

COVID Update and Mask Mandate Recommendation

May 5, 2022



COVID Update

- San Mateo County is in the Yellow Tier for COVID Cases (risk is considered medium) on the [CDC COVID Tracker](#) and the [SM Co. Tracker](#)
 - The R in San Mateo County is 1.08 (down from 1.30 on April 22). COVID is still spreading, but more slowly.
- San Mateo is one of three Bay Area Counties currently in the Yellow Tier
- Effective March 11, 2022, California transitioned its statewide universal indoor masking requirement in K-12 school settings to a **strong recommendation** that individuals continue to wear masks indoors. This recommendation continues to be in place. Our district chose to keep masking mandatory.
- Aside from the outbreak post-SMHS Prom, we have not seen any other outbreaks.

Covid Dashboard: March 21 - April 21, 2022

Week of	Grand Total	AHS	BHS	CHS	HHS	Middle College	MHS	PHS	SMHS
April 4	23	8	2	4	2	0	1	0	6
April 11	106	6	6	2	3	2	3	1	83
April 18*	81	12	12	2	7	3	10	1	34
April 25	72	11	18	9	15	0	9	0	10
May 2	66	16	15	3	13	0	8	0	11

Case Trends

- The District continues to see spread via household cases but not in classrooms.
- We are seeing cases from those who had previously tested positive in the fall test positive again. Most report mild symptoms.
- Testing for COVID at home is becoming more common. We are seeing more instances where staff and students report positive results from home tests vs. testing in school.

COVID Mitigation Strategies

Mills Prom - Tomorrow, May 6 and Capuchino Prom - May 7

- Mitigation efforts at the Hillsdale prom seem effective - relatively few cases reported
- We are requiring masking indoors for all prom attendees
- We are requiring testing of all students and guests -In addition to rapid antigen testing at school sites we are participating in an innovative pilot program with the CDPH involving Canine Medical Detection of COVID.
- Both of these prom venues have extensive outdoor space where students can remove their masks

Staff Recommendation

1. Beginning May 9, the District should realign itself to make masks **strongly recommended** indoors to follow guidelines set forth by the California Department of Public Health.
2. We recommend following this for summer school and in the 2022-23 School Year and following guidelines set forth by the State and County moving forward.
3. We recommend retiring Board Policy 6145.1 which requires weekly testing of unvaccinated students participating in athletics or extracurricular events outside of the school day.

Rationale for Recommendation

- We believe it is time to align our operations with the County of San Mateo based on the guidance of the California Department of Public Health. This means moving to making masks **strongly recommended** in our schools which aligns with State guidance and County operations as of March 11.
- Recommendation means moving to less restrictive guidelines as public health conditions improve AND moving to more restrictive guidelines if public health conditions worsen.
- Recommendation moving forward is to align with all other schools in San Mateo County and continue to follow county guidelines for summer school and next year.
- The District needs some period of time without a mask mandate to prepare for this reality before next school year and the summer.
- There are psychosocial benefits to our students from being unmasked during a time of psychological struggle.
- Long term, the District needs to align itself to Health Department guidance so that Board meetings are not dominated by this discussion every meeting.

**Questions, Comments,
Next Steps**