

Butte County Waiver Application Cover Form

(for use by a Local Education Agency or equivalent)

Instructions:

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 Applicant/District (Local Educational Agency or Equivalent):

Hope Academy for Personalized Learning

School Type: Traditional Public School

Charter School

Private, Independent, or Faith-Based School

Number of Schools: 1 Enrollment: 35

Superintendent (or equivalent) Name: Jodi George

Address: 1888 Springfield Dr

Address Line 1 & 2

Chico, CA, 95928
City State Zip

Proposed Grades Reopening: TK K 1st 2nd 3rd 4th 5th 6th

Proposed # of Students per Grade: 9 5 7 3 7 2 2

Proposed Reopening Date: August 31, 2020

School Website Link where the Reopening Plan is Posted:

www.chicohopeacademy.com

Name of Person Completing Application: Jodi George

Phone Number: 530-518-4092 Email: chicohopeacademy@gmail.com

Signature: Jodi George Date: August 12, 2020

■ **Parent and Community Organizations**

I met with a group of parents, teachers, and board members on June 18th to develop our COVID plan. One is a nursing supervisor at Enloe who gave direction and continues to update us on changes in protocols.

We have kept in contact with parents primarily through emails. Because we are a small school, we have ongoing relationships and conversations regularly. All families who are enroll have expressed repeatedly that they prefer in-person classes for their child(ren). Many are essential workers and need their children in school every day. Most worry about the quality of education in schools that rely exclusively on technology for distance learning. Our re-opening plan outlines options in case of mandatory school closure.

II. **Elementary School Reopening Plans**

Please confirm that elementary school reopening plan(s) addressing 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 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, including contact information, 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, enforcement of the plan, and information related to testing and contact tracing requirements.

■ **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 in accordance with CDPH guidance.

■ **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, parents, and the local health department about cases and exposures at the school, consistent with privacy requirements such as FERPA and HIPAA.

Additional Resources:

CDPH and Cal/OSHA Guidance for Schools and School-Based Programs
<https://files.covid19.ca.gov/pdf/guidance-schools.pdf>

California Department of Education Stronger Together: A Guidebook for the Safe Reopening of California's Public Schools
<https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/he/hn/strongertogether.asp>

CDPH COVID-19 and Reopening In-Person Learning Framework for K-12 Schools in California, 2020-2021 School Year
<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/CDPH%20Document%20Library/COVID-19/Schools%20Reopening%20Recommendations.pdf>

Posted on website
and sent to enrolled
families

Hope Academy Health and Safety Plan 2020

The following plan has been developed in response to CDC guidelines and CDPH requirements for reopening. This framework requires parents and employees to ensure that only healthy individuals are entering the campus. To support and enforce this approach, parents will be required to sign a legally-binding waiver of liability and healthy screening agreement. As such, you are agreeing to follow the protocols we have put in place:

- Check your child's temperature before leaving for school. It must be less than 100 degrees (F).
- Your child's temperature will be checked again on the playground at drop off. We will ask parents to wait to leave until their child has been cleared.
- If a child has a temperature of 100 or more, the parent will be required to take them home and isolate the child until they have been fever free for 24 hours. If other COVID-related symptoms occur with the fever, you have the option of having your child tested, and if they test negative and symptoms subside, he/she can return after 24 hours of being fever free. If you do not want the child tested, we ask that you self-isolate for the 14 day period. Homework will be provided. Please notify the school immediately if the child tests positive.
- If a fever occurs during the school day, a family member must be available to pick the child up within an hour of our call. We do not have space and supervision to isolate the child longer than that.
- Hats with soft, plastic shields will be provided for purchase (\$20) and must be worn throughout the day. Your child does not need to wear a mask with the shield.

