



# SOUTHEAST ISLAND SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF EDUCATION

## Forum & Work Session

### September 3, 2021

#### PURPOSE STATEMENT

Together we will open students' minds to their dreams and aspirations and provide the tools needed to achieve them.

#### MISSION STATEMENT

All Southeast Island School district stakeholders will work together to provide a safe and healthy environment that fosters the development of personal, social and academic skills necessary for students to excel in our rapidly changing world and to become service-minded, life-long learners.

## AGENDA

MEETING: 4:30 PM

LOCATION: Audio/Video Conference

1. Forum to Meet New Staff Members: Sonya Cook, Karen Freese, Deidre Jenson, Joel Jenson, Astrid Richard-Cook, Sam White
2. Review the Southeast Island School District (SISD) American Rescue Plan Act Mitigation and Prevention Plan for the 2021-2022 School Year: the SISD 2021-2022 Back-to-School Plan 2



**Southeast Island School District**  
**American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act**  
**Mitigation and Prevention Plan**

**BACK TO SCHOOL PLAN 2021-22**

**Option A**

**Revised August 21, 2021**



## Mitigation Plan

### Plan Components

Districts must implement, to the greatest extent practicable, prevention and mitigation policies in line with the most up-to-date guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for the reopening and operation of school facilities to effectively maintain the health and safety of students, educators, and other staff. Describe the extent to which the district adopted policies and a description of such policies on each of the strategies listed below:

#### 1. [Masks and Physical Distancing \(e.g., including use of cohorts/pods\)](#)

SISD will follow a layered approach to mitigation, with mask policies dependent on local conditions.

Per CDC [Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in K-12 Schools](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/k-12-guidance.html) (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/k-12-guidance.html>), Updated Aug. 5, 2021

- Due to the circulating and highly contagious Delta variant, CDC recommends universal indoor masking by all students (age 2 and older), staff, teachers, and visitors to K-12 schools, regardless of vaccination status.
- In addition to universal indoor masking, CDC recommends schools maintain at least 3 feet of physical distance between students within classrooms to reduce transmission risk. When it is not possible to maintain a physical distance of at least 3 feet, such as when schools cannot fully re-open while maintaining these distances, it is especially important to layer multiple other prevention strategies, such as screening testing. (see #2 *Physical Distancing for information about 3 feet and 6 feet distances*)

If the alert level on Prince of Wales Island is “high” (red) or “substantial” (orange), all students, teachers, staff, and visitors will practice universal indoor masking.

If the alert level on Prince of Wales Island is “moderate” (yellow) or “low” (blue), Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) masks are required by staff and students when working directly with each other and physical distancing cannot be maintained. Masks will be required in all SISD schools during passing periods and when students are accessing lockers. Masks will be required in the SISD school hallways when students arrive at school in the morning and are exiting the building after school.

The alert level will be determined by Craig Public Health. It will reflect cases over the previous 7 days on Prince of Wales Island and will use the same methodology as Alaska DHSS uses to designate alert levels for each region in the state.

For all alert levels, visitors and volunteers will be permitted upon approval, on a case-by-case basis, when the use of volunteers is essential for the safety and supervision of students (i.e. outdoor field trips). All visitors and volunteers will be temperature screened and are required to wear masks when working directly with staff and students and 6 feet social distancing cannot be maintained.

# American Rescue Plan Act Mitigation and Prevention Plan



Field trip/activity locations are allowed if the activity is outside and students with staff can either walk to the location with appropriate social distancing, or if using district vehicles students will be required to wear masks when appropriate social distancing cannot be adhered to.

## 2. Increased Level of Community Transition, Masks Required and Use of Pods to Continue In-Person Instruction

SISD will follow a layered approach to mitigation, with mask policies dependent on local conditions.

Per CDC Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in K-12 Schools (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/k-12-guidance.html>), Updated Aug. 5, 2021

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Field trip/activity locations are allowed if the activity is outside and students with staff can either walk to the location with appropriate social distancing, or if using district vehicles students will be required to wear masks when appropriate social distancing cannot be adhered to.

If the district’s Medical Advisory Committee recommends that one of more of SISD’s school move to a more restricted level of safety due to an increased level of community transition and/or other factors affecting

# American Rescue Plan Act Mitigation and Prevention Plan



one of our school communities, SISD will put in place more restrictive safety measures. In an effort to keep students in school in-person, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) masks will be required by staff and students when working directly with each other. In this scenario, individual schools in the district may also develop pods within their student population and students/staff will not be able to interact with students/staff in other pods. Flexibility and evidence-based decision making will guide SISD's decisions to shift between Yellow/Moderate (in-person instruction) and Red/High Risk (distance instruction) scenarios.

SISD will closely monitor SE regional trends with COVID-19 infections to include Juneau, Sitka, Ketchikan, Anchorage and Seattle. If regional trends shift rapidly, SISD will utilize this information to consider transitioning to a higher risk scenario to protect our students, families, and staff members.

If there are active COVID-19 cases in an SISD school community, or another island community, that could directly impact SISD families, SISD reserves the right to temporarily transition to a Red/High Risk (distance instruction) scenario for deep cleaning of SISD buildings and while Public Health completes contact tracing and quarantining of those who could directly impact SISD. Once contact tracing is complete SISD shall consult with Public Health and the district's Medical Advisory Committee to determine the district's risk level.

SISD will provide bus service during Orange/Substantial, Yellow/Moderate and Blue/Low Risk scenarios. SISD will provide service to south side of Thorne Bay, Hollis, Klawock and Craig. Due to federal regulations for which the school district has no control, students and bus drivers are required to wear masks at all times when boarding, exiting, and riding on the bus. During Red/High Risk scenarios when the district has moved to a distance instructional model bus service will be cancelled.

AK-TRAILS Statewide Homeschool office's (Thorne Bay, Naukati, Coffman Cove and Port Alexander) will follow all guidelines and mandates for the municipality the office is located. Furthermore, AK- TRAILS offices will institute the State of Alaska Phase 3 and 4 COVID-19 guidelines located at <https://covid19.alaska.gov/reopen/>, specifically guidelines for Attachment D "Public Facing Businesses" to include:

- Social distancing
- Hygiene best practices
- Staffing
- Cleaning and disinfecting

### 3. [Handwashing and respiratory etiquette](#)

To help prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus, SISD has the opportunity and responsibility to educate students, families, and staff on social etiquette, good health and hygiene habits, and disease prevention. SISD will provide regular hand-washing and respiratory hygiene/cough etiquette education for all K-12 students. Our basic educational message will be:

- Cover your cough
- Wash hands often
- Stay home if sick
- Wear appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

### 4. [Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation](#)

# American Rescue Plan Act Mitigation and Prevention Plan



The safety of our students and staff are our primary priority. SISD schools will be completely cleaned and disinfected regularly, and we will continue to adhere to all necessary safety precautions. In addition to the regular deep cleaning all school facilities, the cleaning steps outlined below are to be taken to disinfect workplace surfaces, chairs, tables, etc., to protect students and employees and reduce the risk of spread of infection.

## General Disinfection Measures

Area	Frequency
Classrooms and Offices	At the end of each day
Appliances	Daily
Electronic Equipment	At the end of each use
General used objects like light switches, handles, sinks, restrooms	At least 2 times a day
Buses	At the end of each use
Common Areas	At the end of each use and/or between groups

Deep cleaning is triggered when an active student or employee is identified as positive for COVID-19 based on testing. When a student or employee with a suspected infectious disease is identified and has left the building, their work area, along with any other known places they have been will be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected. The person cleaning and disinfecting will wear a mask and gloves and will discard them immediately afterwards. Hands will be washed and sanitized at the completion of the procedure. During times of a specifically known or suspected disease outbreak, SISD will consult public health officials to determine if there is a proper way to discard waste or if other PPE should be worn by staff.

Additionally, a bleach solution spray bottle and/or disinfecting wipes will be provided to all classrooms, offices, and work locations. SISD employees are required to regularly disinfect personal workstations each day, schedule regular times during the school day for students to disinfect their personal workstations and disinfect all appliances and electronic equipment after each use.

SISD will utilize portable HEPA filter air purifier systems in classrooms and office space to improve indoor air quality.

SISD has contractors coming in to address improvements in air quality and ventilation in district buildings. SISD contracted ATS to develop a condition survey on the Throne Bay School and to tune and survey both Coffman and Naukati School buildings specifically focused on each school's HVAC and controls. This will help drive our CIP (Capital Improvement Plan) School Mechanical Control Upgrades in Thorne Bay where we still operate on pneumatic controls.

SISD will be making some improvements in Kasaan to help create space for social distancing and provide updated surfaces that are easier to clean. This is a small three-room school with a detached library that was used by the community as well as the district prior to Covid. The building is being repaired and

# American Rescue Plan Act Mitigation and Prevention Plan



updated surfaces to better serve SISD's needs. Creating space to further isolate groups from each other and to reduce the risk of spread through updated cleaning surfaces.

## 5. [Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine, in collaboration with the State, local, territorial, or Tribal health departments](#)

If a student or employee becomes ill at work and is exhibiting one or more of the COVID-19 symptoms outlined below they will be asked to leave and go home immediately. If a student or employee becomes ill at home and is exhibiting one or more of the COVID-19 symptoms outlined below they will be asked to stay at home. The student or employee should be tested for COVID-19 and, if necessary, be evaluated by their health care provider. Due to the severe nature of a potential positive COVID-19 diagnosis, parents are asked to immediately pick their student up upon notification from the school that their child is exhibiting symptoms related to COVID-19. Any staff member exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms is asked to immediately notify their direct supervisor of their symptoms and leave school premises.

- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Tiredness or fatigue
- Chills
- Repeated shaking with chills
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell
- Diarrhea
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Feeling feverish or a measured temperature greater than or equal to 100.3 degrees Fahrenheit

Employees returning to work from an approved medical leave may be asked to submit a healthcare provider's note before returning to work. The student or staff member may not return to school until they have met one of the following criteria:

- If they test positive, they must stay home for 10 days since their first symptom or their positive test, whichever is earlier. Once it has been 10 days, they may return to school once they have not had a fever in 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medicine, as long as their other symptoms are improving.
- If they test negative, they may return to school when they have not had a fever in 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medicine and their other symptoms are improving.
- If they do not get a test, they must stay home for 10 days. They may return to school when it has been 10 days and they have not had a fever in 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medicine and their other symptoms are improving.
- If their health care provider determines there is an alternative diagnosis to COVID-19 causing their symptoms, they may be allowed back to school before 10 days and without a negative test as long as the following criteria are met:

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- Their symptoms have resolved and they have not had a fever in 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medicine, and
- They have a note from their health care provider saying it is safe for them to come back to school.

Each school will have an illness tracking Google.doc. Staff will be educated on how and why to complete the form. Each student and employee who is absent or sent home due to illness is put on this list, symptoms are documented and travel history (in last 14 days) is charted. Questions that will be asked on the illness tracking Google.doc will be the following:

- What are the symptoms?
- Have they travelled in the last 14 days?
- Have they been in contact with anyone with coronavirus?

While we all hope to avoid exposure to illness from COVID-19, we need to be prepared for that possibility. If you or someone you've been in contact with has been exposed to the virus, our first concern is for your health and safety and those around you. Your local public health authorities make the final decisions about how long quarantine should last, based on local conditions and needs. Follow the recommendations of your local public health department if you need to quarantine. Options they will consider include stopping quarantine

- After day 10 without testing
- After day 7 after receiving a negative test result (test must occur on day 5 or later)

The student and staff member will be allowed to return to school upon receipt of a release from quarantine letter from Craig Public Health. In this rapidly changing situation, healthcare providers should have the most up-to-date information from CDC.

For all out of state travel SISD staff and students shall follow all state travel orders, mandates, and health advisories and alerts.

## 6. [Diagnostic and screening testing](#)

SISD has prioritized ARPA funding to provide testing for all student extra-curricular events for the student participants and coaches/chaperones to ensure students have access to these "outside" school learning activities. SISD has also prioritized ARPA funding to provide testing for all staff members engaged in district business who are required to travel off island to other Alaskan communities.

In partnership with SEARHC, SISD has a year-long contract for testing. All students and staff members traveling off island for district sponsored extra-curricular events or district sponsored business shall receive a COVID-19 test and negative results prior to travel to ensure all SISD students and staff are symptom free of COVID-19.

Student and staff travel to other Alaskan communities for athletic and extracurricular events will be determined on a case by case basis based on the mitigation plans of the host's and visiting school's mitigation plans and will be approved by the SISD athletic director, principal, and superintendent.

SISD will follow ASAA COVID-19 Practice Guidelines and ASAA COVID-19 Event Guidelines for athletics and

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extra-curricular activities.

## 7. [Efforts to provide vaccinations to educators, other staff, and students, if eligible](#)

SISD has partnered with SEARHC, PEACE Health, and Prince of Wales Public Health to provide staff, students, parents, and community members information about vaccinations. SISD has regularly sent out emails to staff, students, and parents regarding the availability of vaccinations and how to access.

SEARHC is making the Coronavirus vaccine available to our students who are 12 and older. To register parents only need to visit <https://covid19.searhc.org/> and access the link to register.

SISD is extremely appreciative of these resources that are being provided to our island students.

PEACE Health is also making the Coronavirus vaccine available for students 12 and older. Vaccination appointments can be scheduled by calling 907-826-3257.

SISD will continue to work with local and state health agencies to support messaging and outreach about vaccination for members of school communities. SISD communication platforms will facilitate outreach to encourage vaccination of household members of school-age children as they become eligible. This will include outreach in a language that limited English proficient family members or students can understand and in alternate formats as needed to facilitate effective communication for individuals with disabilities.

## 8. [Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to the health and safety policies](#)

Based upon specifications of their individualized education plans (IEPs/504 plans), students with disabilities may be served outside of their regular group time. Individual student services will be based upon a team decision for what is the best for each child based upon the child's disability. This may include in person school during school closures for a full or partial day. This may include continued provision of school transportation during times that busses are cancelled due to school closures. This may include additional services provided in a home-based environment, special equipment provided in the home, etc. Requirements for the use of masks and other PPE will be determined on an individual basis for students with disabilities.

## Continuity of Services

Describe how the district will ensure continuity of services including, but not limited to, services to address students' academic needs, as well as the social, emotional, mental health, and other needs of students and staff (e.g., student health and food service).

SISD has a full-time school counselor on staff to serve our K-12 students. The counselor will work with SISD administration to determine when her services will be provided in-person or remotely. The counselor will work with schools to support staff with best practices around Trauma Informed Practices. A focus will be placed on supporting a positive climate and culture that acknowledges universal trauma care strategies for students.

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Additionally, SISD has a one-to-one electronic device program for all K-12 students. In the event the district or a specific school has to move to Red/High Risk Scenario Distance Learning students will be able to access all classroom content through their electronic devices. All SISD schools will utilize the CANVAS electronic learning platform, Google Classroom, Edgenuity and/or Zoom to provide distance instructional support. All SISD schools will also utilize web-based educational platforms, teacher developed instructional packets, and one-on-one teacher check-ins with each student.

In the event the district or a specific school has to move to Red/High Risk Scenario Distance Learning SISD will provide breakfast and lunch service that is either picked up or delivered to specific locations within the community for student and family pick-up for all students 18 years old and younger.

## Periodic Review

Describe how the district will periodically review and revise its mitigation plan, as appropriate, including a description of how the district will seek public input and take such input into account on (1) whether revisions are necessary and, if so, (2) the proposed revisions to the plan.

**Important Note:** The district must review its mitigation plan no less frequently than every six months for the duration of the ARP ESSER grant period (i.e., through September 30, 2023).

SISD developed a survey for all students, staff, parents, community members asking for input for the district's preparations for the 2021-2022 school year that was administered to all students, parents, staff, and community members from May 24, 2021 to June 9, 2021. Survey results can be accessed [https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1EvxbFHbx4DJzmaRk72ooCEFESlaaN5LZd\\_Q8kiNJOnC/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1EvxbFHbx4DJzmaRk72ooCEFESlaaN5LZd_Q8kiNJOnC/edit?usp=sharing)

Additionally, the SISD has developed a Mitigation Advisory Committee to develop recommendations for the Board's consideration for the development of SISD's ARPA Mitigation and Prevention Strategies (Back to School 2021-22 Plan). The SISD Mitigation Advisory Committee is comprised of members from the different SISD stakeholder groups:

- Certified Teachers
- Classified Staff Members
- Parents
- Students
- SISD Administrators
- SISD Technology Director
- Prince of Wales Medical Providers
- SISD Board President

The Committee will review the stakeholder survey data, review the current SISD Smart Start to School Guidelines, review the guidelines with the American Rescue Plan Act Mitigation Template, and develop a Mitigation and Prevent Strategy following DEED's ARPA guidelines.

The SISD Board Mitigation Advisory Committee will meet monthly to review the SISD's ARPA Mitigation and Prevention Strategies and provide recommendations to the SISD School Board for their consideration. The SISD ARPA Mitigation and Prevention Strategies will be a regular "Old Business" agenda item each month for the SISD Board's consideration.



**Southeast Island School District**  
**American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act**  
**Mitigation and Prevention Plan**

**BACK TO SCHOOL PLAN 2021-22**

**Option B**

**Revised August 21, 2021**



## Mitigation Plan

### Plan Components

Districts must implement, to the greatest extent practicable, prevention and mitigation policies in line with the most up-to-date guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for the reopening and operation of school facilities to effectively maintain the health and safety of students, educators, and other staff. Describe the extent to which the district adopted policies and a description of such policies on each of the strategies listed below:

#### 1. [Masks and Physical Distancing \(e.g., including use of cohorts/pods\)](#)

SISD Strongly Recommends Following CDC Guidance, However Respects Mask Choice.

In consultation with state and local public health representatives, SISD strongly recommends that students, staff, and all school visitors follow the CDC guidance of universal indoor masking in all school facilities during school hours. However, SISD also recognizes individual and parent/guardian choice with regard to masking. SISD will encourage staff, students, and all school visitors follow the suggested CDC guidelines, but will respect individual rights and decisions regarding “mask choice.”

Mask Choice does not apply in the following circumstances:

- Mandated mask wearing as directed by Public Health Representatives.
- SISD mitigation plans for athletics or special events/activities requiring mask wearing.

To allow for transparency, SISD highly recommends “mask choice” be carefully considered given the current Public Health “Close Contact Tracing Process” as detailed on page #5 of the SISD ARPA Mitigation and Prevention Plan.

#### 2. [Increased Level of Community Transition, Masks Required and Use of Pods to Continue In-Person Instruction](#)

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To allow for transparency, SISD highly recommends “mask choice” be carefully considered given the current Public Health “Close Contact Tracing Process” as detailed on page #5 of the SISD ARPA Mitigation and Prevention Plan.

If the district’s Medical Advisory Committee recommends that one of more of SISD’s school move to a more restricted level of safety due to an increased level of community transition and/or other factors affecting one of our school communities, SISD will put in place more restrictive safety measures. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) masks will be required by staff and students when working directly with each other. In this scenario, individual schools in the district may also develop pods within their student population and students/staff will not be able to interact with students/staff in other pods. Flexibility and evidence-based decision making will guide SISD’s decisions to shift between in-person with no mask requirement, in-person with masks required and distance delivery.

