

# **Outlook for the 2021-22 School Year**

As of April 14, 2021



# Expected Conditions for the 2021-22 School Year



# Major Differences Between Last and Next School Years

## Key Factors:

1. Research & Understanding
2. Oversight & Assistance
3. Comprehensive Testing Program
4. Vaccines
5. Community Transmission



# 1. Research & Understanding

August 2020	Now	By August 2021
Limited understanding of role of children in COVID-19 transmission	Understanding and consensus that children are not major vectors	Better tailored and targeted precautions
Tentative understanding of effective precautions	Understanding and consensus that in-school transmission can be minimal with key precautions	Growing evidence of vaccine effectiveness
Skepticism that children can wear masks	Strong understanding that masks are very effective and experience that children can wear them	Continued mask-wearing across all ages
	Aggressive monitoring of variants	Robust testing and contact tracing
		Further heightened focus on variants



### 3. Comprehensive Testing Program

August 2020	Now	By August 2021
<p>Substantial barriers to access, including limited supply chains</p> <p>School-based testing not an option</p>	<p>Nation's most robust school-based testing program, including both PCR and antigen options</p> <p>Nation's leading financial supports, including state and federal funding for testing for low-income students</p>	<p>Between federal and state supports, potential for no-cost testing for schools</p> <p>Expanded capacity to support safe in-person instruction at schools</p>





## 4. Vaccines

August 2020	Now	By August 2021
Vaccines seemed like a distant hope	<p>School staff were offered vaccines throughout the state by early March</p> <p>40% of Californians have received at least one dose</p> <p>On April 15, all Californians ages 16+ will be eligible for vaccines</p>	<p>With greater supply, accelerated rise in vaccination rates in the four months until August, including all high-risk school community members and households</p> <p>Likely vaccine eligibility of children ages 12-15</p>



## 5. Community Transmission Rates

August 2020	Now	By August 2021
<p>Many of the most populous counties are in the Purple Tier</p> <p>Expectation of a surge associated with forthcoming holidays</p> <p>Schools focus on having high quality distance learning programs</p>	<p>Nation's lowest positivity rates</p> <p>Lowest positivity rates to date</p> <p>Among nation's lowest case rates</p>	<p>Immunity through past exposure and vaccination will further mitigate community transmission</p>



## Expected Conditions and Next Steps

- If current trends and best practices continue, the next school year can begin with offering full in-person instruction to all students (full days, five days per week). Some staff, students, and families may continue to require accommodations.
- State health regulations and guidance will remain operative, but will be revised to reflect changing conditions – including any adjustments to respond to variants – and in consultation with federal, state, and local partners.
- Policy decisions about funding, requirements, authorizations, *etc.* will be enacted by the Legislature and Governor, in consultation with K-12 stakeholders.





# Planning for the Future

- Schools can leverage an historic level of state and federal funds, including \$4.6 billion to expand learning opportunities, made available through early action in March.
- The following should be considered as priorities:
  - Summer programming, including in partnership with service providers who can help supplement school staff recovering from the stress of this school year.
  - Planning to offer full in-person instruction to all students to start the next school year.
  - Communicating with and educating families who may be reluctant to return to in-person instruction.
  - Maximizing the amount of instructional time, through an extended school year and/or before/after school.
  - Maximizing the value of instructional time, through expanded mental health services and high-dose academic interventions, such as tutoring.

