

The Panther Prowl NEWSLETTER

September 5, 2021 || Volume 1: No.4



10 days until the new bell and master schedules are distributed, and 11 days before their LAUNCH!

Dear EA Families,

This message is about an upcoming schedule change for students to accommodate some of the teacher vacancy challenges that we have been experiencing at Envision Academy. Below the longer message, you will find a Frequently Asked Questions section and a section that has the most important parts of this email in bullet point form.

OUR CHALLENGE: Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, there was a national teacher shortage; the problem has only exacerbated in the past year, causing critical teacher shortages all over the country and in the Bay Area. The current challenge Envision Academy High School is facing is that we still have four teacher vacancies for this school year and we are not finding strong candidates to take those positions. Our strategy so far has been to maintain robust outreach and hiring while covering classes with substitute teachers as needed. Teachers, administrators, and other educators from the Envision Education network have all been providing substitute coverage during this time, which we are grateful for and which is not sustainable.

OUR COMMITMENTS: In the face of this challenge, we remain focused on these priorities:

1. We are committed to our students and to ensuring that they continue to have rigorous, meaningful learning experiences with qualified teachers

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2. We are committed to our teachers and to providing them sustainable positions that allow them to excel in their profession.
 3. We are committed to our mission and to making sure students get all of the courses they need to get to and succeed in college.

OUR SOLUTION: We have considered several options and consulted with internal and external experts. Here, we are presenting the steps we will be taking to move EAHS forward successfully:

1. **Changing the Master Schedule** to eliminate three of the teacher vacancies. We will combine sections of some 10th and 11th grade classes and reduce the overall number of teachers we need to be fully staffed. Students will be moved into combined classes.

We are also making the following additional changes to the school day:

2. In the new Master Schedule, there will be **more elective classes** for students to choose from, giving them more options to take classes that interest them.
3. We are **elevating A-G approved curriculum** through UC Regents (UC approved) so that educators have high quality curriculum at their disposal
4. **We are changing the Bell Schedule**, both to accommodate student and family requests for a longer lunch period and to bring us in line with state instructional minute requirements. With this shift, school will start at the same time (8:45am) and end at (3:55pm), adding 16 minutes to the school day. Our lunch period will go from 30 minutes long to 35 minutes long.

We know that these are significant changes and that the Master and Bell Schedules are important to you, our families. We are pursuing this path because we believe it is the best way to ensure that we are providing your students with high quality learning experiences and support, while also providing sustainable structures for teachers.

Thank you,
Principal Maafi Cook

FAQs:

Q: When will the change take place?

A: On Friday, September 17th, the new schedule will go into effect for the beginning of Module B. Thursday, September 16th will be an Orientation Day for all students, to prepare them for the new schedule. Module A will end on Wednesday, September 15th.

Q: Has the start and end time of each day changed?

A: The daily school start time will remain the same. The new daily end time for all non-minimum days will be 3:55pm.

Q: How do I know if my child is affected by the change?

A: Every student will get a new schedule. You can review their schedule to see what has changed for them.

Q: Will this change affect the classes students need to get into college?

A: College eligibility will not change: all of the new courses are A-G approved and will be taught by qualified teachers.

Talking Points About the Most Important Elements of the Change

Our Challenge

- Hiring challenges are being faced by schools all over: we are seeing teacher vacancies at schools throughout Oakland and the Bay Area (and nationally)
- We currently have four teacher vacancies and we are not finding strong candidates to take those positions.

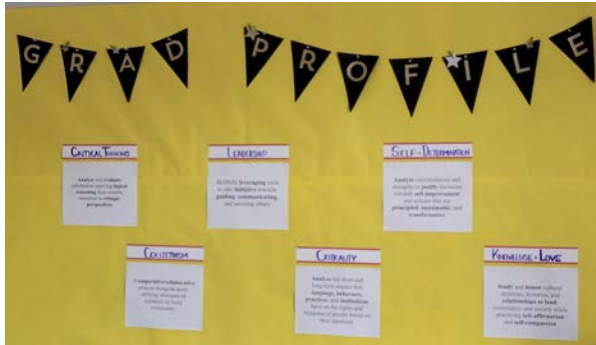
Our Solution:

- We are changing the master schedule to eliminate 3 out of 4 vacancies.
- This solution ensures that every course is taught by a teacher with the expertise and credentialing required.
- This solution allows us to minimize the number of substitute teachers in classrooms while also maximizing the quality of instruction.