SISD will closely monitor SE regional trends with COVID-19 infections to include Juneau, Sitka, Ketchikan, Anchorage and Seattle. If regional and/or individual SISD community trends shift rapidly, SISD will utilize this information to consider transitioning to a higher risk scenario to protect our students, families, and staff members.

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### 3. [Handwashing and respiratory etiquette](#)

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SISD will provide regular hand-washing and respiratory hygiene/cough etiquette education for all K-12 students. Our basic educational message will be:

- Cover your cough
- Wash hands often
- Stay home if sick
- Wear appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

#### 4. [Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation](#)

The safety of our students and staff are our primary priority. SISD schools will be completely cleaned and disinfected regularly, and we will continue to adhere to all necessary safety precautions. In addition to the regular deep cleaning all school facilities, the cleaning steps outlined below are to be taken to disinfect workplace surfaces, chairs, tables, etc., to protect students and employees and reduce the risk of spread of infection.

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## 5. [Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine, in collaboration with the State, local, territorial, or Tribal health departments](#)

If a student or employee becomes ill at work and is exhibiting one or more of the COVID-19 symptoms outlined below they will be asked to leave and go home immediately. If a student or employee becomes ill at home and is exhibiting one or more of the COVID-19 symptoms outlined below they will be asked to stay at home. The student or employee should be tested for COVID-19 and, if necessary, be evaluated by their health care provider. Due to the severe nature of a potential positive COVID-19 diagnosis, parents are asked to immediately pick their student up upon notification from the school that their child is exhibiting symptoms related to COVID-19. Any staff member exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms is asked to immediately notify their direct supervisor of their symptoms and leave school premises.

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- If they test positive, they must stay home for 10 days since their first symptom or their positive test, whichever is earlier. Once it has been 10 days, they may return to school once they have not had a fever in 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medicine, as long as their other symptoms are improving.

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- If their health care provider determines there is an alternative diagnosis to COVID-19 causing their symptoms, they may be allowed back to school before 10 days and without a negative test as long as the following criteria are met:
  - Their symptoms have resolved and they have not had a fever in 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medicine, and
  - They have a note from their health care provider saying it is safe for them to come back to school.

Each school will have an illness tracking Google.doc. Staff will be educated on how and why to complete the form. Each student and employee who is absent or sent home due to illness is put on this list, symptoms are documented and travel history (in last 14 days) is charted. Questions that will be asked on the illness tracking Google.doc will be the following:

- What are the symptoms?
- Have they travelled in the last 14 days?
- Have they been in contact with anyone with coronavirus?

While we all hope to avoid exposure to illness from COVID-19, we need to be prepared for that possibility. If you or someone you've been in contact with has been exposed to the virus, our first concern is for your health and safety and those around you. Your local public health authorities make the final decisions about how long quarantine should last, based on local conditions and needs. Follow the recommendations of your local public health department if you need to quarantine. Options they will consider include stopping quarantine

- After day 10 without testing
- After day 7 after receiving a negative test result (test must occur on day 5 or later)

The student and staff member will be allowed to return to school upon receipt of a release from quarantine letter from Craig Public Health. In this rapidly changing situation, healthcare providers should have the most up-to-date information from CDC.

For all out of state travel SISD staff and students shall follow all state travel orders, mandates, and health advisories and alerts.

## 6. [Diagnostic and screening testing](#)

SISD has prioritized ARPA funding to provide testing for all student extra-curricular events for the student participants and coaches/chaperones to ensure students have access to these "outside" school learning activities. SISD has also prioritized ARPA funding to provide testing for all staff members engaged in district business who are required to travel off island to other Alaskan communities.

In partnership with SEARHC, SISD has a year-long contract for testing. All students and staff members traveling off island for district sponsored extra-curricular events or district sponsored business shall

# American Rescue Plan Act Mitigation and Prevention Plan



receive a COVID-19 test and negative results prior to travel to ensure all SISD students and staff are symptom free of COVID-19.

Student and staff travel to other Alaskan communities will be determined on a case-by-case basis and will include the current COVID-19 risk level of the community and school.

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SISD has partnered with SEARHC, PEACE Health, and Prince of Wales Public Health to provide staff, students, parents, and community members information about vaccinations. SISD has regularly sent out emails to staff, students, and parents regarding the availability of vaccinations and how to access.

SISD will continue to work with local and state health agencies to support messaging and outreach about vaccination for members of school communities. SISD communication platforms will facilitate outreach to encourage vaccination of household members of school-age children as they become eligible. This will include outreach in a language that limited English proficient family members or students can understand and in alternate formats as needed to facilitate effective communication for individuals with disabilities.

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Based upon specifications of their individualized education plans (IEPs/504 plans), students with disabilities may be served outside of their regular group time. Individual student services will be based upon a team decision for what is the best for each child based upon the child's disability. This may include in person school during school closures for a full or partial day. This may include continued provision of school transportation during times that busses are cancelled due to school closures. This may include additional services provided in a home-based environment, special equipment provided in the home, etc. Requirements for the use of masks and other PPE will be determined on an individual basis for students with disabilities.

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# American Rescue Plan Act Mitigation and Prevention Plan



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- Certified Teachers
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The Committee will meet to review the stakeholder survey data, review the current SISD Smart Start to School Guidelines, review the guidelines with the American Rescue Plan Act Mitigation Template, and develop a Mitigation and Prevent Strategy following DEED's ARPA guidelines.

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**Southeast Island School District**  
**American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act**  
**Mitigation and Prevention Plan**

**BACK TO SCHOOL PLAN 2021-22**

**Option CDC**

**Revised August 21, 2021**



## Mitigation Plan

### Plan Components

Per Alaska Department of Education and Early Development: "Districts must implement, to the greatest extent practicable, prevention and mitigation policies inline with the most up-to-date guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and testing."

Per CDC: "Given new evidence on the B.1.617.2 (Delta) variant, CDC has updated the [guidance for fully vaccinated people](#). CDC recommends universal indoor masking for all teachers, staff, students, and visitors to K-12 schools, regardless of vaccination status. Children should return to full-time in-person learning in the fall with layered prevention strategies in place."

CDC Update: Due to the circulating and highly contagious Delta variant, CDC recommends universal indoor masking by all students (age 2 and older), staff, teachers, and visitors to K-12 schools, regardless of vaccination status.

In addition to universal indoor masking, CDC recommends schools maintain at least 3 feet of physical distance between students within classrooms to reduce transmission risk. When it is not possible to maintain a physical distance of at least 3 feet, such as when schools cannot fully re-open while maintaining these distances, it is especially important to layer multiple other prevention strategies, such as screening testing."

#### 1. [Masks and Physical Distancing \(e.g., including use of cohorts/pods\)](#)

Masks will be **required** in all SISD schools during passing periods and when students are accessing lockers.

Masks will be **required** in all SISD hallways when students arrive at school in the morning and are exiting the building after school.

**Consistent and Correct Mask Usage:** When teachers, staff, and students consistently and correctly wear a mask, they [protect others as well as themselves](#). Consistent and [correct mask use](#) is especially important indoors and in crowded settings, when physical distancing cannot be maintained.

- **Indoors:** CDC recommends indoor masking for all individuals age 2 years and older, including students, teachers, staff, and visitors, regardless of vaccination status.
- **Outdoors:** In general, people do not need to wear masks when outdoors. CDC recommends that people who are not fully vaccinated wear a mask in crowded outdoor settings or during activities that involve sustained close contact with other people. Fully vaccinated people might choose to wear a mask in crowded outdoor settings if they or someone in their household is immunocompromised.

Exceptions can be made for the following categories of people:

# American Rescue Plan Act Mitigation and Prevention Plan



- A person who cannot wear a mask, or cannot safely wear a mask, because of a disability as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.). Discuss the possibility of reasonable accommodation external icon with workers who are unable to wear or have difficulty wearing certain types of masks because of a disability.
- A person for whom wearing a mask would create a risk to workplace health, safety, or job duty as determined by the relevant workplace safety guidelines or federal regulations.

Per CDC Operational Strategy for K-12 Schools Through Phased Prevention Updated March 19, 2021, nonessential visitors and volunteers shall be limited. Visitors and volunteers will be permitted upon approval, on a case-by-case basis, when the use of volunteers is essential for the safety and supervision of students (i.e. outdoor field trips). All visitors and volunteers will be temperature screened and are required to wear masks when working directly with staff and students and six feet social distancing cannot be maintained.

Field trip/activity locations are allowed if the activity is outside and students with staff can either walk to the location with appropriate social distancing, or if using district vehicles students will be required to wear masks when appropriate social distancing cannot be adhered to.

## 2. Increased Level of Community Transition, Masks Required and Use of Pods to Continue In-Person Instruction

If the district's Medical Advisory Committee recommends that one or more of SISD's schools move to a more restricted level of safety due to an increased level of community transition and/or other factors affecting one of our school communities, SISD will put in place more restrictive safety measures. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) masks will be required by staff and students when working directly with each other. In this scenario, individual schools in the district may also develop pods within their student population and students/staff will not be able to interact with students/staff in other pods. Flexibility and evidence-based decision making will guide SISD's decisions to shift between in-person with masks required and distance delivery.

SISD will closely monitor SE regional trends with COVID-19 infections to include Juneau, Sitka, Ketchikan, Anchorage and Seattle. If regional trends shift rapidly, SISD will utilize this information to consider transitioning to a higher risk scenario to protect our students, families, and staff members.

If there are active COVID-19 cases in an SISD school community, or another island community, that could directly impact SISD families, SISD reserves the right to temporarily transition to a Red/High Risk scenario for deep cleaning of SISD buildings and while Public Health completes contact tracing and quarantining of those who could directly impact SISD. Once contact tracing is complete SISD shall consult with Public Health and the district's Medical Advisory Committee to determine the district's risk level.

