



## School Year Information for Parents 2021-2022

Student health and safety continues to be a top priority as we return to more normal school operations.

Student health and safety includes not only physical health and safety but also academic health, mental health, and social-emotional well-being. A recent survey of school districts across the United States found that 74% reported multiple indicators of increased mental health stresses among students during the pandemic. In Santa Rosa County, we have also seen learning loss among students who have been disconnected from school the past sixteen months.

Being in school is critical for the overall well-being of our students. Our plans for this year strike a sensible balance that emphasizes your student's success at school while also being mindful of the steps we need to take to keep our school environments safe.

Teachers, administrators, and support staff have been preparing this summer for a return to more normal school operations. The first day of school is August 10th, and we are excited to welcome our students back. We will retain some of the practices that were established last year to keep our schools as clean as possible.

Below are answers to questions that parents have asked this summer and will help you plan for the upcoming school year. Families may contact their child's school if they have additional questions or visit our website ([www.santarosa.k12.fl.us/](http://www.santarosa.k12.fl.us/)).

**Q. Are there currently any Emergency Orders in Florida or in Santa County involving schools and COVID-19?**

A No.

**Q What safety measures will be in place to start the school year?**

A The following safety measures will be in place:

- Hand sanitizer will be available in every classroom, on buses, and in other shared areas.
- Each classroom will have disinfecting wipes.
- Daily cleaning and disinfection of classrooms and buses.
- Masks will be optional in schools and on buses.
- Signs will be displayed to remind those in schools about social distancing and the use of hand sanitizers and hand washing.
- COVID-19 contact tracing will occur as required by the Florida Department of Health.

**Q Will masks be mandatory in schools this fall?**

A. No. Parents are welcome to provide a mask for their child if they choose. Schools will have masks available if requested.

**Q Will masks be mandatory on school buses?**

A No. Parents are welcome to provide a mask for their child if they choose. Masks will be available if requested.

**Q Will temperatures be taken daily upon arrival to school?**

A No. Parents should screen students for symptoms at home.

**Q What are the COVID symptoms?**

A Fever greater than 100.4°, cough, sore throat, shortness of breath or difficult breathing, headache, body or muscle aches, GI symptoms (diarrhea, vomiting, abdominal pain), new loss of taste or smell, and nasal congestion/runny nose.

**Q If my student is identified as a close contact through contact tracing at school, will they be quarantined?**

A Keeping students in school is critically important for their academic growth and overall mental health. Regardless of whether a student is vaccinated, the School District has created a pathway for students without symptoms to stay in school with certain safeguards in place. The guidelines below explain how both vaccinated and non-vaccinated close contacts will be handled at this time.

If the Florida Department of Health mandates through a lawfully issued order that a student isolate or quarantine, the School District will follow the legal requirements of the order.

**VACCINATED CLOSE CONTACTS:**

- **Asymptomatic** close contacts who are **vaccinated** or in their **90-day immunity** period **will not have to quarantine**. Protocol will be to monitor for symptoms.
- **Symptomatic** close contacts must quarantine and may return following these guidelines:
  - **With Negative Rapid Antigen or PCR Test (earliest Day 5)**
    - With negative Rapid Antigen test, return to school **no earlier than Day 8**
  - **With Negative Rapid Antigen or PCR Test (Days 8-14)**
    - With negative Rapid Antigen or PCR test return to school
    - Monitor for symptoms
    - Highly recommend practicing mitigation (mask, distancing)
  - **Without Testing (Day 11)**
    - Student without testing may return to school no earlier than Day 11
    - Monitor for symptoms
    - Highly Recommend practicing mitigation (mask, distancing)

**NON-VACCINATED CLOSE CONTACTS:**

- **Asymptomatic** close contacts who are **not vaccinated** may remain in school if:
  - **Days 1-7**
    - It is highly recommended that the student wears a mask (2-ply)
    - The student should be screened daily by their parent(s) or legal guardian(s) for symptoms of COVID-19
    - It is highly recommended that the student socially distance from others if feasible

