



## Reopening Update - 11-20-2020 - Message to Families

Good morning - I am writing today to provide a brief update on our reopening planning, especially in light of the current Covid surge and our County's recent move back into the state's more restrictive Purple tier.

### Key Points:

- We currently have multiple small cohorts of students participating in in-person activities on our campuses (over 1000 students).
- We continue to plan for a potential expansion of in-person activities so we can all make an informed decision about the safety and feasibility of such an expansion.
- Our County's move back to the Purple tier means that we can continue with the status quo but cannot reopen more broadly until our County has been in the Red tier for at least two weeks.
- We have seen a recent uptick in reported cases of Covid in our schools.
- Please contact the school if your student tests positive for Covid or comes into direct contact with someone who has tested positive. If a student travels out of the county or attends a gathering with others outside of the immediate household, please get tested and self-quarantine before returning to any on-campus activities.
- Get a flu shot to prevent dual threats to community health.

### Full Message:

First an update on our reopening efforts to date. Since last June, we've had cohorts of students (no more than 12 students in a cohort) meeting regularly on our campuses for outdoor-only activities related to a variety of extracurricular activities such as athletics, music, dance, cheer, etc. We currently have close to 1000 students in the district participating in these voluntary extracurricular cohorts. In addition to these cohorts, beginning in October we initiated what we call instructional cohort pilots that provide opportunities for students and staff to engage in-person for instructional purposes in an indoor setting. These are small voluntary cohorts that focus on additional academic support, hands-on and lab activities, as well as direct course instruction. We currently have 15 of these instructional cohorts operating and we anticipate adding additional cohorts after the Thanksgiving Break. Both the instructional and extracurricular cohorts have allowed us to bring approximately 30% of our student body back to campus in a limited fashion which has provided academic support as well as addressing the desire for social interaction while simultaneously allowing us to implement, test, and refine our

health and safety protocols in a lower risk environment. This approach is in line with our gradual and phased approach to school reopening.

We continue to actively engage in logistical planning for a more robust reopening in which all students would have the opportunity to return to campus on a part-time basis. We will share the details of what this would look like in practice for questions and feedback before we make a decision regarding if and when we implement a potential next phase. It's important for families and staff to have a clear understanding of what such a reopening model would look like so that each individual staff member and each family can make an informed decision regarding whether they would actually return to school in such a model and a full understanding of what such a model will look like in practice will also inform our decision regarding if and when we may begin such a model.

The recent move back into the Purple tier does not have significant impacts on us as a school district. We are allowed and will continue to operate and expand our cohorts. The only real restriction we face with the move back to Purple is that we cannot move forward with the next phase in reopening (all students back on campus on a part-time basis) until our county has been in the Red tier for at least two weeks. While it's impossible to predict when our county will move back into the Red tier, given anticipated increases in community spread of Covid due to holiday gatherings, it appears realistic that it may be later in January or into February before we move back into the red tier and this is a required condition before we can begin the next phase of our reopening. I realize that people desire a level of certainty regarding our reopening timeline, but certainty is a rare commodity in this environment given the constantly shifting conditions and evolving requirements within which we must operate. We will proceed with our reopening plans if and when it is legally allowable and we believe that we can do so safely. We will provide all staff and families at least two weeks of notice prior to moving forward with the next phase.

I also want to update you on the number of cases we have seen among our school community. Between March and November, we only had one confirmed case of Covid which came from a staff member - this took place during summer break so had no impact on school operations. In the last week, we've had five confirmed cases - three from staff and two from students. One of these staff members and one of these students were extracurricular cohort participants which necessitated the pausing of their cohorts for two weeks and required all members of these cohorts to self-isolate and be tested. It is highly likely that there have been other cases of Covid among our students and staff which have gone unreported which highlights the need for any Covid case to be reported to the school contact listed below - even if the student or staff member has not been to campus. Having this information helps us to understand the level of spread among our school community which, in turn, helps to inform our reopening planning as well as allowing us to better protect the health and safety of everyone.

We strongly encourage any students who travel outside of our county or who attend gatherings involving people from outside of their immediate households during Thanksgiving or December breaks, to get tested for Covid before returning to participation in extracurricular or instructional

cohorts in order to protect against an expected post-holiday surge. In line with CPHD recommendations, we also suggest that you and your student NOT return to campus until completing a 14-day quarantine period, recommended in the event of a COVID exposure. If your student misses any academic work, arrangements will be made to provide the needed support.

Thank you for your ongoing patience and support as we move through these difficult circumstances and decisions. I hope you all enjoy a safe Thanksgiving with your families.

Mike Grove,  
Superintendent

**COVID-19 Reporting Contacts:**

Los Gatos High School: Adam Minyard [aminyard@lgsuhsd.org](mailto:aminyard@lgsuhsd.org) or 408-354-2730, x-310

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District Office: Jane Marashian [jmarashian@lgsuhsd.org](mailto:jmarashian@lgsuhsd.org) or 408-354-5980

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