SISD will provide bus service during Yellow/Low-Medium Risk scenarios. SISD will provide service to south side of Thorne Bay, Hollis, Klawock and Craig. CDC's Order applies to all public transportation conveyances including school buses. Passengers and drivers must wear a mask on school buses, including on buses operated by public and private school systems, regardless of vaccination status. SISD students and bus drivers are required to wear masks at all times when boarding, exiting, and riding on the bus. During Red/High Risk scenarios when the district has moved to a distance instructional model bus service will be

# American Rescue Plan Act Mitigation and Prevention Plan



cancelled.

Schools will provide masks to those students who need them (including on buses), such as students who forgot to bring their mask or whose families are unable to afford them

AK-TRAILS Statewide Homeschool office's (Thorne Bay, Naukati, Coffman Cove and Port Alexander) will follow all guidelines and mandates for the municipality the office is located. Furthermore, AK- TRAILS offices will institute the State of Alaska Phase 3 and 4 COVID-19 guidelines located at <https://covid19.alaska.gov/reopen/>, specifically guidelines for Attachment D "Public Facing Businesses" to include:

- Social distancing
- Hygiene best practices
- Staffing
- Cleaning and disinfecting

### 3. [Handwashing and respiratory etiquette](#)

To help prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus, SISD has the opportunity and responsibility to educate students, families, and staff on social etiquette, good health and hygiene habits, and disease prevention. SISD will provide regular hand-washing and respiratory hygiene/cough etiquette education for all K-12 students. Our basic educational message will be:

- Cover your cough
- Wash hands often
- Stay home if sick
- Wear appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

### 4. [Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation](#)

The safety of our students and staff are our primary priority. SISD schools will be completely cleaned and disinfected regularly, and we will continue to adhere to all necessary safety precautions. In addition to the regular deep cleaning all school facilities, the cleaning steps outlined below are to be taken to disinfect workplace surfaces, chairs, tables, etc., to protect students and employees and reduce the risk of spread of infection.

# American Rescue Plan Act Mitigation and Prevention Plan



## General Disinfection Measures

Area	Frequency
Classrooms and Offices	At the end of each day
Appliances	Daily
Electronic Equipment	At the end of each use
General used objects like light switches, handles, sinks, restrooms	At least 2 times a day
Buses	At the end of each use
Common Areas	At the end of each use and/or between groups

Deep cleaning is triggered when an active student or employee is identified as positive for COVID-19 based on testing. When a student or employee with a suspected infectious disease is identified and has left the building, their work area, along with any other known places they have been will be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected. The person cleaning and disinfecting will wear a mask and gloves and will discard them immediately afterwards. Hands will be washed and sanitized at the completion of the procedure. During times of a specifically known or suspected disease outbreak, SISD will consult public health officials to determine if there is a proper way to discard waste or if other PPE should be worn by staff.

Additionally, a bleach solution spray bottle and/or disinfecting wipes will be provided to all classrooms, offices, and work locations. SISD employees are required to regularly disinfect personal workstations each day, schedule regular times during the school day for students to disinfect their personal workstations and disinfect all appliances and electronic equipment after each use.

SISD will utilize portable HEPA filter air purifier systems in classrooms and office space to improve indoor air quality.

SISD has contractors coming in to address improvements in air quality and ventilation in district buildings. SISD contracted ATS to develop a condition survey on the Throne Bay School and to tune and survey both Coffman and Naukati School buildings specifically focused on each school's HVAC and controls. This will help drive our CIP (Capital Improvement Plan) School Mechanical Control Upgrades in Thorne Bay where we still operate on pneumatic controls.

SISD will be making some improvements in Kasaan to help create space for social distancing and provide updated surfaces that are easier to clean. This is a small three-room school with a detached library that was used by the community as well as the district prior to Covid. The building is being repaired and updated surfaces to better serve SISD's needs. Creating space to further isolate groups from each other and to reduce the risk of spread through updated cleaning surfaces.

# American Rescue Plan Act Mitigation and Prevention Plan



## 5. [Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine, in collaboration with the State, local, territorial, or Tribal health departments](#)

SISD will collaborate with state, tribal, and local health departments when investigating cases and exposures to SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19. SISD will coordinate with district counsel and the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) to ensure compliance with applicable laws related to privacy and the collection/sharing of this information as they undertake these activities.

SISD students, staff, and educators diagnosed with COVID-19 should isolate and stay away from the school premises until requirements for end of isolation are met. SISD will report COVID-19 cases to the health department, in accordance with applicable privacy and other laws as soon as they are informed. SISD will quickly prepare and provide information and records to aid in the identification of potential exposures and close contacts at district facilities and/or events. SISD will notify close contacts (and families of close contacts in the K-12 setting), in accordance with applicable privacy and other laws, of exposure as soon as possible after they are notified that someone in the K-12 school tested positive for or been diagnosed with COVID-19. Prompt and coordinated actions, including case investigation and contact tracing, in combination with isolation and quarantine, will inform decision-making about strengthening and focusing prevention strategies. Per the CDC guidance at the time of this plan's approval:

The quarantine options for unvaccinated contacts are:

- a. If you remain asymptomatic you may have a shortened quarantine starting on day #8 with negative testing done on days 5 through 7. Must wear a face covering and strict social distance in public settings through day #14.
- b. If you remain asymptomatic you may have a shortened 10-day quarantine without testing. May resume regular activities on day #11. Must wear a face covering and strict social distance in public setting through day #14.
- c. The **safest** option is to quarantine for a full 14 days which means you can resume regular activities on day #15.

Due to the delta variant, for fully vaccinated contacts:

- a. Quarantine not necessary. Continue to attend in-person school and participate in activities.
- b. Test 3-5 days after exposure (the testing timeframe is different for vaccinated individuals because studies have shown that if they contract COVID-19, their viral loads typically drop quickly)
- c. Wear a mask in public indoor settings for 14 days or until they receive a negative test result.

For individuals who have been diagnosed with COVID-19 in the previous 90 days, no quarantine and no testing is needed.

It is well documented that there was a relatively low rate of disease transmission between students in the classroom setting last year (good ventilation, good hand hygiene, students staying home when ill, masking, social distancing). DHSS' definition of a contact within school classrooms for students has

# American Rescue Plan Act Mitigation and Prevention Plan



changed. If students are spaced at least three feet apart and both the infected student and the exposed students were masked, the exposed students will not be considered contacts.

It is well documented that there was a relatively low rate of disease transmission between students in the classroom setting last year (good ventilation, good hand hygiene, students staying home when ill, masking, social distancing). DHSS' definition of a contact within school classrooms for students has changed. If students are spaced at least three feet apart and both the infected student and the exposed students were masked, the exposed students will not be considered contacts.

If universal masking is not in place, DHSS and SISD will continue to use the following guidelines for contact tracing

- a. Any person within 6 feet of the confirmed case during their infectious period for 15 minutes or more.
- b. Any person who was sneezed or coughed on by the confirmed case during their infectious period.
- c. Any household member of the confirmed case.

Contact tracing for extracurriculars will depend on the risk of the activity. We will be interested in indoor or outdoor settings, physical closeness, number of people, level of intensity, duration of time.

If a student or employee becomes ill at work and is exhibiting one or more of the COVID-19 symptoms above, they will be asked to leave and go home immediately. If a student or employee becomes ill at home and is exhibiting one or more of the COVID-19 symptoms, they will be asked to stay at home. The student or employee should be tested for COVID-19 and, if necessary, be evaluated by their health care provider. Due to the severe nature of a potential positive COVID-19 diagnosis, parents are asked to immediately pick their student up upon notification from the school that their child is exhibiting symptoms related to COVID-19. Any staff member exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms is asked to immediately notify their direct supervisor of their symptoms and leave school premises.

Employees returning to work from an approved medical leave may be asked to submit a health care provider's note before returning to work.

The student or staff member may not return to school until they have met one of the following criteria:

- If they test positive, they must stay home for 10 days since their first symptom or their positive test, whichever is earlier. Once it has been 10 days, they may return to school once they have not had a fever in 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medicine, as long as their other symptoms are improving.
- If they test negative, they may return to school when they have not had a fever in 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medicine and their other symptoms are improving.
- If they do not get a test, they must stay home for 10 days. They may return to school when it has been 10 days and they have not had a fever in 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medicine and their other symptoms are improving.
- If their health care provider determines there is an alternative diagnosis to COVID-19 causing their symptoms, they may be allowed back to school before 10 days and without a negative test as long as the following criteria are met:
  - Their symptoms have resolved, and they have not had a fever in 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medicine, and
  - They have a note from their health care provider saying it is safe for them to come back

# American Rescue Plan Act Mitigation and Prevention Plan



to school.

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For all out of state travel SISD staff and students shall follow all state travel orders, mandates, and health advisories and alerts.

- All staff and students older than 10 should be tested at the Ketchikan Airport upon return to Alaska or have a negative COVID test within 72 hours of departure into Alaska.
- Unvaccinated staff and students cannot return to school for five days after travel outside of Alaska that is longer than 72 hours and negative test results are received. They may return to school after the five days as long as they remain symptom free.
- It is recommended that staff and students receive a follow-up COVID test 5-14 days after arrival.
- Fully vaccinated staff and students can return to school immediately as long as they are symptom free.
- If unvaccinated staff or students do not get a test at the Ketchikan Airport or within 72 hours of departure into Alaska, they must stay home for 10 days. They may return to school when it has been 10 days and remain symptom free.

