



CARDEN CONEJO SCHOOL

Carden Conejo School

Reopening Plan

August 26, 2020

Submitted to Ventura County
Public Health



CARDEN CONEJO SCHOOL

August 24, 2020

Robert Levin, MD
Health Officer
Ventura County Public Health

Dear Dr. Levin,

Thank you for allowing our school to submit a waiver. I appreciate the opportunity to return to in-person instruction.

When California was shut down in March, our teachers did an outstanding job of transitioning to online instruction. I am proud of the high quality educational program Carden provided for our students. But we cannot ignore the effects online learning had on the mental health of both our staff and our students, and the challenges it brought to some of our parents. It was especially difficult when parents could not be at home because of essential work.

While some children seem to be unaffected by long periods in front of screens, for others the effects are alarming. For those children affected, we teachers witnessed first-hand, some of our students becoming anxious, distracted, depressed. Our teachers as well became anxious with the added workload that assigning, collecting and grading work online entails. Many were working from early in the morning through the night, seven days a week to meet the demands of a quality online program. I believe that our hybrid program will meet the needs of all of our learners and families. Our families will have the option to send children to campus, or to keep them learning from home as we livestream all classes daily. Families will have the flexibility to send their children to campus as their comfort level dictates. Seventy percent of students plan to start school on campus.

Mr. Fleming, the co-owner of our school and Business Manager, and I have completed many hours of training. We have worked hard and researched extensively to understand mandates and guidelines from the CDC, Cal/OSHA, The California Department of Education and Ventura County. We have met with physicians and epidemiologists. I have met repeatedly with staff, and communicated frequently with parents to understand needs and concerns.

I am confident our Reopening Plan will reflect our commitment to following the strictest guidelines and mandates. As we have done, we will continue to stay abreast of new information, and make changes as necessary to ensure our staff and students are kept as safe as is possible.

We look forward to working with your office to safely reopen our campus for instruction.

Sincerely,

Lisa Macias-Flavin
Head of School

Waiver Application Cover Form

(for use by a Local Education Agency or equivalent)

Please submit one application for each local educational agency or equivalent. If applying on behalf of a school district, please submit one application for 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 Application (Local Education Agency or Equivalent)

Carden Conejo School

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

Number of Schools: 1 Enrollment: 160

Superintendent (or equivalent) Name: Lisa Macias-Flavin

Address: 975 Evenstar Avenue
Westlake Village, CA 91361

Grades/Number of Students Proposed to be Reopened:

Pre-K, Jr. K, K, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, no 6th grade

Date of Proposed Reopening: September 10, 2020

Name of Person Completing Application: Lisa Macias-Flavin

Phone Number : 805-552-9427 Email: Lisa.Flavin@cardenconejo.com

Signature Lisa Macias Flavin

Date 8/26/2020

I. Consultation

Please confirm consultation with the following groups:

Labor Organization

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

Parent and Community Organizations

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

We wanted to speak directly (virtually) to all of our parents, so we held multiple Town Hall meetings. We explained the hybrid program we will offer, and our plan to safely return to campus. We also shared the components of the waiver process. We gave parents the opportunity to voice their support for the waiver (included). I also met with our Parent Association (CCPA) Co-presidents on August 25 to share waiver plans
Town Hall Meetings: Wednesday, August 12, May 20
July 9 - Emailed Initial Reopening Plan

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

We are a private school. Our teachers are not represented by a union. We met virtually with staff to explain our process for reopening school. Teachers and staff were given the option to not return to school. All teachers and staff who will work for us beginning September 10 expressed a desire to return to campus. (Letter, statements included).

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, have been published on the website of the local educational agency (or equivalent):

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 stays together for all activities 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 prompted and incorporated into routines.
- ☒ **Identification and Tracing of Contacts:** Actions that staff will take when there is a confirmed case.
- ☒ **Physical Distancing:** How space and routines will be arranged to allow 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 that 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 school, consistent with privacy requirements such as FERPA and HIPAA.

