



**Hughson Unified School District  
Elementary School Waiver Application**

**Submitted October 7, 2020**

## Elementary School Waiver Application Cover Form

Please submit one application for each local educational agency or equivalent. If applying on behalf of a school district, please submit one application for all elementary schools in the district that are seeking to reopen for in-person instruction. If applying for an independent, private, faith-based, or charter school, please submit an application for each school.

### Background Information

Name of Applicant (Local Educational Agency or Equivalent):

Hughson Unified School District

School Type:

- Traditional Public School  
 Charter School  
 Private, Independent, or Faith-Based School

Number of schools: 5

Total Enrollment: 2,055

Superintendent (or equivalent) Name: Brenda M. Smith

Address: 7448 Fox Road  
Hughson, CA 95326

Grades/Number of Students Proposed to be Reopened:

TK    K    1<sup>st</sup>    2<sup>nd</sup>    3<sup>rd</sup>    4<sup>th</sup>    5<sup>th</sup>    6<sup>th</sup>

Date of Proposed Reopening: Start date to be determined

Name of Person Completing Application: Brenda M. Smith

Phone Number: (209) 883-4428

Email: bsmith@hughson.k12.ca.us

Signature: *Brenda M. Smith*

Date: 9/23/2020

## I. Consultation

Please confirm consultation with the following groups:

### Labor Organization

Name of Organization(s) and Date(s) Consulted:

Hughson Educator's Association - 8/26/2020  
CSEA Chapter #834 - 9/3/2020

### Parent and Community Organizations

Name of Organization(s) and Date(s) Consulted:

HUSD parent forum 09/02/2020  
Hughson Ministerial Association 09/18/2020

If no labor organization represents staff at the school, please describe the process for consultation with school staff:

## II. Elementary School Reopening Plans

Please confirm that elementary school reopening plan(s) addressing the following, consistent with guidance from the California Department of Public Health and the local health department, and are published on the Stanislaus County Office of Education website:

**Cleaning and Disinfection:** How shared surfaces will be regularly cleaned and disinfected and how use of shared items will be minimized.

**Cohorting:** How students will be kept in small, stable, groups with fixed membership that stay together for all activities (*e.g.*, instruction, lunch, recess) and minimize/avoid contact with other groups or individuals who are not part of the cohort.

**Entrance, Egress, and Movement Within the School:** How movement of students, staff, and parents will be managed to avoid close contact and/or mixing of cohorts.

■ **Face Coverings and Other Essential Protective Gear:** How CDPH's face covering requirements will be satisfied and enforced.

■ **Health Screenings for Students and Staff:** How students and staff will be screened for symptoms of COVID-19 and how ill students or staff will be separated from others and sent home immediately.

■ **Healthy Hygiene Practices:** The availability of handwashing stations and hand sanitizer, and how their use will be promoted and incorporated into routines.

■ **Identification and Tracing of Contacts:** Actions that staff will take when there is a confirmed case. Confirm that the school(s) have designated staff persons to support contact tracing, such as creation and submission of lists of exposed students and staff to the local health department and notification of exposed persons. Each school must designate a person for the local health department to contact about COVID-19.

■ **Physical Distancing:** How space and routines will be arranged to allow for physical distancing of students and staff.

■ **Staff Training and Family Education:** How staff will be trained, and families will be educated, on the application and enforcement of the plan.

■ **Testing of Students and Staff:** How school officials will ensure that students and staff who have symptoms of COVID-19 or have been exposed to someone with COVID-19 will be rapidly tested and what instructions they will be given while waiting for test results. Describe how staff will be tested periodically to detect asymptomatic infections.

■ **Triggers for Switching to Distance Learning:** The criteria the superintendent will use to determine when to physically close the school and prohibit in-person instruction.