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# American Rescue Plan Act Mitigation and Prevention Plan



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# American Rescue Plan Act Mitigation and Prevention Plan



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# SISD Back to School COVID Mitigation Plan

## Feedback received from Stakeholders (students, parents, community members, and staff)

Since Masks seemed to be the biggest concern:

Pro Masks comments: in Blue

Against Masks comments: in Red

Unknown or Not addressing Masks or neutral/other: in black

**KEEP IN MIND: MANY OF THE STAFF LISTED BELOW  
ARE ALSO PARENTS THAT HAVE CHILDREN IN SCHOOL.**

### **Comments received via Email:**

Comments in this section are not word for word. Some words/statements that could potentially identify a specific individual may have been removed in order to maintain confidentiality; Any/all written feedback received will be shared privately with the School Board only - until the morning of the School Board meeting. Should the individuals that made statements below feel comfortable, they may identify themselves during the Public Comment session of the School Board meeting on 8/18 @ 5:30pm

- 1. ITINERANT STAFF:** Regarding 8/12 draft: I support and appreciate that both school personnel and students will maintain use of masks at all times when working closely within 6 feet or less. For the work I do, all my interaction with students is in close proximity. I personally want to insure a safe environment and had planned to request that all students I work with in person wear a mask while we are in a shared space. I plan to maintain use of a mask at all times indoors regardless of whether I am in direct contact with a student or not. The only time I may remove my mask briefly would be for eating or drinking and this would be in space where I am alone or further than 20 feet from others. The info above would also hold for any shared transportation (motor vehicle travel) to POW and on the island traveling between schools. It appears that you recently added the most recent CDC guidance on exposure and quarantine related to the delta variant and individuals who are vaccinated. This is good to see knowing how hard it is to keep up with the many changes over time. I assume you will continue to make adjustments if CDC guidelines become stricter or less restrictive over the school year. Follow up regarding 8/14 draft: I have already provided feedback to the first draft plan in a prior email, and those comments do not change. However, this new information in today's message, and the comments about parents not allowing their children to attend to school if masks are required concerns me as someone who will only be visiting the schools 3x this school year. I feel the need to maintain masks for my safety and that of the students as I will be traveling to POW and this has inherent risks. Will I be allowed to request that students I am working with wear a mask during our session unless we are able to move outdoors or maintain a distance greater than 6 feet indoors?

2. **STAFF:** Regarding 8/12 draft: Thanks for sharing this. I know we're going to get questions about wearing masks. According to this mitigation, it sounds like our small school would be required to wear masks all day since we're too small to keep staff and (at least 19 students) socially distanced. I know we have some families that won't send/enroll kids here if that is the case.
3. **STAFF:** Regarding 8/12 draft: I know of 2 parents that have stated that their child/ren will not wear a mask here in school. At least 2 of the students have asthma.
4. **PARENT:** Regarding 8/14 Draft: The main thing that stood out to me was the change in how contacts would be determined. Based off of spread last year doesn't make a lot of sense to me as we have different conditions this year: delta, which is more contagious and a significant case load on the island. I don't know what will count as mask wearing, as I see a lot of people wearing masks with their noses uncovered. I would want my daughter to be considered a contact in that situation, so that we can test and know if our infant is potentially at risk. As far as mask requirements go--I find blanket requirements fairest and most reassuring. In my view, measures that are shown to cut down on the chance the school has to quarantine or go into red status are desirable. Better to be taking measures to keep kids in the classroom as much as we can--for their benefit as much as working parents' benefit. More children are being admitted to hospitals for covid itself in this wave as opposed to being admitted for other things and testing positive, as was the case this last school year. Experts are still figuring out what this means as far as severity, but we do know kids are catching it more readily now. With schools starting up, we are seeing how that is playing out.
5. **STAFF:** Having just recovered from Covid, along with several other staff and students here in (city omitted), our input would be in regard to those who have natural immunity due to being infected. While I appreciate it being mentioned that someone within 90 days of infection would not need to test or quarantine after contact with an infected person, I would like to see that time period increased. Everything I have read has mentioned natural immunity lasting 6 months to a year, while the vaccinated are still catching and spreading the virus. Is the 90 day rule based on research or a state guideline? I would also like to see that rule, for those with natural immunity, applied to the return to school after out of state travel. The draft allows those who are vaccinated to return immediately after a negative test result, while the unvaccinated have to wait an extra 5 days. There was no provision for the unvaccinated who have natural immunity.
6. **STAFF:** I feel strongly that if a student or staff member has tested positive for Covid and recovered that they have proven to have developed natural immunity. They can't get it again from someone, and they aren't going to infect someone. So why require them to wear a mask? I completely support taking temps, regular handwashing, cleaning high use surfaces etc. . . In case you didn't see this article that I posted on FB the link is below regarding almost 600 healthcare workers in Spain. Naturally acquired immunity includes a whole suite of antibodies, not just the antibody associated with the spike protein.  
<https://www.republicworld.com/lifestyle/health/covid-19-sars-cov-2-antibodies-remain-stable-for-7-months-after-infection-says-study.html?fbclid=IwAR3Hh29m5weQwdM2Dd0SzuLVJXpXNYxE SYHLX7a05PedddQYJSuxCKPIkZk>
7. **PARENT:** I believe school should open like regular, this covid is the flu 99.8% survival rate for healthy, its the compromised and elderly at risk just like the flu. It is unhealthy to

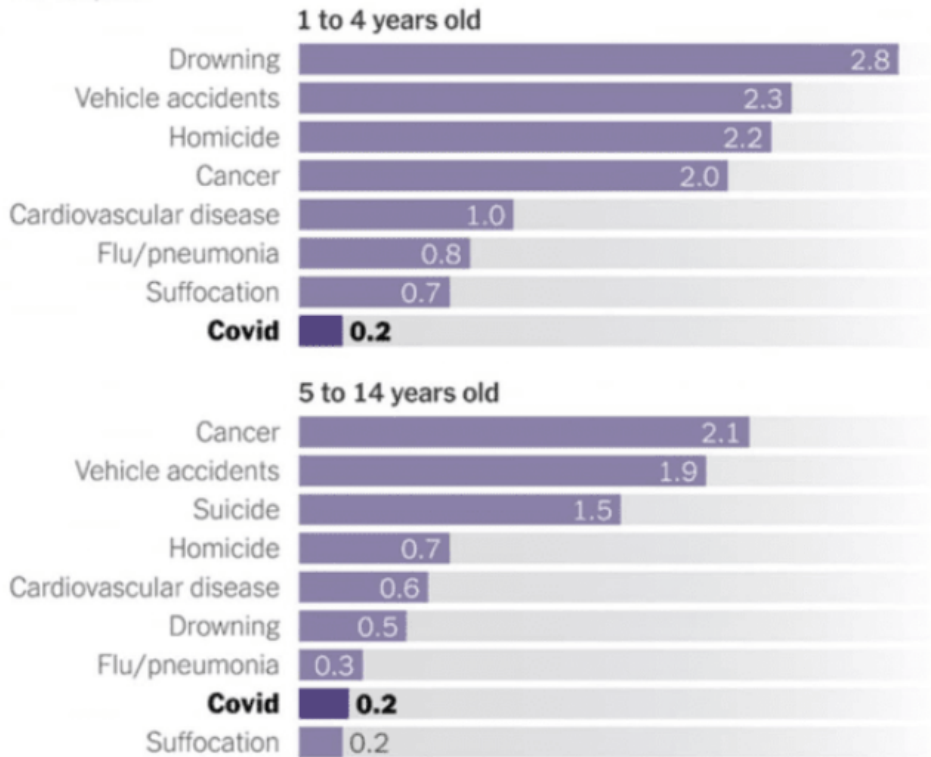
- wear masks and my child will not be attending if masks are required. Please Open. Remind kids to wash hands and Not touch their face. I firmly believe this is POLITICAL.
8. **PARENT:** I will go down the line, I am not going to be eloquent so please bear with me. Masks have been proven virtually useless. They may stop some spittle but barely slow an airborne virus. Not to mention that this is absolutely no worse for kids than the flu. Masks and social distancing for the kids must stop. Kids need the social interaction, not to be taught to fear a hand shake or opening your locker. There is nothing social about this, if our kids are required to wear masks they should all just stay home. Chalk this up as another missed year in school. NO FRIGGING MASKS, they are a joke. Keep kids in class not in the hallways. Even at #2, I don't care, again masks are all but useless, no social distancing. If my kids are required to wear masks then they will have the option to not go to school. Teachers can get the vaccine if they wish, I don't think it should be required of anyone. MY Body My Choice, isn't that what the pro killing babies at un-Planned Parenthood like to say. They at least finally have it right about something. IN person schooling no masks or social distancing required. Lunch and recess as normal. #3 handwashing, yeah that is effective for more than covid. Cover your cough, yep. PPE? Not if you mean masks.#4 I think the cleaning is getting a bit out of hand. Kids need a drinking fountain, at least the water bottle station. #5 People come and go to this island on a regular basis. No one stays quarantined when not sick, that is house arrest. If you get tested and are neg, back to work or school. I don't want my family in ANY contact tracing app. #6 If masks are required, there shouldn't be any sports. Then there will not be travel. No masks, business as usual. #7An email or something talking about the availability of vaccines is fine. But by no means does that mean shaming, forcing, coercing or teaching kids that unvaccinated people are a problem or wrong. That is a family choice. NOT YOUR MANDATE. #8 Accommodating special needs? I believe children should all be treated equally. Same praise, same punishment same lunch....you get the picture. In a nutshell, we need to be teaching our kids. School should go on. The CDC and the other idiots in the government have proven to be liars and intent upon destroying our country all in the name of Covid. Gunshot to the head, covid death, motorcycle crash, covid death. 99 years old and cancer, covid death. Its time we teach our children another important lesson, stand up for what is right. No Masks, no social distance, wash your hands, treat everyone with respect. School as normal, not the same crap as last year, my kids are all in Junior and High school at this point. They NEED to be IN school learning and laughing. NOT at home terrified of a sickness that is completely overblown.I know this is a bit rambling, wrote it while eating lunch.
9. **STAFF:** I spend some time reading and reviewing the mitigation plan and I thought it sounded good. I do like the part where masks are recommended as we have a few families that will not send their children if we require them to wear masks. But keeping our kids safe is a priority and you will always get parents that will side for being too safe or not safe enough.
10. **STAFF:** PA is so different then on island schools, so moving forward, I ask that we take that into consideration. Here is the feedback I've received thus far. 1. "No masks should be required, nor COVID tests in Sitka...." 2. We want to protect our community and students. (local lodge) has successfully had people out of state here every 5 days all

summer with the following plan: We ask they vaccinated if not then we have 1 negative before they travel then test at airport and wear a mask till that comes back negative. (this statement was agreed to by one other person. If community members are uncomfortable with the risk, they can choose to wear a mask or strictly not be around the students. I think once all the kids have successfully been here and tested negative we should not be expected to wear masks unless he/she wants to. 50% of [this school's] students are vaccinated.

