

# **Special Education Learning Hubs**

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# Organization of the Presentation

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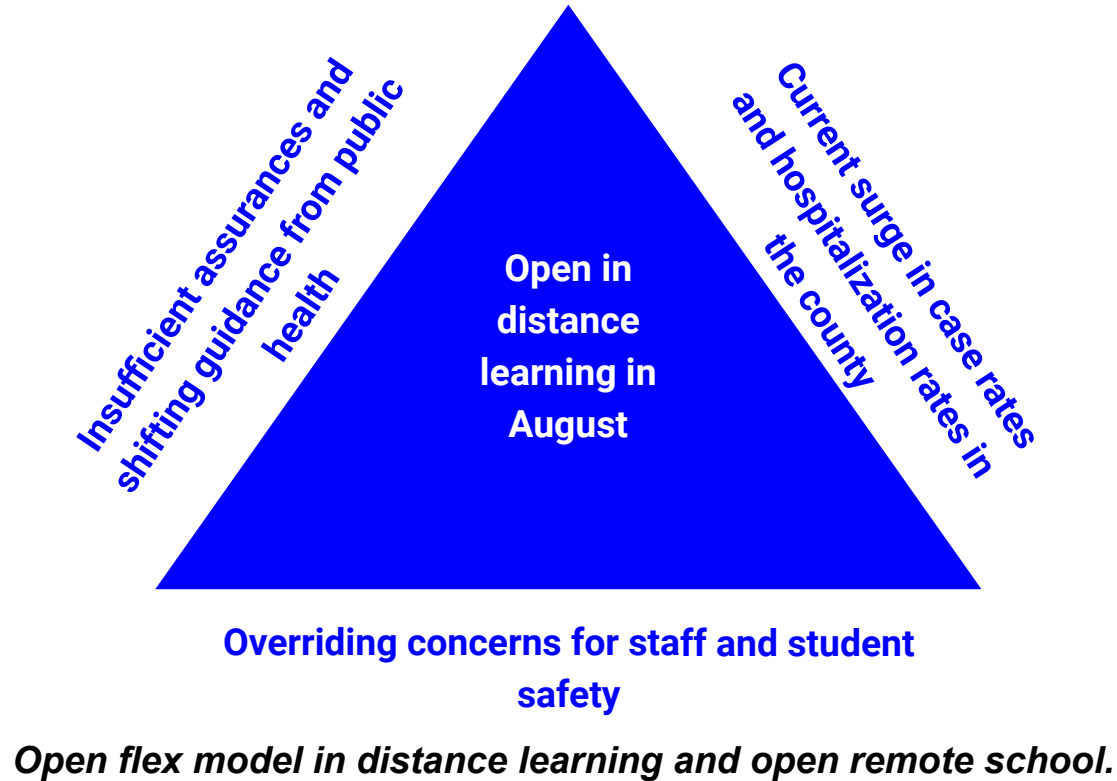
- Section 1: Background Information
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# **Section 1:**

# **Background Information**

# Decision Made by the Board

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# Governor and State Public Health Announcements on Friday, 7/17/20

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Schools located in counties that are on the Monitoring List must not physically open for in-person instruction until their county has come off the Monitoring List for 14 consecutive days.

*\*California Department of Public Health 7/20/20*

# California Department of Public Health

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## Guidance Related to Cohorts - UPDATED September 4, 2020

This guidance applies to groups of children and youth in controlled, supervised, and indoor environments operated by local educational agencies, non profits, or other authorized providers, including, but not limited to, public and private schools; licensed and license-exempt child care settings; organized and supervised care environments, i.e., **"distance learning hubs"**; recreation programs; before and after school programs; youth groups; and day camps. **Guidance and directives related to schools, child care, day camps, youth sports, and institutions of higher education are not superseded by this document and still apply to those specified settings.**

# Definitions and Guidance

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Cohort: A cohort is a stable group of no more than 14 children or youth and no more than two supervising adults (or a configuration of no more than 16 individuals total in the cohort).

Supervised care environment: An environment where multiple children or youth, from multiple families or households, are being supervised simultaneously by an adult. Where some educational services are being offered to a subgroup of students as identified by a local educational agency on a school campus.