■ **Communication Plans:** How the superintendent will communicate with students, staff, and parents about cases and exposures at the school, consistent with privacy requirements such as FERPA and HIPAA. Please specifically refer to 34 CFR § 99.3



# Hughson Unified School District

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P.O. Box 189 ♦ 7448 Fox Road ♦ Hughson, CA 95326 ♦ 209-883-4428 ♦ Fax 209-883-4639

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October 1, 2020

California Department of Public Health:

In an effort to create a Plan for the Hughson Unified School District to re-open schools through the elementary waiver process, we sought input from our local stakeholders. We met with the following groups to hear comments and questions about the proposed plan:

August 26, 2020	Hughson Educators Association
September 2, 2020	Hughson Unified School District Parent Forum
September 3, 2020	California School Employee Association Chapter #834
September 18, 2020	Hughson Ministerial Association

We have also provided an update on our process at each of our school board meetings. The meetings are recorded and the videos are on our YouTube channel. Please let me know if you need any further information.

Sincerely,

Brenda Smith  
Superintendent



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## Hughson Unified School District Elementary TK - 5th Grade Reopening Plan

### **Introduction:**

Hughson Unified School District is a small rural school district with 2,077 students and 250 staff members. We have four comprehensive schools and one alternative education school site. Hughson Elementary is a TK - 3rd grade school and has 541 students. Fox Road Elementary School serves our 4th and 5th graders and has 280 students. Emilie J. Ross Middle School has 448 6th - 8th graders. Hughson High School has 767 students. Valley Community Day School and Billy Joe Dickens High School serve 58 students total and have their own school site.

We began the 2020-21 school year on August 12th in a Distance Learning model. While we were prepared for this instructional model, we know that students need the socialization and structure that schools provide. Our youngest learners do not have the same technology skills as older students and Distance Learning is much harder for them. The foundational skills that are taught in elementary school are vital for future learning. In addition, many of the parents in our community work and this has caused a considerable hardship on our families as they have had to navigate work, home, and schooling.

Our administrative team has prepared three learning models: Distance Learning (DL), a Hybrid Model, and 5-day in-person learning. As we have created the models, we have kept the health and safety of our staff, students, and community as a top priority. We hope to be able to bring our TK - 5th grade students back to school for in-person learning under a waiver granted by the Stanislaus County Public Health Department and the California Department of Public Health.

### **Considerations:**

- We will bring back our Hughson Elementary School TK – 5<sup>th</sup> grade students on a hybrid model.
  - Hughson Elementary School has 539 students. 118 students will stay on Distance Learning. We will have at least one dedicated DL teacher per grade level. We will be bringing back the following students:
    - TK – 20 students with one teacher = 10 per cohort
    - K – 94 students with five teachers = 9 per cohort
    - 1<sup>st</sup> – 108 students with five teachers = 11 per cohort
    - 2<sup>nd</sup> – 107 students with 4.5 teachers = 12 per cohort
    - 3<sup>rd</sup> – 88 students with 3.5 teachers = 13 per cohort
  - Fox Road Elementary School has 267 students. 51 students will stay on Distance Learning. We will have at least one dedicated DL teacher per grade level. We will be bringing back the following students:
    - 4<sup>th</sup> – 95 students with 4 teachers = 12 per cohort
    - 5<sup>th</sup> – 122 students with 4 teachers = 15 per cohort

- We will begin in-person instruction on a hybrid model; students would attend two days per week in person, and three days on Distance Learning.
- The student body will be divided into Cohort A and Cohort B. Cohort A would attend Monday and Tuesdays and Cohort B would attend Thursday and Fridays. Wednesdays all students would be on Distance Learning.
- On Wednesdays, custodial crews will deep clean school sites between cohorts.
- We have increased our custodial staff by three and have added a COVID-19 specialist in charge of the new cleaning procedures and sanitation.
- We surveyed our parents and found that 70% of our families preferred in-class instruction to distance learning.
- There will also be an option for families who would like to remain at home, on the Distance Learning Program.