If you prefer not to have your child on campus, we will offer to send packets of work home until you are comfortable returning. Packets (language arts, math, science, and social studies) will be available for pick up on Monday morning in the front office, and completed work must be returned by Friday at 3 pm. If work is not picked up, returned or completed more than once, this option may not be continued. While we want to accommodate families' needs, teachers are working very hard to adjust to the new conditions and providing take home packets is an extra part of their job. Teachers will also be available on a limited basis for consultation with any family that chooses the at home option, but are not responsible for extra tutoring or ongoing individual help.

Classroom and Facilities

- All classrooms will be equipped with hand sanitizer, disinfectant wipes, soap, and paper towels.
- Common areas will be cleaned and sanitized throughout the day.
- Classroom doors will be kept open to allow ventilation and airflow.
- Two air purifiers with UV will be placed in the room.
- Desks will be spaced to provide six feet of distance between students.
- Students will remain with their grade level groups of no more than 12 students throughout the school day.
- Students may only touch/handle their own learning materials. Each desk will have its own pencil can with supplies.
- Backpacks, lunches, and jackets will be kept in individual bins by the student's desk.
- All persons in the classroom will wear face shields or masks.
- Students must bring a lunch and water bottle. No heat ups (microwave).
- Students will eat at their desks in the classroom to continue social distancing. If the weather is nice and not too hot, we may move out onto the lawn or picnic tables.

Staff

- Staff will be willing to submit to regular testing (as available) to make sure they are not carrying the virus. This includes daily temperature checks and regular COVID testing.
- Staff will be responsible for following all guidelines and protocols, and will keep their cohort / class isolated from other groups so we can isolate any potential case of COVID and do appropriate contact tracing.
- Staff will wear masks/ shields at all times inside the building and out on the playground.

Parents, Visitors, Guests

- Visitors (including volunteers) will be limited and need to be temperature-checked before entering the building, and will be required to wear masks or shields.
- We will temporarily suspend “tours” for prospective new families.
- Grade 1-6 parents are not permitted to enter the building during drop off or pick up. Kindergarten parents, wearing masks or face shields, will be permitted to accompany their child to the classroom during the first week of school (if it is helpful for the child).

Drop Off

- Student drop off begins at 8:45 am at designated areas.
- Students checking in after 9:30 am (or when we are no longer on the playground) are to be dropped off at the front door where they will have their temperature checked.
- Students will have a staggered entry process in and out of the building; they will line up, enter/leave with their class. Marks on the floor will help them stay spaced in lines.

Check out

- Parents will come to the playground gate to request their child to check out. On most days we will be out on the new playground for check out. On rainy days, students will be brought downstairs at 3 pm and parents can pick up from the lobby.
- Early check out for appointments must be prearranged by texting 518-4092 so we can arrange to have your child downstairs for pick up.

PE and recess

- Students will play outside with limitations. No tag or contact games; students may play foursquare, basketball (shoot hoops), kickball, jumprope, etc.
- Equipment will be cleaned regularly.
- We will maintain our normal PE and recess schedule, allowing the students plenty of exercise and fresh air.

Water fountains and bathrooms

- Posters reminding children to wash their hands with soap and water for 20 seconds will be posted. We have hand washing timers that play a tune and flash lights when 20 seconds is up to help younger students.
- No more than one child will be in the bathroom at a time (already a rule!)
- Students will also be asked to use hand sanitizer every time they enter the classroom. You may provide one from home if you wish, but we will also have a touchless dispenser by the door.
- Water fountains will not be operational. Students must bring their own water bottle labeled with their name.

If A Child or Staff Member Tests Positive

- We will immediately notify staff and family members (following confidentiality practices of FERPA and state law related to student privacy)
- Call Butte County Public Health to notify them of the positive case
- Document possible exposure
- Sanitize areas where student or staff member may have been while infected. Ensure no other students or staff use the area until it has been completely clean.
- Staff and students must isolate at home until they have met the CDC criteria.