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

- A newly hired Cleaning Tech will clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces throughout the day, including the restrooms.
- Teachers and staff members will clean frequently touched surfaces in their classrooms or in the office throughout the day.
 - Students shall be taught to clean their own desk in the classroom each day and teachers shall supervise the daily cleaning protocols.
 - Special wipes that are safe for children to use shall be provided as well as spray bottles with a soap and water solution for desk cleaning.
- Carden Conejo will require the use of personal reusable water bottles. Shared drinking fountains shall be taped off to prevent use.
 - All drinking fountains in classrooms are filtered and shall only be available to refill personal reusable water bottles. (signs shall be posted to remind students of this rule)
- The school will limit the use and sharing of objects and equipment, such as toys, games, art supplies, and playground equipment. Students will have their own set of school supplies, including math and science manipulatives and art class equipment.
- Student Personal Belongings will be kept separated by hooks, bins, or taped off spaces on the floor.
- When shared use is allowed, like Chromebooks, items will be cleaned and disinfected after each use.
- Outdoor play equipment is currently taped off so students will not use it.
- Play equipment like playground balls will be used in individual skill building, not in competitive play.

Carden Conejo shall use products approved for use against COVID-19 on the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-approved “N” list and train workers on chemical hazards, product instructions, ventilation requirements, Cal/OSHA requirements, the CDPH asthma safer cleaning methods, and as required by the Healthy Schools Act, as applicable.

- Carden Conejo will provide proper PPE to custodial staff and other employees who clean and disinfect.
 - Students will clean their own desks before leaving at the end of the school day while being supervised by their teacher.
- Teachers and staff shall be taught to ensure safe and correct application of disinfectant and shall keep products away from students.
- Thorough cleaning shall be done when children are not present by professionals, and the space shall be aired out before the arrival of children to campus.
 - Carden Conejo shall replace and check air filters and filtration systems to ensure optimal air quality.
 - Air filters are checked and replaced regularly by the landlord.
- The school currently has two air filters in each classroom.

Cohorting: How students will be kept in small, stable groups with fixed membership that stays together for all activities and minimize/avoid contact with other groups or individuals who are not part of the cohort.

- Each student will be assigned to a cohort/homeroom with a maximum of 15 students.
- Parents were asked to share the names of children that their own children visit with outside of school. These children will be placed in the same cohort.
- After arriving on campus, students will receive a health screening and then proceed directly to the cohort classroom.
- One homeroom teacher will be assigned to the cohort.
- The students will not mix with any other cohorts at any time during the day.
- Students will stay with their cohorts during recess and lunch.
- The door between classrooms will remain closed.
- Specialist teachers will travel into the homeroom to teach, but will teach from behind a plastic screen and not come closer than six feet to the students. The homeroom teacher will stay in the room to help individual students.
- Carden Conejo is fortunate to have an eight acre campus. Cohorts will be assigned specific play areas on the yard far away from other cohorts. Play spaces will rotate each week.
- Each cohort will have its own canopy for outside instruction. The cohort will also eat under the canopy weather permitting.
- Only families with no other child care help will be able to enroll in Play Program, Carden's after school program. Children will stay in their school day cohort during Play Program as well.
- No after school enrichment classes will be offered during the first quarter.

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.

- Arrival times in the morning will be staggered to limit the flow of students onto campus at one time, and to allow for health screenings.
- Only visitors with essential business will be allowed on campus.
- Carden Conejo will minimize movement of students and teachers or staff as much as practicable.
 - Students will remain in their homeroom/cohort class for instruction, or under their cohort canopy. Specialist teachers will move between classes but will teach from behind a clear plastic screen at the front of the classroom and shall limit direct interaction with students individually.
 - Teachers shall also monitor their students to make sure they are properly social distancing.
- The school shall implement procedures for turning in assignments to minimize contact, including paper trays and Google Classroom.

- Carden Conejo shall minimize congregate movement through hallways as much as practicable.
 - The Carden Conejo campus has exclusively outdoor corridors and has no indoor hallways.
 - All student movement between classrooms shall be monitored by a teacher or staff member to ensure proper social distancing procedures are being maintained at all times.
- Pre-purchased meals from Choicelunch will be delivered to the students in their classrooms if students do not bring their own lunch from home.
- Carden will designate and mark walkways as one-way to avoid two cohorts passing by one another.