### **Cleaning and Disinfection:**

***How shared surfaces will be regularly cleaned and disinfected and how the use of shared items will be minimized.***

The district has made the following efforts to ensure a safe and clean environment:

- Purchased disinfectant spray systems to be used in each classroom daily, when students are not present, in addition to other high traffic areas
- Installed plexiglass sneeze guards in all school and district offices
- Replaced all air filters throughout District
- Purchased and installed touchless hand-sanitizer dispensers in classrooms without sinks
- Purchased portable hand sanitizer pumps for all classrooms
- Purchased reusable and disposable masks for students and staff
- Purchased face shields with drapes for each employee
- Purchased face shields for students that need assessments that cannot be conducted if the student is wearing a mask
- Purchased disinfectant wipes and/or spray bottles and paper towels for each classroom
- Purchased 59 touchless thermometers for use throughout the district
- Designated a sick room at each site to isolate staff or students that may be symptomatic
- Hired health clerks at each site (Ross Middle School and Hughson High School - once students return)
- Hired three additional custodians

Staff will clean and disinfect frequently-touched surfaces at school and on school buses at least daily and, as practicable, these surfaces will be cleaned and disinfected frequently throughout the day by trained custodial staff.

Buses will be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected daily and after transporting any individual who is exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19. Drivers will be provided disinfectant wipes and disposable gloves to support disinfection of frequently touched surfaces

Staff will be provided disinfectant wipes and disposable gloves to support disinfection of frequently touched surfaces during the day. Frequently touched surfaces in the school include, but are not limited to:

- Door handles
- Light switches
- Sink handles
- Bathroom surfaces
- Tables
- Student Desks

- Chairs

Use of sharing of objects and equipment will be limited, such as toys, games, art supplies and playground equipment to the extent practicable. When shared use is allowed, items will be cleaned and disinfected between uses.

The following considerations are made when Teachers are planning classroom routines and physical design for in-school instruction:

- Classroom Routines ensure minimizing of shared/mixed items, i.e.
  - Chromebooks checked out to specific student for the year (Grades TK-12)
    - Students maintain their own Chromebook at their desk when returning to school occurs
  - No shared buckets of crayons, sharp pencils, etc.
  - Separate personal items from co-mingling with other students' items (i.e. backpacks on hooks outside classroom)
  - Utilize digital work whenever possible to reduce papers transitioning through multiple people which also prepares students for Distance Learning
- Classroom Routines address transitions in and out of classroom:
  - Hand sash / sanitize upon entry and departure every time
  - Wiping down desk and seat
    - Grades TK-5 upon leaving each day

### **Cohorting:**

***How students will be kept in small, stable groups with fixed membership that stay together for all activities (instruction, lunch, recess) and minimize/avoid contact with other groups or individuals who are not part of the cohort.***

- We will begin in-person instruction on a Hybrid Model, which would have students attending two days per week in person and three days on Distance Learning.
- The student body will be divided into Cohort A and Cohort B. Cohort A would attend Monday and Tuesdays and Cohort B would attend Thursday and Fridays. Wednesdays all students would be on Distance Learning.
- On Wednesdays, custodial crews will deep clean school sites between cohorts.
- In grades TK-5 students, only two classrooms will be released at a time for recess. There will be adequate supervision on the playground to keep the cohorts separated.
- Cohorts will not be allowed to mix.
- Students in the classroom will stay with the same teacher and paraprofessional throughout the day.
- Lunch will be scheduled by grade level and the cohort will stay at a separate eating area from other cohorts. Students will be encouraged to eat lunch outside if weather permits. With the decreased number of students in the cafeteria at one time, we will be able to seat our students a minimum of 6 feet apart. Students will be social distanced in line while entering and exiting the cafeteria.
- Lunches will be served with as little contact as possible. We will have everything pre-served so it is an easy grab and go for the students to keep them from standing in line for too long.
- There is indoor and outdoor seating for the cafeteria to maximize social distancing.
- On the school bus family members will sit together. We will have 30% of the regular students that ride the bus traveling the bus routes. This enables us to have students sit every other seat as practical.



## **Entrance, Egress, and Movement Within the School:**

***How movement of students, staff, and parents will be managed to avoid close contact and/or mixing of cohorts.***

- We currently have grade level building areas that are already grouped together.
- Hallways are designated as travel for specific grade levels.
- We have a playground for TK/K and a separate playground for 1st - 3<sup>rd</sup> grades.
- At Fox Road Elementary, our 4th and 5th grade levels use separate bathrooms.
- There will be no pullout programs for the remainder of the year.
- Libraries will remain closed for the 2020-21 school year.
- Volunteers and visitors will not be allowed on campus.
- All access gates will be open in the morning and afternoon to keep students from grouping together as they enter and exit.
- Bus riders will load to the back of the bus first and exit from the front to back. Windows will be left open for ventilation, weather permitting. Face coverings will be required for all ages when on a school bus.