11. **PARENT:** The Mitigation plan seems fair to me. As long as the mask are recommended and not required until the school reaches Red I will send my children to school.
12. **STAFF:** This is very disappointing, I will do whatever I need to do as far as being an employee goes at least till it conflicts with my religious beliefs. As a parent the idea that kids need masks is not science, edicts yes many conflicting from CDC. 99 + % recovery for 17 and under, the increase in suicide in that age group (during lockdowns) is more then the risk of death from Covid. The numbers I have seen from the few states releasing them are 80 to 85 median age of Covid deaths. Nothing about this adds value to my children's education. School is for education and Healthcare is between my family and my doctor. Covid is an airborne contaminant as stated on the CDC website. it is not a particle contamination although it can spread that way too. These mask would not protect you in any OSHA situation expect against particulate contamination, if we really are going to "protect" kids we should have fitted full face respirators with filtration systems rated for air borne contamination and full Tyvek suits with washdown areas and controlled entrance and exit points just to start. CDC pretending that a N95 mask is anything more than a placebo against airborne contaminants is the real health concern. Plus CDC recommends that N95 masks be reserved for medical staff not our kids. Kids can strap their underwear, "mask" is not defined by CDC edict, over their face and we pretend it will stop an airborne virus. This would not have been my opinion a year ago but as data has trickled out it is at odds with the religious fervor of those that are pushing this. I hope the school board will recommend we provide for all students a safe environment but leave their personal health decisions where they belong with the parents and their medical providers. If you have high risk people you care about and wish to take precautions we can and should accommodate at the same time if you do not / have immunity / have been immunized / personal factors including other health issues (assma), there is no need to mandate all be grouped together. We are teaching kids that totalitarian rule though medical edict is ok. Included is New York Times chart with CDC data:

## Annual Deaths Among Children in the United States

Per 100,000



Covid data is for the 52 weeks ending April 10, 2021. Other data is for 2018.

By The New York Times | Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

13. **PARENT:** Just some notes, you probably already have gotten these comments but since I am I think something like the masks will be recommended district wide with local options implemented after adoption by the ASC's. that gives schools like PA the option of saying we are all in the same 4 households and masks don't make sense but we want a travel out of town need negative test. or something like that.
14. **PARENT:** I do not feel that it is appropriate to have all SISD Schools as one cohort as we are all different, Howard Valentine School suffered much this past year and I do not believe that closing our school was the answer when there were no cases in Coffman Cove. Coffman Cove had not seen any cases until this July 2021 and if the school was open at that time I could see a reason for closure. I also do not believe in forcing people into wearing masks, I understand that the idea is to keep the virus from spreading, however for our school to be forced to follow rules set in place for what seems like much larger schools I strongly disagree. I understand that it takes time to do a different plan for each school individually, but that is what the ARPA money is for and it will cover the cost of someones time to do the work. Please keep in mind that most if not all of our kids play together on a daily basis, in the winter time there is approximately

100 people left, and at a minimum there are 4 families that have children in our school so lets not through everyone in the same pot.

15. **STAFF:** My concern would be requiring masks for pre school, as they are only 3 and 4 years old. It would turn into a management nightmare and picking them up off the floor and urging them to wear them rather than spending time teaching. And being 6 feet apart is an unrealistic expectation for that age group. Could they be their own cohort and have different regulations? Especially since they are only there for 2 hours.
16. **STAFF:** As a staff member of SISD, I have had no indication that masks work. Our students mix and mingle as soon as they are out of school doors. Any cohorting or masking the school enforces is automatically undone by their hours of play time together outside school. As a staff member, I had very limited contact with the students at the start of the year. I waited for them at the entrance, masked and gloved, where I took their temperature while asking them the screening questions after they were masked. There were a few students who came to school already sick with the summer cold. We followed protocol to the book and sent them straight home to recover and be Covid tested, not able to return to school until they were symptom free. Any interaction I had with them was seconds in length, from a safe distance, and wearing proper PPE. Regardless, I became very sick with the cold and missed school for a considerable length of time before I could return to work with a negative Covid test and symptom free. I realize that this is what is called "anecdotal evidence" by the science community. But I would also like to respectfully remind the School Board that even the medical community cannot agree that masks are helpful. If even those with degrees in medicine cannot unilaterally declare that masks are the be all end all, then it seems we have no right to enforce a mask mandate that is clearly against many parents wishes. If we allow parents choice over other medical procedures in our schools, such as fluoride treatments, then we should allow them choice over this as well. It sends the message to our parents that we don't trust them with their children's health and don't believe their decision making skills are as competent as ours. This seems very high handed. As a staff member, I loathe interacting with the community and students in enforcing mask mandates. As a professional, I will continue to uphold the district decision, but please put yourselves in the shoes of those of us who totally disagree with this idea but have to enforce it, regardless of student pleas and contrary to common sense. There are community members who have stated they will not enroll their students in school if they have to be masked. I am one of these. I believe children have the right to be educated in an environment free of mental and emotional fatigue and fear, both of which masks perpetuate.
17. **Staff:** As a staff member of the SISD school district, I am in favor of requiring masks only when it is a choice of closing the doors to in-person instruction due to the high rate of community transition in that specific community or having our students receive their education in the school in person. Our children be in school learning from teachers. I believe the Board can come to a compromise and decide that IF there are a number of positive cases in the specific community that are determined to have a direct impact on the school, the district working with the Medical Advisory Committee, will make a decision as to whether or not the school will close or switch to requiring masks. If there is

a positive case in a specific school (a student/staff member), I believe that the students in that class and anyone that the student/staff member has been in close contact with will be required to quarantine as per CDC guidelines. If that staff member or student has proof of full vaccination, I believe masks would be recommended for that student/staff member. Our students and our teachers need to be in school in-person as much as absolutely possible but we as a school district are also responsible for the safety of our students and staff. I believe that any student/staff member that is sick and has any symptoms of COVID, should either isolate for the DHSS recommended number of days or show documentation of a negative COVID test. The district should make the decision of closing doors to the school and/or requiring masks in order to keep kids in school with the district Medical Advisory Committee. Each case and each school should be considered individually and not held to a blanket policy as there are many variables involved in these decisions - student and staff safety being the number one priority. A school district should NOT make a decision like this based on our values or beliefs. Our school district is state and federally funded and therefore should adhere to state and federal guidelines as closely as possible - not personal values/beliefs. Of course, these should be taken into consideration and in the end, it is a parent's choice to follow district requirements or pull their child out of school if masks, at any time, become a requirement. This really is no different than school districts being required to obtain proof of other vaccinations upon a student's enrollment in the school if the parent has a medical, religious or immunity exemption for this requirement, the student is allowed to enroll in school. However, if there is an outbreak of something in the school that would affect the child that has not received that vaccination. The current vaccinations required by the State of Alaska for school enrollment of children in preschool are: Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis, Polio, Measles, Mumps, Rubella, Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B, and Varicella (chicken pox). The current vaccinations required by the state of Alaska for enrollment of children in grades are the same as above with the exception of varicella only being required for grades K-6. Per Alaska requirements: "**Vaccine-preventable disease outbreak information:** Public health staff will provide guidance to facility staff in the event of a vaccine-preventable disease outbreak in a school or child care setting. School/child care staff will need to review all children's immunization records to identify those who have not received specific vaccines or who do not have valid documentation of immunity. A susceptible child may need to be excluded from his/her routine school/child care environment until (1) the child is vaccinated, (2) the child becomes ill with the disease and completely recovers, or (3) the danger of the outbreak has passed as determined by public health officials. For example, during measles outbreaks, susceptible children may be excluded for 18 days after the onset of symptoms of the last case in the community, which may result in school/child care exclusion for several months."

