



**In-Person Learning 2021-2022 School Year
COVID-19 Protocols**



**DELTA
ELEMENTARY**
CHARTER SCHOOL



LIGHTHOUSE
CHARTER SCHOOL

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Mission Statement

The mission of River Charter Schools, a leading center of educational innovation, is to grow leaders and scholars, ignite a love of learning and equip each student with the knowledge, skills, character, and social-emotional well-being to thrive and contribute to an evolving and increasingly connected world, through schools which;

- Promote belonging for all members of our collaborative school communities
- Transform teaching, learning, and operations in our continuing pursuit of excellence
- Are filled with teams of talented, well trained, adequately supported and caring staff
- Are connected with communities of volunteers, parents and business people to empower students and teachers through partnerships and positive relationships
- Rely upon responsible fiscal planning.

The Core Values of River Charter Schools are:

Positive Attitude: At RCS, we exemplify empathy and compassion. We assume positive intent and pride ourselves on having a positive outlook and perspective daily.

Self-Reflection: At RCS, we strive for continuous improvement through practicing humility, listening actively, having a willingness to change, and speaking our truth.

Collaboration: At RCS, we work as a team to communicate with all stakeholders, build trusting relationships, and engage in courageous conversations. We are valued contributors who work together to develop and achieve common goals.

Introduction and Philosophy

River Charter Schools plans to reopen for student attendance on August 11, 2021. The plan in the following document is based off the guidance provided by the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) that was updated on August 2, 2021. The guidance from CDPH can be found here: <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/K-12-Guidance-2021-22-School-Year.aspx>

We are confident that our plans and procedures outlined herein, will allow our students to return safely and receive the education they deserve. We will offer our families the choice between two educational delivery options, fully remote learning through the River Charter Schools Virtual Academy or in-class instruction to ensure all students are served, no matter their particular needs. We pride ourselves at River Charter Schools in having a wide variety of educational options for our students and now is no different. We are sure that whatever your student or family may be facing, we have a solution for you. **As with all best laid plans, this plan is subject to change and grow in this ever-changing pandemic environment.**

Options for Families

At River Charter Schools, we believe that parents/guardians play a key role in the education of their student, and we value parent choice in determining the best environment for their student to learn. Therefore, the Re-Opening plan contains options for families that prefer to remain on distance learning as well as those families who wish to return to 5 day a week instruction for their student.

River Charter Schools Distance Learning Options

The River Charter Schools Distance Learning Option allow for high quality, standards-based option that provides an age-appropriate way for students to access grade level state standards. The Distance Learning program has been built to retain the best instructional methods that have been developed during the virtual learning from the 2020-21 school year and has been adapted in an age-appropriate way of delivering instruction.

This program will be headed by a fully credentialed teacher and will have daily interactions with the teacher. This program will require an investment of time from the parent or guardian as much of the learning will be done independently by the student on the Chromebook. For those parents that are interested in this option for their student, please contact your school office for enrollment options.

The primary platform students will be using is called Bright Thinker. This software is a highly rated and successful platform for students to learn independently. For more information about the platform, please look here: <https://brightthinker.com/>

California Department of Public Health Guidance

River Charter Schools will be following all state and county requirements. Regular updates will be provided to families through townhalls, school site meetings or at the school board meetings. The information below is provided by the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) as of August 2, 2021 and is subject to change based on revisions to the CDPH guidelines.

On July 9, 2021, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) published its updated recommendations for K-12 schools. The following guidance applies CDC's recommendations to the California context, in order to help K-12 schools formulate and implement plans for safe, successful, and full in-person instruction in the 2021-22 school year. This guidance is effective immediately and will be reviewed regularly by the California Department of Public Health (CDPH).

The foundational principle of this guidance is that all students must have access to safe and full in-person instruction and to as much instructional time as possible. In California, the surest path to safe and full in-person instruction at the outset of the school year, as well as minimizing missed school days in an ongoing basis, is a strong emphasis on the following: vaccination for all eligible individuals to get COVID-19 rates down throughout the community;

universal masking in schools, which enables no minimum physical distancing, allowing all students access to full in-person learning, and more targeted quarantine practices, keeping students in school; and access to a robust COVID-19 testing program as an available additional safety layer. Recent evidence indicates that in-person instruction can occur safely without minimum physical distancing requirements when other mitigation strategies (e.g., masking) are fully implemented. This is consistent with [CDC K-12 School Guidance](#).