## **Face Coverings and Other Essential Protective Gear:**

***How CDPH's face covering requirements will be satisfied and enforced.***

- All staff are required to wear a cloth or disposable face covering unless they are instructing students in a way where their mouth needs to be visible (speech, special education, ELD, language lessons, beginning reading instruction, working with young children), in which case, they can wear a face shield with a drape on the bottom edge. Once instruction is over they must return to a cloth or disposable face covering.
- Students in TK-2nd grade will be strongly recommended to wear a face covering.
- Students from 3rd grade and older must wear a face covering.
- Children younger than two years old, anyone who has trouble breathing, anyone who is unconscious or incapacitated, and anyone who is otherwise unable to remove the face covering without assistance are exempt from wearing a face covering.
- A cloth/disposable face covering should be removed for meals, snacks, naptime, or when it needs to be replaced. When a face covering is temporarily removed, it should be placed in a clean paper bag (marked with the student's name and date) until it needs to be put on again.
- The school will exclude students from campus if they are not exempt from wearing a face covering under CDPH guidelines and refuse to wear one provided by the school. They will be placed on Distance Learning.
- If a student forgets to bring a face covering, the school will provide a face covering to the student to prevent unnecessary exclusions.
- Our staff are supplied with gloves, face coverings, wipes, hand sanitizer, and plexi-glass barriers for close 1:1 instruction or assessment.
- Face coverings will be required for all ages when on a school bus. The bus driver will have disposable face coverings for anyone who forgets to bring one.

## **Health Screenings for Students and Staff:**

***How students and staff will be screened for symptoms of COVID-19 and how ill students or staff will be separated from others and sent home immediately.***

- Upon arriving to work, staff are required to complete a temperature check, answer our five screening questions including temperature, any COVID-19 symptoms, and exposure to anyone with COVID-19.
- Any staff member who cannot pass the screening questions is referred to Human Resources (HR). After assessing the situation, HR will send the staff member home if they could possibly have COVID-19. They are advised to see their medical doctor and get tested. HR would then check on the employee throughout their quarantined time at home.
- Students will receive temperature checks when they arrive at school. If they are 100.4 degrees or higher, they would be separated to the sick room and sent home and recommended to get a COVID test and/or see their doctor.
- Each site has a designated sick room for students to rest while they are waiting to be picked up. The sick room has a cot, N-95 mask for the health care provider, gloves, and is staffed by the site health clerk.
- The health clerk, District Nurse, and the Principal's secretary at each site will be fit tested for the N95 mask.
- If a child or staff member is symptomatic with COVID symptoms they will be sent home and advised to see a medical provider for testing. If the medical provider tests the individual and the test result is negative the person can return to the school 3 days after the resolution of symptoms. If the medical provider writes a note and provides a reasonable alternative diagnosis the individual can return to school immediately based on the medical providers guidance.

### **Healthy Hygiene Practices:**

***The availability of handwashing stations and hand sanitizer, and how their use will be promoted and incorporated into routines.***

- Provide foundational lessons on hygiene and the impact of COVID-19 during the first two weeks of school and reinforce the routines regularly.
- All elementary classrooms have sinks. Hand washing times will be scheduled throughout the day: when they get to school, after recess, before and after lunch, and before they go home.
- Hand sanitizer is available in all buildings. Students will wash their hands or use hand sanitizer as they enter and exit the classroom or other building.
- All classrooms have peroxide wipes to clean surfaces quickly and easily.
- Staff will continually monitor and educate students on the importance of social distancing.
- Teachers will frequently review hand washing and sanitizing lessons they created for the beginning of the year. Teachers will also reteach PBIS school and classroom expectations.

