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NEWS RELEASE

Riverside County

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(Monday through Friday during business hours)

Riverside County elementary schools can apply for waiver starting Monday to hold in-person classes

Elementary schools in Riverside County seeking to open for in-person teaching can apply for a waiver starting Monday, county officials have announced. According to state guidelines, waivers can only be approved for grades ranging from transitional kindergarten through sixth grade.

Schools, both public and private, can obtain a waiver application on the RUHS-Public Health website or by [clicking here](#).

No in-person education has been allowed to take place in Riverside County for months following an order by Gov. Gavin Newsom in the wake of the spread of coronavirus.

“The biggest predictor of school spread is community spread, and although we’re still finding new cases of COVID-19, our case rate has dropped enough where we can consider elementary school waivers,” said Dr. Cameron Kaiser, Riverside County public health officer. “However, the waiver process won’t be a rubber stamp, and elementary schools will be required to publicly demonstrate they have the pieces in place to operate safely or they won’t be approved. We want exposures to be rare and, should an exposure occur, for the school to show they can handle it without putting others at risk.”

The state's threshold for schools to apply for waivers allowing for in-person instruction is 200 cases per 100,000 residents. Riverside County is currently at 170 cases per 100,000 residents. This is a daily calculation on the state's monitoring list. Riverside County officials have been monitoring the per-case levels and will start accepting waiver applications Monday.

The waiver application will be reviewed by Dr. Cameron Kaiser, Riverside County public health officer. Waivers are necessary because Riverside County is currently on the state's watch list. The county must be off the watch list for 14 days before schools and school districts may reopen without a waiver.

“Adapting to virtual learning has been a challenge for everyone, and I applaud all the teachers, parents and students for their continued commitment to education during this pandemic” said Vice Chair Karen Spiegel, Second District Supervisor. “Now that we’re meeting state metrics, the schools and districts that wish to apply for in-person instruction now have the opportunity to do so, while ensuring proper safeguards for the children and staff.”

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