

Health & Safety Steering Committee Meeting Notes - December 8th, 2021

Read full meeting agenda and member list [here](#).

Superintendent Booker provided an update on the status of PUSD students receiving the COVID vaccination:

- Students 12 and older - Deadline to submit proof of vaccination has passed (November 17th). Down to eight students who have not submitted. Families of six of those students requested an extension to January 4th. Remaining two families' intentions are unclear at this time. Any students not providing proof of vaccination by January 4th, will be transferred to the District's Independent Study program.
- Students ages 5-11 - A letter to families with instructions of how to submit their proof of vaccination was sent last week. Have received proof from approximately 270 students so far, or about 25% of total students. Another reminder letter will be sent this week and another during Winter Break. Deadline remains Friday, January 14th. Three families have asked for an extension to the end of the school year but were told no. Could possibly extend another two weeks if extenuating circumstances exist.
 - Alameda County has reported that over 85% of children ages 5-11 in Piedmont have received at least one shot. Believe that bodes well for families' commitment to fully vaccinate their children.

Rapid-Antigen Testing:

- State has allowed for students identified through contact tracing to return to class if cleared by a rapid-antigen test, are not exhibiting symptoms, or do not have anyone at home who has tested positive. Allows students to return to class without waiting 48-72 hours for results from a standard test.
 - District will not accept home tests. Results must come from a lab-based provider, or performed on-site by District nurses or health clerks.
 - Pediatric offices are using the rapid-antigen tests as well.
 - Drawback to rapid-antigen tests is they have a short shelf-life. Was a shortage around the Bay Area but the state is now providing larger quantities.
 - PUSD is on the waiting list to receive 3,000 home tests before Winter Break.

Discussion Topics:

Omicron Variant

- Has proven to be somewhat more transmissible than Delta. May be less symptomatic - and also milder - than Delta. People with Omicron still get sick, but

are less likely to require hospitalization. Vaccinated individuals are catching it, but the cases don't seem to be as severe. Best defense is to get the booster.

Winter Break Travel Guidance - Families should be aware of the latest [CDC Travel Guidance](#).

- International travel now requires a negative COVID test within 24 hours to enter the U.S.
- Recommendations are for vaccinated individuals to be tested within five days of return to the U.S. - no restrictions on activities up to that time - and for unvaccinated individuals to quarantine for seven days after returning to the U.S.
- Would be wise for the District to ask families to test before returning to school on January 5th.
- Everyone needs to keep in mind that the U.S. has the most COVID cases and deaths in the world. Great to be safe while travelling internationally, but need to look inward as well.
- Those not travelling will still be out and about and many will be hosting other people from around the country and world. All must take precautions.
- PUSD should know by the end of the week if we'll be receiving tests from the state that can be distributed to families.

Outdoor Masking

- District's plan is to consider lifting the outdoor mask requirement for younger students following the January 14th deadline for submitting proof of vaccination.
- Are seeing a trend toward extending the time between shots. That may cause difficulty for some families to meet the deadline.
- The District has not seen an increase in in-school transmissions at the secondary level since lifting the requirement for older students. However, with only eight unvaccinated students, the environment is safer than what younger students might be facing.
- Communication must be clear that outdoor close contact for unvaccinated students without masks means that modified quarantine is no longer an option. Being outside does not mean you're safe. Just because there isn't any data doesn't mean it isn't happening.
- Many older students are still wearing their masks outside.
- There is a low case rate overall in Piedmont which provides some protection in situations that other communities don't have.

Litigation - Superintendent Booker informed the group that the same organization that has filed suit against the Los Angeles Unified School District over its vaccination policy

has also filed suit against PUSD. He and the Board will be discussing in closed session at tonight's meeting.

Open House - Principals have asked for guidance regarding hosting Open Houses in late January.

- Will have much more information coming back from Winter Break. May be better to postpone ahead of time rather than cancelling shortly before. Is it really the best first event to bring families back to campus on a large scale?
- Schools have hosted Open Houses later in the school year before. Would be able to adjust accordingly.

Next meeting - TBD