### **Identification and Tracing of Contacts:**

***Actions that staff will take when there is a confirmed case. Confirm that the school has designated staff persons to support contact tracing, such as creation and submission of lists of exposed students and staff to the local health department and notification of exposed persons. Each school must designate a person for the local health department to contact about COVID-19.***

- Confirmed staff cases are referred to Human Resources (HR) and a spreadsheet is kept of all cases in the district.
- Confirmed student cases are referred to the Assistant Superintendent and a spreadsheet is kept of all cases in the district.
- The site Principal will be responsible for keeping track of cohorts and any mixing of groups.
- If there is a confirmed case, we will work with Stanislaus County Public Health using StanTrack, a syndromic and COVID surveillance system, for case reporting and tracking.
- For all confirmed cases, we will contact the County Department of Public Health.

- Hughson Elementary contact person: Megan Reisz, Principal, 883-4412
- Fox Road Elementary contact person: Eric Petersen, Principal, 883-2256
- Human Resources Analyst: Theresa Berner, 883-4428
- Assistant Superintendent: Carrie Duckart, 883-4428

### **Physical Distancing:**

***How space and routines will be arranged to allow for physical distancing of students and staff.***

The district has made the following efforts in maximizing available classroom space for social distancing:

- District Administration, Maintenance/Operation Director, Principal, and site custodian scheduled site meetings to ensure furniture needs, storage for excess furniture and desks spaced a minimum of 3 feet apart. On the hybrid model, desks can be spread 6 feet apart.
- Storage created for non-essential and/or non-compliant issues such as group tables and double desks. These items were removed from classrooms.
- Teachers have been instructed to remove any personal belongings that infringe on available classroom space.
- Classroom libraries will be covered up so that students do not use this common area.
- Students will store their belongings in their backpack on the hooks located on the wall outside of the classroom.
- On the school bus family members will sit together. We will have 30% of the regular students that ride the bus traveling the bus routes. This enables us to have students sit every other seat as practical.
- Bus riders will load to the back of the bus first and exit from the front to back. Windows will be left open for ventilation, weather permitting. Face coverings will be required for all ages when on a school bus.

### **Staff Training and Family Education:**

***How will staff be trained, and families will be educated, on the application and enforcement of the plan.***

We have and will train all staff and provide educational materials to families in the following safety actions:

- Enhanced sanitation practices
- Physical distancing guidelines and their importance
- Proper use, removal, and washing of face coverings
- Screening practices
- How COVID-19 is spread
- COVID-19 specific symptom identification
- Preventing the spread of COVID-19 if you are sick, including the importance of not coming to work if staff members have symptoms, or if they or someone they live with has been diagnosed with COVID-19.
- For staff, COVID-19 specific symptom identification and when to seek medical attention
- The employer's plan and procedures to follow when children or adults become sick at school
- The employer's plan and procedures to protect staff from COVID19 illness

Training will take place in a virtual format through staff meetings and collaboration time. Parents will receive information through our social media and Aeries Communication information system.

### **Testing of Students and Staff:**

***How school officials will ensure that students and staff who have symptoms of COVID-19 or have been exposed to someone with COVID-19 will be rapidly tested and what instructions they will be given while waiting for test results. Describe how staff will be tested periodically to detect asymptomatic infections.***

- We need to test 25% of our staff every two weeks. This would enable us to test all of our staff every two months.
- HUSD will participate in staff testing under the county-wide testing initiative being coordinated by the Stanislaus County Office of Education with Quest Laboratories.
- Staff or students who are exposed to COVID-19 are referred to the District Office Human Resources Department (for staff) and Student Services (for students). A spreadsheet has been created that keeps track of their last time on campus, details of the exposure, if they were tested, results of the test, and return date.
- Staff will check in daily at their school office and answer five questions:
  - I am not experiencing any symptoms such as current or recent fever (100.4 or higher), new or worsening cough, new or worsening shortness of breath or respiratory illness, sudden lack of taste or smell, sudden onset of unexplained gastrointestinal illness.
  - I have not been in close contact with anyone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19.
  - I have not been in close contact with anyone who is experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, but is yet to be confirmed.
  - I am not living with, or, in close contact with anyone such as a family member who is experiencing symptoms or has been confirmed as positive for COVID-19.
  - I have not traveled outside of the continental United States within the past 14 days.