Masks are one of the most effective and simplest safety mitigation layers to prevent in-school transmission of COVID-19 infections and to support full time in-person instruction in K-12 schools. SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, is transmitted primarily by aerosols (airborne transmission), and less frequently by droplets. Physical distancing is generally used to reduce only droplet transmission, whereas masks are one of the most effective measures for source control of **both** aerosols and droplets. Therefore, masks best promote both safety and in-person learning by reducing the need for physical distancing. Additionally, under the new guidance from the CDC, universal masking also permits modified quarantine practices under certain conditions in K-12 settings, further promoting more instructional time for students. Universal masking indoors in K-12 schools is recommended by the [American Academy of Pediatrics](#) and by the [CDC](#) in their Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in K-12 schools (updated July 27, 2021).

Finally, this approach takes into account a number of key considerations: current unknowns associated with variants and in particular the Delta Variant, which is more transmissible; operational barriers of tracking vaccination status in order to monitor and enforce mask wearing; and potential detrimental effects on students of differential mask policies. Detrimental effects of differential mask policies include: potential stigma, bullying, isolation of vaccinated OR unvaccinated students, depending on the culture and attitudes in the school or surrounding community.

CDPH will continue to assess conditions on an ongoing basis, and will determine no later than November 1, 2021, whether to update mask requirements or recommendations.

Indicators, conditions, and science review will include vaccination coverage status, in consideration of whether vaccines are available for children under 12, community case and hospitalization rates, outbreaks, and ongoing vaccine effectiveness against circulating variants of SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19 in alignment with the [CDC-recommended indicators](#) to guide K-12 school operations.

This guidance is designed to enable all schools to offer and provide full in-person instruction to all students safely, consistent with the current scientific evidence about COVID-19, even if pandemic dynamics shift throughout the school year, affected by vaccination rates and the potential emergence of viral variants.

This guidance includes mandatory requirements, in addition to recommendations and resources to inform decision-making. Implementation requires training and support for staff and adequate consideration of student and family needs. Stricter guidance may be issued by local public health officials or other authorities.

COVID-19 vaccination is strongly recommended for all eligible people in California, including teachers, staff, students, and adults sharing homes with these members of our K-12 communities.

See [CDC recommendations](#) about how to promote vaccine access and uptake for schools. Additional California-specific vaccine access information is available on the [Safe Schools Hub](#) and [Vaccinate All 58 – Let’s Get to Immunity](#).

Fully In-Person Learning Safety Measures for K-12 Schools

In Summary, **ALL Students, Staff, Parents or anyone on campus** will be required to **wear a mask or appropriate face covering** in indoor settings. If a student or staff member tests positive, regardless of vaccination status, they will be required to Quarantine:

- i. Quarantine can end after Day 10 from the date of last exposure without testing; OR
- ii. Quarantine can end after Day 7 if a diagnostic specimen is collected after Day 5 from the date of last exposure and tests negative.

Modified Quarantine is available for students or staff who came in close contact with an individual who tested positive for COVID-19. Under Modified Quarantine, a student who was considered a close contact of a positive individual can remain in in-person learning during the period of their quarantine as long as the student provides proof of a negative test after being notified of the exposure and again after 3-5 days. These results must be provided to the school.

The following is detailed guidance from the California Department of Public Health regarding masks and quarantine that will be followed by River Charter Schools.

1. Masks
 - a. Masks are optional outdoors for all in K-12 school settings.
 - b. K-12 students are required to mask indoors, with exemptions per [CDPH face mask guidance](#). Adults in K-12 school settings are required to mask when sharing indoor spaces with students.

c. Persons exempted from wearing a face covering due to a medical condition, must wear a non-restrictive alternative, such as a face shield with a drape on the bottom edge, as long as their condition permits it.

d. RCS schools will provide a face covering to students who inadvertently fail to bring a face covering to school to prevent unnecessary exclusions.

e. River Charter Schools is offering alternative educational opportunities for students who are excluded from campus because they will not wear a face covering. These students will be eligible to enroll in the River Charter Schools Virtual Academy.

f. In limited situations where a face covering cannot be used for pedagogical or developmental reasons, (e.g., communicating or assisting young children or those with special needs) a face shield with a drape (per [CDPH guidelines](#)) can be used instead of a face covering while in the classroom as long as the wearer maintains physical distance from others. Staff must return to wearing a face covering outside of the classroom.

