The new guidance from the CDE on how to safely reopen schools contains many of the same considerations that are in the LA County framework released on May 27.

Both sets of guidelines recognize that the health and safety of students, staff and families must always come first. They are built on the directives of public health authorities and are subject to change as the health crisis evolves.

Education leaders must ensure that schools reopen with a focus on safety and well-being and that continuity of learning according to the needs of their diverse communities. While it is enormously challenging to implement physical distancing in schools, we must make it work given our charge to protect the state’s most precious resource — our children.

We at LACOE remain committed to supporting our 80 districts and advocating on their behalf so they receive the resources they need to reopen safely.

State Guidelines for Reopening Schools

The California Department of Education today released “Stronger Together: A Guidebook for the Safe Reopening of California’s Public Schools.” (View here.)

The CDE guidelines follow new California Department of Public Health interim guidance for the upcoming school year announced last Friday.

CDE’s guidebook contains many of the same considerations that are in the Los Angeles County Schools Planning Framework released by a LACOE-led task force on May 27. Both documents are built on the recommendations of public health authorities and are subject to change as the health crises evolves.

Districts and schools will need to follow the directives of their local public health authorities. LACOE has been working with the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health to develop its guidelines for reopening schools.

LACOE’s framework will be modified and updated as needed to reflect current public health guidelines. View here.

The CDE guideline call for:

- **Face coverings:** Students and staff should wear face coverings during all educational activities (at school or on a bus).
- **Physical distancing:** Students and staff should engage in physical distancing (at least six feet of spacing between seats and in hallways and on buses) at all times.
- **Symptom screening:** School districts should identify staff who can take temperatures for students and staff before they enter the campus.

The California Department of Public Health announcement reflects ongoing safety concerns around COVID-19. The interim guidance is based on the “best available public health data, international best practices currently employed and the practical realities of managing school operations.”

In addition, CDEP released updated guidance to help school districts and providers plan, including resources for parents and employers supporting employees with childcare needs.

The guidance follows an announcement Friday that the state will provide a 60-day supply of Personal Protective Equipment to TK-12 schools. To support the safe reopening of schools and protect public health, the Governor’s Office of Emergency Services and the Department of General Services will assist public schools (traditional and charter), private schools and childcare facilities in procuring necessary PPE, supplies and equipment.

LACOE is grateful that the following supplies will be distributed to meet the near-term needs of schools and childcare programs:

- No-touch thermometers for every school and childcare facility totaling more than 47,000;
- Face shields for every teacher and childcare provider, totaling approximately 2.4 million;
- More than 4 million cloth face coverings for staff and students;
- More than 16 million disposable masks;
- 123,000 N95 masks for school-based health professionals, including those interacting with symptomatic students;
- 143,000 gallons of hand sanitizer.