18. Unknown: Thank you for your time and work putting together the Covid Mitigation plan. Regarding the masking section, I think it would be better to go with CDC guidance and require the medical advisory committee to strictly follow this guidance. Similarly, I think CDC guidance should be adhered to regarding quarantining, ventilation, and universal mask wearing on school transportation vehicles. If not, it would be better if the Medical

Advisory Committee will publish the criteria they will use for masking, quarantining, etc. The CDC defines the various risk levels. Will the school district be using these definitions? Also, at the bottom of page 5 is a sentence that indicates that the authors do not believe that Covid transmission is likely among children based on data from the 2020-2021 school year. I think a sentence should be added indicating that recent data indicates that because of the Delta variant, Covid can rapidly spread among children. Pinellas County in Florida is just one example of an area currently having lots of spread among school children. Also, I think Covid vaccination should absolutely be required for all eligible students and staff. Anyone who refuses should be relegated to distance learning if a student and if staff, either fired or if their job allows working from home, required to work from home or be tested at employee's expense at least weekly. Required vaccination is obviously the safest for all and offers the best protection for those ineligible for the vaccine. If the safety of the people at the schools is actually the first priority, I do not understand why it is not already required. Unfortunately, the fact that it isn't really shows that the safety and health of the students and staff is at a lower priority than something else. That said thank for the work you are doing to keep people safe. I just would like to see more since it is feasible. Please consider the CDC guidance as absolute minimum protection and do better. I emailed a comment last night regarding the plan. I wanted to add the following: Please realize that every commenter to this plan, all the authors of the plan, and the entire school board have significantly less knowledge of covid than the great majority of scientists and doctors who have been studying this virus full time for over a year. This includes the CDC. Obviously there is way more unknown about the virus than known. Please do not presume or advise the board to know more than the epidemiologists who have devoted their lives to combatting disease. Please do not assume that the CDC has an ulterior motive other than public health. Please do not assume that SISD should do less than follow the CDC recommendations and assure us that SISD will at minimum comply with CDC public health recommendations as based on daily situation on the island. If you choose to not comply with CDC, please explain why and why the CDC recommendations are not useful. And please explain what you will tell the 20% of children who contract Covid and have long term effects. (This 20% was reported by USA Today and quoted in today's Washington Post. Also reported was that over 200,000 children tested positive for Covid in US last week.) Also, one has to wonder what the district's legal liability will be to any child who contracts Covid at school and suffers long term diminished quality of life effects. Again, thank you for your work on this and please do the right thing. This should not be a vote based on who speaks the most or loudest. My third and probably last comment is that the very first sentence of the plan should be strictly adhered to as a minimum mitigation measure. Thank you again for the time and effort to insure that this is accomplished and this sentence remains as written in the adopted plan.

19. Questions on Survey sent out by one school:

- **Relationship to the school: Parent/guardian**
- What do you like about the plan?
  - Required masking
- What might you want to see changed?

- Any time masking is not required
- What specific concerns do you have?
  - The spread of Delta variant and the health of our largely unvaccinated population.
- What suggestions do you have to address your stated concerns?
  - Mandatory universal masking.
- Please share research links or sources that you believe are important for the Southeast Island School District to consider as they prepare for the 2021-2022 School Year.
- Optional - Please share your name and best contact information (phone or email). This will help if there are any follow-up questions.

20. Questions on Survey sent out by one school:

- **Relationship to the school: Staff**
- What do you like about the plan?
  - Following CDC protocols! (:
- What might you want to see changed?
  - Masks required is awesome - nothing needs to be changed(:
- What specific concerns do you have?
  - Nothing!

21. Questions on Survey sent out by one school:

- **Relationship to the school: Parent/guardian**
- What do you like about the plan?
  - School choice and District support
- What might you want to see changed?
  - Any time masking is not required
- What specific concerns do you have?
  - We will lose students if masks required, we will lose students if masks not required. People will get sick if masks not required.
- What suggestions do you have to address your stated concerns?
  - I want to try the "Humanity Shield" - are Covid \$'s available? or maybe Grant dollars from Amy? They look goofy and they are expensive but I think they will be worth it as they will no doubt help with connection, communication, and reduce the tension about masks. I know we will have more families in attendance both because of the universal masking and on the other point of view - that it is not a mask against their face.  
<https://rapidresponseppe.com/>
- Please share research links or sources that you believe are important for the Southeast Island School District to consider as they prepare for the 2021-2022 School Year.
  - Humanity Shield - <https://rapidresponseppe.com/>

- Optional - Please share your name and best contact information (phone or email). This will help if there are any follow-up questions.

**Public Comments on Facebook regarding this mitigation plan** (direct quotes as posted on a public forum): Regarding 8/12 draft:

1. **Sam Sawyer: "This mask crap Has got to end"**
  - a. **Bardic Strength: "sam Sawyer, agreed...the cdd has lied time and time again concerning this COVID stuff...it's foolish to set policy around a crooked organization like that"**
2. **Video link shared by Jay Kohn:**  
<https://www.facebook.com/bennyjohnson/videos/26698188826522>
3. **Garden Sage:** "There are always options for those who don't care to comply. I hope that the district decides to ere on the side of public health, and the health and safety of their employees and the children."
  - a. **Bardic Strength to Garden Sage** "how bout not suggesting child abuse? Having a kid wear a mask all day destroys their immune system and the psychological damage is unimaginable...sad that so many people just listen to whatever the boob tube tells em"
4. **Garden Sage to Bardic Strength: Garden Sage:** "Not"
  - a. **Sam Sawyer:** I respectfully disagree... Masks are a small inconvenience. Doesn't mean I love the CDC, or enjoy wearing a mask - it just makes sense to me, to mask up. (My family was nearly eradicated in 1918. I wonder sometimes what they would think of people resisting the wearing of masks and getting vaccinated.) Interesting times... Take care.
5. **Garden Sage** I disagree how they're a small inconvenience. I don't want my kid breathing air from a mask all day long. I wear one of these stupid things for 15 minutes and get a runny nose. It's not healthy and not right to put a kid through this kind of abuse. Anyone want to talk about the suicide rate in kids skyrocketing the past year? The affect this crap has on them is more than people realize I think. My kid won't be going to tnb school if this is how they're gonna be. Following the cdc guidelines is ridiculous . They flip flop all over the place and Have no credibility anymore
- 6.

**End of Year Survey Results:** (these are not responses to the COVID Mitigation plan drafts. These are questions and comments from the End of the Year Survey that was available to all SISD stakeholders. Only COVID related questions/comments are included)

1. What did SISD do during this pandemic year that worked well and/or that you would like to see continue?
  - Decisions to close and re-open were made responsibly and quickly and clearly communicated.
  - None. No masks and let the public come back to the school. We miss having open gym
  - Allowed students to use WiFi and work off of thumb drives since not everyone has WiFi at home. Flexibility and understanding were the biggest things that made it easy to get through the pandemic.

- Allowing Thorne Bay to be one cohort was a great decision. Having the meals and classwork when red was a huge success this year. I do appreciate how diligent everyone has been with the temp checks.
- Nothing in regards to Covid, just a bunch of sheeple. Teach kids, this so called pandemic is ruining our country, and it's so much junk science and misleading numbers.
- From red, to one day of yellow. Then back to green
- Staff meeting students in the community or at the school to provide school work and food.
- They did everything right
- Good parent communication
- The SISD didn't do anything well this year
- It was good the district was flexible. We like that the teachers could go to homes and send so many different things for our children to do.
- School lunches. Hiring a preschool teacher was very beneficial.
- In-person school
- Let us have in-person lessons all year
- Staying in-person without a mask
- Stay in-person without having to wear masks
- Allowed our school to stay in-person without having to wear mask
- Adhering to recommendations (masking, distancing, etc.)
- Allowed for individual sites to determine needs.
- The internet access for two students at a time worked well when needed
- The teachers, other staff, and students all followed protocols in sanitation. Temperatures were checked every day. Minimal visitors were allowed in the school. Minimal time with masks on.
- COVID is over and should not do it any more. % of deaths were inflated.
- Nothing. Normal school is better than both distance learning and masks. It's not even a pandemic anymore...
- Zoom
- The code like code green yellow and red
- Staff and students adapted quickly and well as circumstances warranted.
- The only thing i can think of is more online classes.
- We had school as much as possible. Very few red days.
- In person classes
- Have school most of the year
- Wearing masks when it is code yellow
- Code red, yellow, green
- Going to places
- Rewriting the protocol plan for Covid made it easier to be in school instead of distance learning.
- Kept the normal 4 day week schedule
- Supportive

- Electives
  - I dont want to see it continue but we went in cohorts
  - Online classes
  - Mask
  - School Cohort and consistency.
  - Quit believing in the fake news and understand it's a flu, don't encourage vaccines
  - I think we, as teachers, became better at adapting to circumstances and helping our students to learn, despite the many obstacles that we have encountered. I feel like I have grown from this experience. Not only that, but if there was a chance for anything extra-curricular or a day that we could be outside learning in nature, we took advantage of it--even if meant being a little bit more spontaneous than usual.
  - TUTORING!
  - The whole school as one cohort
  - Teachers went out of their way to make sure that students had what they needed. Being able to set up extra zoom sessions was also helpful. Naukati also did tutoring, and I think that really helped.
  - I was very happy to be invited to participate in the smartstart planning and editing process. I think we should continue including many stakeholders and adapt as the world changes.
  - I would rather see the kids be able to do everything that they did before COVID.
  - If the school did NOT make masks mandatory in the red zone, that would have been very...very...very nice. Other than that, it was pretty good.
  - Checking in with parents with changes and updates.
  - Checking temps is safe & not time consuming.
  - We were happy that they allowed the children to attend school in person without masks. (unless in a high risk time)
2. Going into the 2021-2022 school year, what are your 3 biggest concerns? What suggestions do you have about how SISD can address those concerns?
- Having to wear a mask or not going to school in person because of the hypochondriacs making these Decisions. 99% survival rate and you've done more damage to all these kids mental Health than this stupid virus.
    - Stop believing all the hype about covid. As we stand, EVERY SINGLE PERSON who has been infected on POW with covid has recovered just fine. Stop abusing the kids because you are scared.
  - Being in red--having more outdoor nature assignments for elementary.
    - Surveys like these are great. I feel like I can give feedback, express myself, without causing a stink in admin.
  - COVID-19, Loss of education opportunities this year, ?
  - Not having in-person school, wearing a mask, not having sports
    - Working with Health officials and staff