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

- The Carden Administration believes strongly in the science demonstrating the efficacy of face coverings in mitigating the spread of Covid-19.
- All students, Pre-K through Fifth Grade will be required to wear face coverings.
- All adults on campus will be required to wear face coverings.
- All essential visitors to campus will be required to wear face coverings.
- Teachers will wear plastic face shields in addition to the face covering.
- Masks worn by both teachers and students shall be checked for proper fit each day during the health screenings and those who's masks are deemed to not be in accordance with the CDPH guidelines shall be offered a disposable mask to wear or shall be asked to leave campus if they do not wish to wear a mask provided by the school.
- Carden Conejo shall teach and reinforce the use of face coverings, or in limited instances, face shields to students, staff and families. Carden will also teach about mask exemptions.
- Carden Conejo shall have signs posted around campus that reinforce the proper use of face coverings as well as signs in the classroom that demonstrate proper handwashing procedure while reminding students to frequently wash their hands.
- A teacher will work with a student who has a difficult time wearing a face covering. She will check for fit, fabric, etc. But if a child will not wear a face covering she/he will continue to learn through Carden's online program
 - This rule was communicated to parents and staff at two town hall meetings and in writing.
 - Signs shall also be posted that let any visitors that are trying to enter campus know that they shall be barred from entry if they are not wearing a mask that is in accordance with the CDPH guidelines.
- All staff must use face coverings in accordance with CDPH guidelines unless Cal/OSHA standards require respiratory protection.
 - In limited situations where face coverings cannot be used, a face shield shall be permitted instead while maintaining physical distance from others.
 - Clear plastic barriers are being installed at the front of each classroom to ensure an extra layer of protection between teachers and students.

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.

- All students and staff will take a PCR test for COVID-19 three to five days prior to the first day of instruction. We will receive results in 24-48 hours. All those testing positive will stay home to isolate.
- Carden Conejo shall implement health screenings of students and staff upon arrival each day.
 - Staff, teachers, and students shall all be required to self-screen at home.
 - A no-touch thermometer will be used to take the temperature of students, staff, and teachers each day as part of the health screening for admittance. If temperature is below 99.5 degrees Fahrenheit, students and staff will proceed on campus, directly to the homeroom.
 - Staff will continue to monitor for symptoms throughout the day.
- Staff understand they may stay home if not well, and there will be no discrimination.
- Students and staff will be asked to stay home if they have been in close contact with a person testing positive for COVID-19.
- School Staff will track any known COVID-19 exposure at school. Staff will consult with the VCPH Liaison about any COVID-19 exposure at school and possible close contacts to be quarantined. Staff will communicate with the parents through the Alert Now system.
- An isolation room will be available for any person on campus exhibiting Covid-like symptoms. Any person with symptoms will stay in this room with a face covering until picked up. They will be supervised by a dedicated staff member. If severe, 911 will be called.
- Teachers will be tested for COVID-19 every two months

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

- Carden Conejo will teach and reinforce proper hand washing techniques
- Carden Conejo has rented and shall install (on 9/1/20) four portable handwashing stations throughout the campus and near classrooms to allow easy access to handwashing while minimizing congregation in bathrooms.
- Carden Conejo has adequate supplies to support healthy hygiene behaviors, including soap, tissues, no-touch trash cans, face coverings, and hand sanitizers with at least 60% ethyl alcohol for staff and children who can safely use hand sanitizer. Hand sanitizer dispensers have been installed in each classroom and in the administrative offices.
- Students will wash hands when arriving at school, after sneezing or coughing, before and after recess, lunch, sports class, using the restroom, and before leaving for the day.
- All classrooms have sinks for handwashing, as do the restrooms.

- “No Touch” sinks and toilets have been installed in the two main student restrooms.

Identification and Tracing of Contacts: Actions that staff will take when there is a confirmed case.

- The Assistant to the Head of School and Bob Fleming, Business Manager will be responsible for contact tracing.
- The VCPH Liaison will be notified if more than one person in a cohort tests positive, as per instructions on training Thursday, August 6.
- Any person in close contact with another person testing positive will be instructed to quarantine for 14 days.
- If a person on campus later tests positive, the spaces that person occupied will be closed for 24 hours, then disinfected.
- Carden parents will be notified if a member of their child’s cohort tests positive for COVID-19, according to HIPAA and FERPA mandates.