2. Physical distancing

a. Recent evidence indicates that in-person instruction can occur safely without minimum physical distancing requirements when other mitigation strategies (e.g., masking) are implemented. This is consistent with [CDC K-12 School Guidance](#).

3. Ventilation

a. For indoor spaces, ventilation has been optimized. The HVAC systems at River Charter School buildings meet federal recommendations and filtration is changed regularly

4. Recommendations for staying home when sick and getting tested:

a. Follow the strategy for Staying Home when Sick and Getting Tested from the [CDC](#).

b. Getting tested for COVID-19 when symptoms are [consistent with COVID-19](#) will help with rapid contact tracing and prevent possible spread at schools.

c. Staff members and students with symptoms of COVID-19 infection not to return for in-person instruction until they have met CDPH criteria to return to school for those with symptoms:

i. At least 24 hours have passed since resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications; and

ii. Other symptoms have improved; and

iii. They have a negative test for SARS-CoV-2, OR a healthcare provider has provided documentation that the symptoms are typical of their underlying chronic condition (e.g., allergies or asthma) OR a healthcare provider has confirmed an alternative

named diagnosis (e.g., Streptococcal pharyngitis, Coxsackie virus), OR at least 10 days have passed since symptom onset.

Modified Quarantine for K-12 Settings

1. **Quarantine recommendations for unvaccinated students for exposures when both parties were wearing a mask, as required in K-12 indoor settings.** *This will be the most common scenario as our students will be wearing masks indoors at all times.* These are adapted from the CDC K-12 guidance and CDC definition of a close contact.
 - a. When **both parties were wearing a mask in any school setting in which students are supervised by school staff**, unvaccinated students who are close contacts (more than 15 minutes over a 24-hour period within 0-6 feet indoors) may undergo a modified quarantine as follows. They may continue to attend school for in-person instruction if they:
 - i. Are asymptomatic;
 - ii. Continue to appropriately mask, as required;
 - iii. Provide proof of a negative test within 24 hours of the initial notification of exposure and a second negative test with 3-5 days of exposure and results are provided to the school within 24 hours of the test; and
 - iv. Continue to quarantine for all extracurricular activities at school, including sports, and activities within the community setting.
2. Quarantine recommendations for: unvaccinated **close contacts** who **were not wearing masks or for whom the infected individual was not wearing a mask during the indoor exposure**; or unvaccinated students as described above.
 - a. For these contacts, those who remain asymptomatic, meaning they have NOT had any symptoms, may discontinue self-quarantine under the following conditions:
 - i. Quarantine can end after Day 10 from the date of last exposure without testing; OR
 - ii. Quarantine can end after Day 7 if a diagnostic specimen is collected after Day 5 from the date of last exposure and tests negative.
 - b. To discontinue quarantine before 14 days following last known exposure, asymptomatic close contacts must:
 - i. Continue daily self-monitoring for symptoms through Day 14 from last known exposure; AND
 - ii. Follow all recommended non-pharmaceutical interventions (e.g., wearing a mask when around others, hand washing, avoiding crowds) through Day 14 from last known exposure.

c. If any symptoms develop during this 14-day period, the exposed person must immediately isolate, get tested and contact their healthcare provider with any questions regarding their care.

Volunteering on Campus

We are pleased to announce that parent/family volunteers are welcome back to campus this year. The following will be required for any persons volunteering on campus or school field trips for longer than 15 minutes:

- Cleared fingerprints through Live Scan
- Cleared TB test or cleared TB risk assessment
- Proof of Covid-19 vaccination (Per CDPH Guidelines)

Short-Term Independent Study

RCS Short Term Independent study practices from past years will continue. In situations in which a student becomes ill and needs to stay home for an extended period of time or if a family member is ill and the student is asked by medical professionals to stay home until they are cleared to return, it will be critical that access to classwork be available. Students will be asked to continue their work on short term independent study.

Students that have been asked to quarantine or who are ill, but well enough to otherwise complete school work will be asked to complete packets that can be picked up from the school office. These students will not be placed in the virtual academy, but will continue their learning through Independent Study packets.