## *Cohort Size*

- Cohorts must be limited to no more than 14 children and youth and no more than two supervising adults, **or a configuration of no more than 16 individuals total (children and youth or adults) in the cohort.**

# Definitions and Guidance - Cohort Mixing

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- Prevent interactions between cohorts, including interactions between staff assigned to different cohorts.
  - Assign children and youth who live together or carpool together to the same cohort, if possible.
  - Avoid moving children and youth from one cohort to another, unless needed for a child's overall safety and wellness.
  - Cohorts must be kept separate from one another for special activities such as art, music, and exercise. Stagger playground time and other activities so that no two cohorts are in the same place at the same time.
- The requirement to prevent interaction between cohorts can be met either by having each cohort in a separate room or space created by partitions.
- Supervising adults should be assigned to one cohort and must work solely with that cohort, unless serving children five years of age and younger in which case an adult may be assigned to no more than 2 cohorts.
- One-to-one specialized services can be provided to a child or youth by a support service provider that is not part of the child or youth's cohort.
- Specialized service includes but not limited to occupational therapy services, speech and language services, and other medical, behavioral services, or educational support services as part of a targeted intervention strategy.
- Services must be provided consistent with the industry guidance for Limited Services.



# **Section 2:**

# **Purpose of Learning Hubs**

# Starting Current Flex Model in Distance Only

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- ACH orders dictated that we must deliver instruction in distance only
- Classroom observations, staff sharing and parent sharing show that distance and remote education for moderate to severe students is very challenging
- The special education team has continued to do their best by adapting schedules to be shorter bursts of online activity followed by project-based activities
- The team recognizes that distance learning continues to be challenging for families and students with moderate to severe disabilities and wants to offer additional support to help students in build their skills for success in distance learning

# Learning Hubs

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Learning Hubs are designed to be a support to students and families. The goal of the Learning Hub is to assist students in:

- Developing student independence skills so they are more able to access their learning in the virtual space.
- Increasing student engagement through positive behavioral supports and positive reinforcement.
- Providing students with greater needs time to learn precautions if and when we return to in-person classes.
- Raising student awareness of safety precautions through staff guidance and reinforcement.
- Increasing overall well-being of the student which is fostered through seeing friends and staff in locations where precautions are applied and movement opportunities are provided.
- Practicing social skills through interactions with peers.

# **Section 3:**

## **Learning Hub Description**

# Staffing and Location

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- Two classes at Ruby Bridges for elementary
- Two classes at WMS for secondary
- Each class would run a cohort of students and staff on Monday and Tuesday and another cohort of students and staff on Thursday and Friday
- Each cohort would have access to support from 8:20 - 11:20 am
- Each cohort would have no more than 10 students and 6 staff
- There would be 2 Non Public Agency (NPA) teachers hired that would float between classes to supervise and assist paraprofessionals. These teachers would not be part of the cohort.
- Additional support staff will include Behaviorists, a Physical Therapist and an Administrator.

# Staffing

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## Why two NPA teachers?

Due to the county order the school district can only offer instruction through distance learning and are not allowed to offer instruction on campus or in person. Teachers will still be instructing their classes through distance learning and cannot both instruct in distance and provide in person on campus support. Two NPA teachers would be needed in addition to our current staffing to provide support to the students and paraprofessional in the learning hubs.

# Learning Hub Schedule and Staff

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**Staff:**  
2 classes of cohort 1 at RB and at WMS for a total of 40 students and up to 24 staff  
2 classes of cohort 2 at RB and at WMS for a total of 40 students and up to 24 staff  
Total students served 80, total paraprofessionals needed up to 48  
Additional staff - 2 Non Public Agency teachers, 2 Behaviorists, 1 Physical Therapist,  
and 1 Administrator per day

| Start/Time    | Monday  | Tuesday | Thursday  | Friday |
|---------------|---|---------|---|--------|
| 8:20 - 8:30   | Cohort 1 check in   |         | Cohort 2 check in   |        |
| 8:30 - 11:10  | Cohort 1 1-10 students (3 - 6 paraprofessional staff depending on student need) |         | Cohort 2 1-10 students (3 - 6 paraprofessional staff depending on student need) |        |
| 11:10 - 11:20 | Student dismissal   |         | Student dismissal   |        |

# What Will Drop Off Look Like?

- Parent transport to learning hub
- Curbside drop off / Health Screening
- Temperature Checks (for now),
- Two drop off areas for different classrooms
- Face coverings for all adults and students
- No visitors or parent volunteers inside the classroom



## **Families/guardians and staff report on 4 questions daily before entering the classroom:**

1. Does your child live with anyone or have you or anyone in your immediate household had close contact with anyone with a prolonged cough, fever, flu like symptoms or been diagnosed with COVID-19 in the past 14 days?
2. Does your child or anyone else in your immediate household have a fever, cough and or shortness of breath? For children and adults fever is 100.4 or above using a forehead thermometer.
3. Do you or your child have any other signs or communicable illness such as cold, flu, rash or inflammation?
4. Has your child or anyone else in your household experienced diarrhea or vomiting (within the last 24 hours)?



# What Will the Classroom Look Like?

- Space seating and desks at least 6 feet apart where feasible;
- Use partitions between desks or learning spaces if needed;
- Mark classroom floors to promote distancing;
- Arrange desks in a way that minimizes face-to-face contact with other students;
- Decluttering of room; and
- Individual materials for student use.