- Having to wear masks to school, having to do Distance Education, not getting to do sports
    - Work with health department and staff to keep our schools open
  - Mental health of our students secondary to pandemic, lack of staffing retention, poor community support of school/staff
    - Town Hall type meeting to invite stakeholders to discuss concerns/complaints/positives, increase availability of school counselor
  - Attending school as normal with no masks.
  - District still stuck in the COVID and critical race theory trying to be thought. I'm Against
  - Covid , if the school is still on, and money for the school
  - Us getting covid and getting a mean teacher
    - Us doing better to protect others and ourselves
  - Having to wear a mask
    - To not allow masks
  - Having to were a mask
    - No more masks
  - Shut down in-school time, masks, cancelled activities.
  - The kids will still be very far behind, they will stop having the kids come to school every time someone in our community gets a cough and that we are dumbing down our kids. Teach them to read, write, mathematics, common sense stuff, quality arts and crafts, music, painting, choir, and how to WORK!
  - Not enough students and parents getting vaccinated . Better education by having 5 days of school a week rather than just 4.
    - Have the School district disseminate information that Covid immunizations are not
    - Get the concerns about children and COVID behind us and get education back on track.
  - That the school will cancel PE, that the school will cancel electives.
    - Not canceling anything,
3. In what other areas can SISD do better or help meet the needs of your student(s)?
    - In-person teaching all year, allowing us to do sports
    - Keep us doing in-person school
  4. What has been the largest challenge with Distance Education?
    - Switching back and forth and in and out of distance education was the hardest part.
  5. How are your students doing? Are there other ways we can meet their needs?
    - Keeping us in school with our teachers as much as possible
  6. What thoughts do you have about the next school year?
    - 0 distance learning, keep them I'm school and teach the basics. Keep your agenda at home.
    - Hoping to keep in-person learning all year.
    - Stay in-person

- Praying the school is open for all the students. Good for the school, good for the community
- 

Email from Sharon Hillis

August 30, 2021

To the members of the SISD School Board:

I would like to voice my opinion on the wearing of masks in schools. I am STRONGLY in favor of Option B Mask Choice.

As you may know finding information on the Internet is very difficult because of the censorship. A lot of data has been collected as a result of the events of the last year. Data is still being compiled. However, a few studies have been published.

There is a study that has been done in Germany that mentions detrimental health effects for children who wear masks several hours a day.

Below my comments is an article based on a report in the American Medical Association Journal of Medicine. I have provided the link if you want to read the original study in JAMA. The second article explains the cause of “Mask Mouth.”

An Israeli study (August 2021) comparing natural immunity from having the disease versus the shots ( <https://www.medrxiv.org/content/10.1101/2021.08.24.21262415v1.full.pdf> ) concludes natural immunity is more effective than the shots. Schools should be evaluated on an individual basis. Most of the Whale Pass school students and staff have natural immunity from the covid 19 variant.

I have not been able to find any official studies regarding the social and behavioral development of school age children, however, some teachers and counselors are speaking out about their experiences. One such person, Megan Currier, a teacher at Carbondale Middle School [Colorado] and mom of two, said that she

hopes masks can soon be removed in her classroom because they make it difficult for young students to develop relationships and social skills.

“Masks have a toll or a price in the classroom,” she said. “This is a really important time — K-12 — where they’re learning social-emotional skills, they’re learning to read how other people are doing, and I think masks really hinder that. If that’s what we need to do now, that’s what we need to do, but I really hope everybody is pushing hard to get them off as quickly as possible.”

I do hope you will take the time to read the following reports and seriously consider the consequences we may see in our children years from now if they are forced to wear masks on a continuous basis while they are in school. I personally do not want to wait 10 years to find out that a decision you make today will have life-changing effects on our children. Children usually have a very robust immune system and do not normally have major problems if they catch SARS-CoV-2 . They have a 99.999..... percent recovery rate. ( <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/planning-scenarios.html> ) Scroll down to Box 1, table 1, scenario 5. You will have to do your own math. Of 1,000,000 (1 million) cases approximately 2.5 children under age 17 died. I am NOT taking these deaths lightly. I am only trying to emphasize the low risk to children according to the CDC web site.

Thank you,

Sharon Hillis

Whale Pass

[Additional information submitted to the School Board by Sharon Hillis:](#)

<https://thefederalist.com/2021/07/01/ama-journal-masks-are-bad-for-your-kids-quit-forcing-them-to-wear-them/>

AMA Journal: Masks Are Bad For Your Kids. Quit Forcing Them To Wear Them

JULY 1, 2021 By Maggie Hroncich

A new report published by an American Medical Association journal revealed forcing children to wear face masks leads to adverse health effects. JAMA Pediatrics, a top-rated monthly journal published by the AMA, found wearing face masks increases the amount of carbon dioxide in inhaled air to unhealthy levels.

The study (<https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamapediatrics/fullarticle/2781743>) measured carbon dioxide levels in 45 children ages 6-17 while wearing masks. The normal content of carbon dioxide in the air is 400 parts per million (ppm), with anything above 2000 ppm considered unacceptable by the German Federal Environmental Office.

The JAMA report measured averages of 13,120 to 13,910 ppm of carbon dioxide in the inhaled air of children wearing masks, which is over six times higher than the unsafe threshold. The study further pointed out this measurement was after only three minutes of wearing a mask. Children forced to wear masks at school find themselves wearing masks for hours, five days a week.

The JAMA report follows a larger German survey of over 25,000 children, which found 68 percent of them reportedly had problems while wearing facial coverings.

“Most of the complaints reported by children can be understood as consequences of elevated carbon dioxide levels in inhaled air,” the JAMA study concluded. “This is because of the dead-space volume of the masks, which collects exhaled carbon dioxide quickly after a short time.”

“This carbon dioxide mixes with fresh air and elevates the carbon dioxide content of inhaled air under the mask, and this was more pronounced in this study for younger children.” The authors of the study urged those who are forcing children to wear masks to consider the scientific evidence when making that decision.

“Many governments have made nose and mouth covering or face masks compulsory for schoolchildren. The evidence base for this is weak,” the study found. “We suggest that

decision-makers weigh the hard evidence produced by these experimental measurements accordingly, which suggest that children should not be forced to wear face masks.”

*Maggie Hroncich is an intern at The Federalist and a student at Hillsdale College.*

<https://phillipschneider.com/mask-mouth-dentists-warn-gum-disease-and-tooth-decay-have-increased-50-since-mask-mandates-began/>

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Mask Mouth” – Dentists Warn Gum Disease and Tooth Decay Have Increased 50% Since  
Mask Mandates Began

BY PHILLIP SCHNEIDER ON SEPTEMBER 2, 2020

In light of national and global mandates to wear masks indoors, dentists have discovered that patients returning for check-ups are experiencing a 50% increase in both gum disease and tooth decay.

Dentists have termed the condition “mask mouth” after the notorious “meth mouth” that tends to plague methamphetamine users. It is even affecting those who have never had issues before and is believed to be caused by a buildup of bacteria in a dry environment rich in Co2 and low in oxygen.

“We’re seeing inflammation in people’s gums that have been healthy forever, and cavities in people who have never had them before,” says Dr. Rob Raimondi, co-owner of One Manhattan Dental in New York City.

Raimondi’s dental partner Dr. Marc Scalfani warns that increased mask wearing is not only causing deterioration of the gums and teeth, but that it “will eventually lead to strokes and an increased risk of heart attacks” down the line.

*“The mouth breathing is causing the dry mouth, which leads to a decrease in saliva — and saliva is what fights the bacteria and cleanses your teeth. Saliva is also what neutralizes acid in the mouth and helps prevent tooth decay and gum disease.” – Dr. Marc Sclafani*

Doctors have been warning for months that wearing a mask and exacerbate existing respiratory conditions like asthma, but now it appears that the damage extends not only to the lungs, but the mouth as well.

*“Patients are coming into us like, ‘Wow, my breath smells, I need a cleaning,’” says Dr. Sclafani. “When you smell the bad breath, you either already have periodontal disease or you have a lot of bacteria that’s sitting on your tongue because of dry mouth”*

For this reason, Sclafani recommends that those who must wear masks drink a lot of water, brush their teeth regularly, and avoid breathing through the mouth while wearing one, at the very least, to avoid further complications.

As hundreds of doctors have gone on the record denouncing the draconian measures being taken by governments around the world to curb coronavirus infections as ‘disproportionate’ to the problem, it is becoming clear that forcing individuals to close down their businesses, isolate themselves, and wear masks wherever they go causes damage as well, and is in fact costing lives.

Lockdowns and mask mandates have not only caused a spike in suicide rates and drug abuse, but an increase in gum disease means an inevitable increase of strokes and heart attacks, causing fatalities which never would have occurred if not for mandated mask-wearing.

Recent data from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) show that only 6% of coronavirus deaths are attributed to Covid-19 alone, while the other 94% have been associated with an average of 2.6 comorbidities, adding to the idea that isolating healthy people instead of the sick and vulnerable may only be adding to the problem.

After conducting a review on the effectiveness of surgical masks, the Canadian Agency for Drugs and Technologies in Health (CADTH) concluded that “no evidence was found to support the use of surgical face masks to reduce the frequency of surgical site infections” and “no evidence was found on the effectiveness of wearing surgical face masks to protect staff from infectious material in the operating room.”

Meanwhile, the World Health Organization (WHO) recommends that we actually forego dental work until we understand more about the virus or until more equipment is available to protect health care workers from aerosols.

*The likelihood of COVID-19 being transmitted through aerosol, micro-particles or airborne particles ... today I think is unknown, it's open to question at least. This means that more research is needed.” – Benoit Varenne, WHO dental officer*

Even the World Health Organization admits in a report from June 5th that science regarding the current large-scale use of masks is lacking.

*“At the present time, the widespread use of masks by healthy people in the community setting is not yet supported by high quality or direct scientific evidence and there are potential benefits and harms to consider.” – WHO, Interim Guidance, p.6*

Perhaps it is time we have a conversation about the effectiveness of individuals to make their own decisions to fight the pandemic, rather than blanket mandates from governors and bureaucrats which appear to be causing us harm.

This article (“Mask Mouth” – Dentists Warn Gum Disease and Tooth Decay Have Increased 50% Since Mask Mandates Began) originally appeared at PhillipSchneider.com and may be re-posted freely with proper attribution, author credit, and this copyright statement.