

News Release

Alameda County Office of Education
Alameda County Public Health Department



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ACOE/ACPHD Joint Release: Best Practices for Addressing COVID-19 During Upcoming Winter Closure



Superintendent L.K. Monroe
Alameda County
Superintendent of Schools



Dr. Nicholas Moss
Alameda County
Public Health Officer

The winter break for our schools, students, staff and families is just around the corner and we appreciate that the happiest holidays include spending time with family and friends, and we want to ensure you enjoy a healthy holiday season.

As you prepare to celebrate, please be reminded that COVID-19 case rates are on the rise in Alameda County, and the highly transmissible Omicron variant is making its way to our communities. We recommend multiple layers of prevention and protection that work together to keep your family - and our school environments - safe and healthy.

Get vaccinated: Use the winter break to get vaccines for you and your children. Vaccines have been authorized for 5-15 years-olds, and fully approved for ages 16 and older. More than 60,000 children in Alameda County in the 5 to 11 age group have already received their first dose of COVID-19 vaccine. Children are much less likely to experience side effects from the vaccine.

Get boosted: Boosters are widely available and strongly recommended for anyone who has already received two doses of the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines at least 6 months ago or the Johnson and Johnson single dose vaccine at least 2 months ago. Emerging data show that a booster dose improves the body's immune response to the virus that causes COVID-19, helping to prevent serious illness.

Wear a mask: Alameda County and the State require currently masking in all indoor spaces regardless of vaccination status. It is one of the most effective ways to stem the spread of COVID-19, not to mention the flu and other respiratory illnesses.

Get tested before traveling or gathering and before returning to school: Get tested 1-3 days before a family gathering, or prior to any travel, even if you have no symptoms. Make a plan to seek out a COVID-19 test before you return to school after the break, whether it's a testing site, pharmacy, a home antigen test or your child's school district offering testing opportunities. Don't miss your chance to test and protect yourself and others. If you're traveling out-of-state, follow other state and federal travel requirements and recommendations.

Take exposure seriously: If you've had close contact with someone who has COVID-19 or if you have symptoms of COVID-19, get tested right away. You should also get tested 5-7 days after exposure, even if you don't have symptoms or are fully vaccinated. Unvaccinated people and anyone with symptoms should stay home. Everyone should wear wear a mask for 14 days following exposure or until your test result is negative.

Stay home if ill: What applies for school also applies to family and social gatherings. No party is worth potentially spreading COVID among those you care about.

The pandemic has created significant challenges for our schools and our families over these past nearly two years. But we are much better equipped to keep our communities safe and healthy than we were back in the early months of 2020. We now know better, and can do better. We hope that your winter break is full of celebration, meaning and good health.



L. K. Monroe
Superintendent of Schools
Alameda County Office of Education



Dr. Nicholas Moss, MD, MPH
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About ACOE

The Alameda County Office of Education (ACOE), under the leadership of County Superintendent of Schools L. K. Monroe, serves as liaison between the California Department of Education and the 18 Alameda County public school districts that serve more than 200,000 students and 10,000 teachers. ACOE provides oversight of district budgets and Local Control and Accountability Plans (LCAPs). ACOE also directly operates schools that serve Alameda County's most vulnerable students: Court Schools at the Juvenile Justice Center, ACOE Opportunity Academy schools serving students 16 and older seeking a high school diploma, and Community Schools that serve foster youth, students in substance abuse treatment, pregnant and parenting teens, Probation-referred youth, and students expelled from their resident school districts. ACOE also runs the Infant & Family Support Program, which provides individualized service for children from birth to three years and their families. For more information, visit www.acoe.org.

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