# What Will Students Do in the Learning Hubs?

## Activities that promote “learning to learn” skills

- Distanced circle time with virtual teacher to work on engagement & participation while supported by paraprofessionals
- Project-based activities that promote following directions while having fun (e.g. arts and crafts)
- Individualized practice on targeted behaviors through BCBA consult, shaped through reinforcement (e.g. wearing a mask, staying calm, following directions)
- Virtual individual sessions w/ related service providers (e.g. SLP, OT) and para support
- Individual and small group learning activities/games with virtual teacher while participation is reinforced
- Physical therapy to stretch or enter stander w/ in-person PT w/ precautions
- Earned tokens traded in for favorite reinforcers

## Activities that promote social skills and well-being

- Development of social skills supported by para and guided by teachers through reinforcers, modeling, and role play practice
- Social awareness and interaction practice through para supported conversations, greetings, and eye contact w/ peers
- Social awareness games about what is “cool” (i.e. appropriate)
- Increase verbal interactions with peers through talk about a favorite topic using picture prompts
- Practice social learning through interactive games (indoor and outdoor activities)
- Participate in social skills groups that develop understanding of perspectives of others
- Engage in movement to music while Adaptive PE teacher leads on Smart Boards
- Travel training by walking to a destination with reinforcers to learn social distancing, staying in a space and movement (without elopement)

# **Section 4:**

# **Precautionary Measures**

# Face Coverings, Masks, and Shields

## State and County Guidance say...

- Required for TK and up
- Required for all school staff
- Exceptions: unable to wear them due to special circumstances, such as a particular **developmental or health diagnosis** that would limit their ability to wear a face covering.



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## Question: What if my child will not or cannot wear a face mask?



### We will:

- Try a face shield or “cool” visor hat with shield. We could try making these.
- Use Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) techniques to increase endurance and reinforce positively for wearing masks or shields.

**NOTE:** Although we will explicitly teach behavior, students may not wear masks at all times.

# Distancing

## State and County Guidance say ...

- Physical distancing as feasible
- Stay in cohorts



## Question: What if my child, due to nature of disability, may not maintain social distance?

### We will:

- Use ABA techniques to maintain distance through positive reinforcement.
- Place prompts or guides on floor to define space and reinforce.
- Engage paraprofessionals in reinforcement and prompting as needed.

**NOTE:** Despite explicit instruction, students may not fully distance. Paras will need to be close with Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

# Cohorts

## State and County Guidance say ...

- As practicable, students should remain in the same space and in groups as small and as consistent as possible.
- When it is not possible to remain in stable cohorts within the same space (e.g. secondary school), face coverings and limiting group gatherings are a higher priority.



## Question: How many students and staff will my student be exposed to in a learning hub?

- In a learning hub, class sizes will range from 5 to 10 students, at times with up to 6 paras.
- No more than 16 total people as part of the cohort.
- Paras need to be close to students.

**NOTE:** Although staff will schedule activities in small groups and outside when possible, numbers in cohorts of students could be as high as 10. Staff will work to teach physical distancing and wearing face coverings.

# Screening

## State and County Guidance say ...

- Students and families are required to self-screen at home. Self-screening is a “must” with lower threshold temperatures.
- Staff may conduct visual screenings at school (e.g. coughing, runny nose).
- Staff may take temperatures. AISD purchased no-contact thermometers.



## Question: How do we ensure our child is not exposed?

- Since students and staff may be asymptomatic, we cannot ensure that students will not be exposed.
- All students/staff will be pre screened prior to starting the day.

**NOTE:** Although staff will wear Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and work to keep students safe, exposure can happen while at school. Quarantining for 14 days could be an outcome. Procedures have been created to communicate exposure and when to close learning hubs if someone tests positive for COVID.

# **Section 5: Next Steps**



# Next Steps for Families

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- A survey will be sent to parents and guardians to determine which families wish to “opt into” learning hub sessions.
- Staffing will be provided based on the following:
  - Review of individual student needs
  - Consideration of students with medical needs
  - Grouping of students based on needs and ages

# Next Steps for Staffing

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- A survey will be sent to paraprofessionals to see who is willing to volunteer to staff the learning hubs
- Special Education will work with non public agencies to hire 2 teachers to staff the learning hubs
- Additional cost to the budget of \$230,000 for the addition of the NPA teachers
- Depending on how many para staff are needed, additional cost of NPA paraprofessionals up to \$300,000

# Next Steps

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- We are seeking the Board's direction to continue the exploration and planning for learning hubs proceeding with the next steps named above with the understanding of the potential increase to the Districts budget.
- If the Board directs staff to continue exploration and planning, the special education team will bring an update back to the Board at the next Board meeting on October 13th.

## Questions