### **Triggers for Switching to Distance Learning:**

***The criteria the Superintendent will use to determine when to physically close the school and prohibit in-person instruction.***

Classrooms, schools or districts may be closed depending on the rate of infection in a school or district. All of this would be done with the assistance of, and in consultation with, the County Public Health Department.

- If there is an exposure in a classroom – the class will be quarantined for 14 days and move back to distance learning during this time.
- If 5 % of the total school population is positive, or if there are multiple cases in multiple cohorts, the entire school could be closed for in person learning for 14 days depending on the size and physical layout of the school.
- The Superintendent should close the district if 25% or more of the schools in the district are closed due to COVID-19 within 14 days. They would all typically reopen after 14 days.

### **Communication Plan:**

***How the Superintendent will communicate with students, staff, and parents about cases and exposures at school, consistent with privacy such as FERPA and HIPPA. Please specifically refer to 34 CFR 99.3.***

Testing all employees in a workplace should be the first strategy considered for identification of additional cases. Testing may be done at a single point in time or at repeated intervals.

Hughson Unified School District (HUSD) is responsible for ensuring all employees are offered and provided testing. District will also provide information to employees who may prefer to contact their personal medical provider or visit a [CA Coronavirus Testing Task Force site](#) for testing.

We will consult with County Public Health on topics including, but not limited to, tracing all close contacts of confirmed cases and instructing those individuals to quarantine or temporarily closing the workplace and quarantining all employees.

- Conduct contact tracing and quarantining of close contacts of confirmed cases in the workplace.
  - HUSD will provide information to the CPHD on the confirmed COVID-19 case of employees in the workplace, including job titles, work areas, close contacts in the workplace, dates of symptom onset, and departments worked while infectious.
  - Establish if HUSD, CPHD, or both will conduct interviews of the cases to determine their close contacts.
  - If a child or staff member is a close contact to a positive person, they must quarantine at home for 14 days. It is recommended that they are tested for COVID on, or around, day 5-7 and again at day 14. Testing will not decrease the quarantine time nor delay return to school while waiting on results. If the individual develops symptoms of COVID they are advised to test.
  - If a staff person or child is COVID + they must follow current isolation guidelines and stay in isolation for 10 days and be fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication and have a reduction in symptoms. A doctor's note is not required to return to school if they meet these criteria.
  - A close contact is someone who spent 15 minutes or more within 6 feet of an individual with COVID-19 infection during their infectious period, which includes, at a minimum, the 48 hours before the individual developed symptoms.
  - Interview employees with laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 by phone to determine when their symptoms began, the departments they worked during their infectious period, and to identify other employees with whom they had close contact during their infectious period.
  - Use employment records to verify areas worked during the infectious period and other employees who may have worked closely with them during that time period.
  - While at home, close contacts should self-monitor daily for COVID-19 symptoms (e.g., fever, chills, shaking chills, cough, difficulty breathing, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, fatigue, body or muscle aches, loss of taste or smell, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, loss of appetite).
  
- Employers must maintain confidentiality of employees with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 infection when communicating with other employees.
  - HUSD Human Resources (HR) Department should notify all employees who were potentially exposed to the individuals with COVID-19. HR should provide any healthcare consultations needed to advise workers regarding their exposure, which may be especially important for those with high-risk medical conditions (e.g., immune compromise or pregnancy).
  - Close contacts of cases should be given instructions on home quarantine 14 days from exposure and symptom monitoring, and COVID-19 testing.
  - Provide any employees who are sent home before or during a shift with information about what to expect after they are sent home (e.g., instructions about testing, sick leave rights under federal, state, and local laws and district policies, return-to-work requirements, etc.).
  - In some outbreaks, but not all, employees who were never symptomatic and did not have close contact with any of the laboratory confirmed cases may continue to work, as long as the employer has implemented all control measures as recommended by public health authorities, Cal/OSHA, or other regulatory bodies. The CPHD will make this determination based on strategies being used to control the outbreak and identify new cases.