- Days 8-14
  - Continue monitoring for symptoms
  - Continue practicing highly recommended mitigation strategies (mask, distancing, etc.)
- Symptomatic close contacts quarantine:
  - With Negative Rapid Antigen or PCR Test (earliest Day 5)
    - With negative Rapid Antigen or PCR test, return to school **no earlier than Day 8**
  - With Negative Rapid Antigen or PCR Test (Days 8-14)
    - With Negative Rapid Antigen or PCR test, return to school.
    - The student should be screened daily by their parent(s) or legal guardian(s) for symptoms of COVID-19
    - Continue practicing highly recommended mitigation strategies (mask, distancing)
  - Without Testing (Day 11)
    - Student without testing may return to school no earlier than Day 11
    - Continue monitoring for symptoms
    - Continue practicing highly recommended mitigation strategies (mask, distancing)

## SYMPTOMATIC STUDENTS (not exposed)

**Q What will happen if a student exhibits multiple COVID symptoms while at school?**

A Like last year, students with multiple COVID symptoms will be sent to the health clinic, socially distanced, and given a mask. Parents will be contacted to determine if symptoms are due to a pre-existing condition. If not, the parent will be required to pick up the student. **The student will be able to return to school once they are symptom free without medication for 24 hours.**

**Q Are there any single symptoms that will require my student to be excluded from school?**

A Yes. If a student has any one of the following symptoms, they will be excluded from school: fever, diarrhea, vomiting, or new loss of taste or smell. The student will not be able to return to school until they are symptom free without medication for 24 hours. **EXCEPTION: If the student experiences a loss of taste or smell, parents should contact their healthcare provider and follow Department of Health guidance for isolation.**

**Q What should I do if my child develops COVID symptoms away from school?**

A Students who have COVID symptoms that are not due to a pre-existing condition must be kept home until they are symptom free without medication for 24 hours. **Students exhibiting a new loss of taste or smell may not attend school. If the student experiences a loss of taste or smell, parents should contact their healthcare provider and follow Department of Health guidance for isolation.**

## COVID-19 HOME EXPOSURE

**Q If there is a positive case at home, will my student be required to quarantine away from school?**

A Yes. Parents would follow the guidance of the Department of Health regarding quarantine protocol. The student's timeline for a return to school will track the timeline for symptomatic close contacts.

## OTHER COVID-19 INFORMATION

**Q Will students who are isolated or quarantined be able to make up their schoolwork?**

A Yes. Please contact your school for information on receiving make up work.

**Q Will absences due to isolation/quarantine or COVID symptoms be excused?**

A Yes. Absences of this type will be excused with a note from a parent or doctor.

**Q. COVID-19 cancelled or modified many school events last year, such as field trips, athletic and performing arts events. Will these return to normal this year?**

A Yes. Our plan is to allow normal school activities such as field trips to resume. Athletic events and extracurricular activities such as band and choral concerts will occur without limits on seating capacity. We will be mindful as we move into the school year and adjust if needed.

**Q Will parents be able to volunteer in classrooms this fall and chaperone trips?**

A Yes. We are pleased to have our parents return to schools as volunteers. Volunteer applications must be completed and approved by the School Board. The volunteer application can be completed online at <https://www.santarosa.k12.fl.us/community/vol/>

**Q Will schools continue to provide extra cleaning of classrooms and other areas?**

A Yes. We will retain some of the protocols put in place last year to help keep our schools as clean as possible. If a positive case is identified, the classroom and /or classrooms of the positive case will be deep cleaned.

**Q What other measures are being continued?**

A Hand sanitizer will be available in every classroom and other shared areas. Water bottle filling stations will be available in schools. Proper handwashing will continue to be emphasized again this year, especially with our younger students. Air purifiers will continue to be used in large open spaces like libraries and cafeterias.

**Q Will an online option be available this year?**

A Yes. Santa Rosa Online (SRO) is the district's primary K-12 virtual option. Information about this option is available at <https://www.santarosaonline.org/>

Santa Rosa County School District will work with local public health officials to determine the prevention strategies needed in our area by monitoring the levels of community and school transmission. Policies and procedures may change during the school year. Please contact your child's school for more information.

(07/28/21)