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

- Carden Conejo shall maximize space between seating and desks.
 - The school has arranged seating to minimize face to-face contact, and shall use physical partitions where needed.
 - Teacher and other staff desks have been spaced at least six feet away from student desks.
 - Student desks have also been spaced in a way that ensures six feet of distance between another student or teacher desk.
 - Our classrooms can mathematically accommodate 20 student desks, but we are only allowing 15 in each room.
- Carden Conejo shall ensure staff maintain physical distancing from each other.
 - Staff and teachers shall be trained on how to maintain and reinforce proper physical distancing.
 - Signs shall be posted around campus that remind teachers and students to “keep it moving” and not congregate.
 - The school shall provide another space on campus that is outside that can be used for teachers to meet and plan with masks and socially distanced.
- Support staff who are at higher risk for severe illness or who cannot safely distance from household contacts at higher risk, are provided options such as telework, where appropriate, or teaching in a virtual learning or independent study context.
 - Carden Conejo has reached out and shall continue to reach out to staff. No staff has requested to telework.
- Carden Conejo shall conduct all staff meetings, professional development training and education, and other activities involving staff, with physical distancing measures in place, or virtually, where physical distancing is a challenge.

- Staff meetings shall take place outside and physical distancing shall be observed. If weather does not permit, meetings shall be held virtually.
- The school shall minimize the use of and congregation of adults in staff rooms, break rooms, and other settings by setting up an outside area for staff to meet as well as having a second room for meal preparation available. Additionally, staff break times shall be staggered whenever possible to avoid teachers congregating in the break room.
- All photocopying will be done by the Assistant to the Head of School to avoid staff congregating in the office.

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

- Carden Conejo has shared its Reopening Plan with parents repeatedly since July 9th.
- Additional Training on the application and enforcement of the plan will be held: Staff Training - Monday, August 31, Parent/Caregiver Training - Thursday, September 3rd, Student Training - Friday, September 4th.
- Carden Conejo shall be conducting the training and education virtually and a PowerPoint has been prepared that shall also be sent out to families and staff.
- Carden Conejo shall train all staff and provide educational materials to families in enhanced sanitation practices, physical distancing guidelines and their importance, proper use, removal, and washing of cloth face coverings, screening practices, COVID-19 symptoms and transmission, how to prevent COVID-19 spread, when to seek medical attention, the plan and procedures to follow when someone becomes sick at school, and the plan and procedures to protect workers from COVID-19 illness.
 - Additionally, the school shall have posters around the school reminding teachers and students to maintain proper social distancing, to be reminded and aware of the signs and symptoms of COVID-19, proper hand washing protocol, as well as other procedures and health concerns that relate to COVID-19 that need to be followed at all times on campus.
 - The School will involve the students in age-appropriate design of instructional posters.

Testing of Students and Staff: How school officials will ensure that students and staff that 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.

- All staff and students will be tested within 7 days of the first day of school on campus
- Carden Parents and staff will be given a list of local test sites
- The Assistant to the Head of School will follow up with parents/staff and document date and time of test
- Each staff member will be tested every 2 months

- Parents/Staff will receive a Quarantine Compliance Document

Triggers for Switching to Distance Learning

- Carden Conejo shall check State and local orders and health department notices daily about transmission in our area or closures and shall adjust operations accordingly.
- When a student, teacher, or staff member tests positive for COVID-19 and has exposed others at the school, the school shall refer to the CDPH Framework for K-12 Schools, consult with the VCPH Liaison to determine whether to close the school or to clean and quarantine exposed persons, based on the risk level within the community; close off the classroom or office where the patient was based and do not use the areas until cleaned and disinfected; communicate with students, parents, teachers, staff and the community; inform staff regarding labor laws and leave time; remind parents, teachers, and staff to use physical distancing in the community and discourage them from gathering
- If 5% of our students and staff test positive for COVID-19, all staff and students will be sent home to quarantine. If 2 of the members of a cohort from different families tests positive, the cohort will be sent home to quarantine.

Communication Plans: How the superintendent will communicate with students, staff, and parents about cases and exposures at school, consistent with privacy requirements such as FERPA and HIPAA.

- Carden Conejo uses the Alert Now system to send text, voice, and email messages to any group of parents, or all of the parents.
- Staff is sent emails directly from the Head of School, usually just before a parent email is sent.
- If a child or teacher tests positive for COVID-19, the parents of the other students in that cohort will receive an email sharing the positive case, but not the name of the infected person.
- Any communication with students will be calm and child-friendly in a way that is comforting, not threatening.