Our Commitments

- Our focus is 100% on our students and ensuring that we are giving them what they need and deserve: a high school with excellent teachers, who can build strong relationships with students and deliver high quality instruction that prepares students for college, career and beyond.
- If you have any questions, please reach out to Principal Maafi Cook at mcook@envisionacademy.org or call the school at (510) 596-8901.

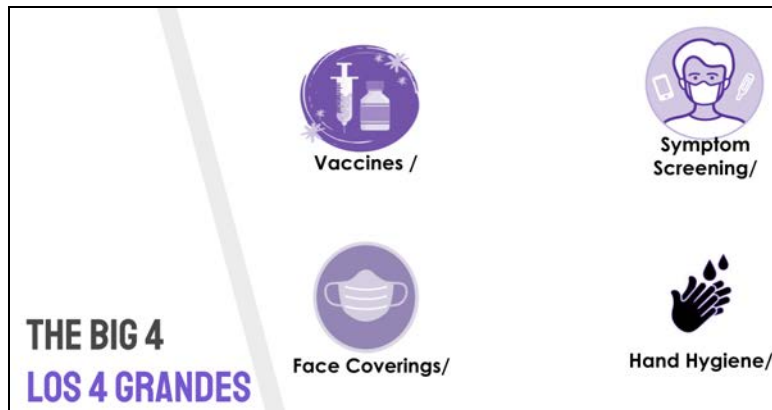
Our Graduate Profile is a Promise to the Students, Family and Community



Vision of an Envision Graduate: Graduates from Envision are lifelong learners who problem solve society's greatest challenges by exercising college and career skills alongside core competencies (critical thinking, leadership, criticality, knowledge (and love) of self and land, collectivism, and self-determination) so that the generations to come benefit from environmentally and culturally sustaining practices.

COVID-19 Updates

We continue to practice and strengthen the **BIG 4 (students)** and **Big 5 (staff)** to maximize COVID-19 safety at school.



The BIG 5!



Vaccines



Symptom Screening



Sign in & out



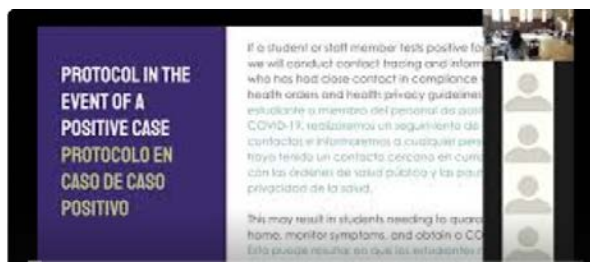
Face Coverings



Hand Hygiene

Recording of Open House (8/17/21)
COVID-19 presentation now available!

EAHS COVID-19 SAFETY Protocols



[Presentation Zoom Recording](#)



Everyone is required to wear a mask inside and outside!

Thank you for practicing safety for all!

Daily COVID-19 SCREENING Families are asked to use this COVID-19 Screening Tool to assess their student's health PRIOR to coming on campus:

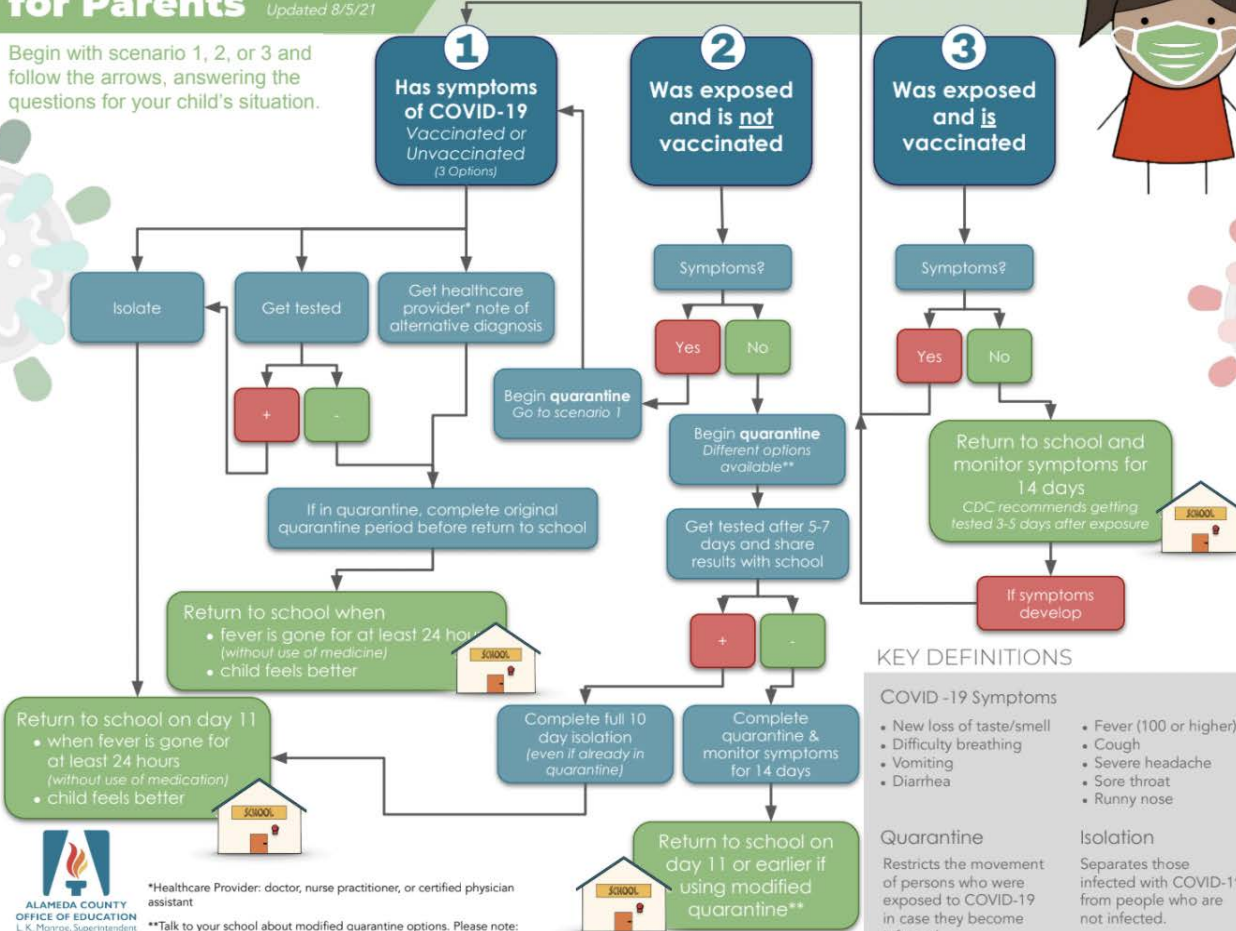
COVID-19 Flowchart for Parents

Updated 8/5/21

MY CHILD...



Begin with scenario 1, 2, or 3 and follow the arrows, answering the questions for your child's situation.



*Healthcare Provider: doctor, nurse practitioner, or certified physician assistant
 **Talk to your school about modified quarantine options. Please note: modified quarantine only applies to school and not extracurriculars or sports

KEY DEFINITIONS

- COVID -19 Symptoms**
- New loss of taste/smell
 - Difficulty breathing
 - Vomiting
 - Diarrhea
 - Fever (100 or higher)
 - Cough
 - Severe headache
 - Sore throat
 - Runny nose
- Quarantine**
 Restricts the movement of persons who were exposed to COVID-19 in case they become infected.
- Isolation**
 Separates those infected with COVID-19 from people who are not infected.



Envision Academy High School is a special place to learn and grow. We are proud of recent school beautification projects, and have more planned. This summer, Envision Schools (ES) Chief Academic Officer, Javier Cabra, collaborated with directors and teachers across the ES network to develop exciting new teaching and learning frameworks to boost learner connectedness and engagement. We all have high expectations for our students, and everyone in our community. We at EAHS are building our learning community with these elements as an important part of reaching the goals of our graduate profile.

In-Person Back to School Night CANCELLED for COVID Safety!!



Instead, **Back-to-School Night will be a YouTube Event:**
Wednesday, September 15th link available starting at 5 pm!