We will adjust this plan as needed given the current circumstances in our community and state. In the unlikely event that we are required to shut down again, we will provide weekly packets of school work and ongoing support to maintain consistency of instruction. Students will use the materials/ curriculum they are using at school; we will not switch to an online program as we did before. Tuition will remain the same; in the event of job loss or other family financial hardship, we will address these on a case by case basis.

Waiver of Liability and Health Screening Agreement

The novel coronavirus COVID-19 has been declared a worldwide pandemic by the World Health Organization. COVID-19 is very contagious and is believed to spread mainly from person-to-person contact. The CDC has strongly recommended the use of face coverings (masks or shields) to limit the spread, as well as social distancing and hand washing.

Hope Academy for Personalized Learning (Hope Academy) has put in place preventative measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19; however, Hope Academy cannot guarantee or assure you that your child will not become infected with COVID-19 as a result of or while attending classes or engaging in activities.

Please read and sign the waiver/health agreement below:

I understand the contagious nature of COVID-19 and voluntarily assume the risk on behalf of my child. I recognize the unpredictable nature of the COVID-19 virus, and agree to abide by the protocols the school has put in place to help ensure the well-being of all the students and staff at Hope Academy. I will commit to taking my child's temperature daily, keeping him/her home if there is evidence of a fever, keeping the school informed of health issues so we can make a plan for re-entry, and abiding by the hat/shield requirement while on the playground and in the classroom.

I hereby waive, release, and covenant not to sue or hold Hope Academy liable for exposure or contraction of COVID-19, or any results thereof.

Print student's name

Date

Parent signature

Addendum for waiver

Staff Training and Family Education

All families and our staff have received a copy of the Health and Safety Plan above. We have given families the opportunity to ask questions or voice concerns. We are holding a staff training on Friday, August 29th before the first day of school to walk through all of the protocols, ensure we have adequate supplies and that things are properly placed and accessible for consistent use, and that staff understand procedures for isolating a student who is ill or shows symptoms.

We have many empty/ unused rooms in the building during the school day that can be used to isolate a child who becomes ill or has a fever during the school day. We will immediately call the parent and require that parent sends someone to pick up the child within an hour.

If a child, parent, or staff member is exposed or exhibits symptoms of COVID, that person will be sent home immediately to isolate either for the 14 day period or until they are tested and confirmed to be negative.

Staff/ teachers will have their temperatures taken daily. If they have been exposed to a person who has tested positive for COVID, the staff/ teacher will be furloughed for 10 days and required to be tested before returning.

The criteria for a complete shutdown would be a consultation with the Butte County Department of Health.

Staff Support

Staff Consultation Letter

I have read the Health and Safety Plan provided to parents for the 2020-2021 school year, and agree with its guidelines and protocols.

I am comfortable teaching my in-person classroom assignment, understanding that each class grouping will consist of no more than 12 students and will be self-contained for the duration of each day.

I understand and will abide by the protocols required for preparing for my class, screening my students, and notifying the administration if I show symptoms or know I have been exposed to the virus.

I recognize that even with the precautions in place, there is still a chance of infection from the COVID virus by virtue of interacting with students.

Please list any questions or concerns:

Penny B Johnson _____ August 6, 2020

Print name

Date

Patrick J Nelson _____ August 6, 2020

Print name

Date

Joshua P. Molchen _____ August 7, 2020

Print name

Date

Penny B Johnson

Signature

Patrick J. Nelson

Signature

Joshua Molchen

Signature

Parent and Community Support

August 7, 2020

Ms. Jodi George, Administrator
Chico Hope Academy



Dear Ms. George,

I am writing to urge you, as superintendent of Chico Hope academy, to please pursue a waiver to operate a K-5th elementary school from the Butte County Department of Public Health.

My wife Rebekah and I feel, as parents of four young children, that in-person learning is absolutely critical to the developmental well-being of children. We also feel that children being isolated at home and out of school can be detrimental to their mental and physical health.

Our son Lance, who is 10 years old, struggled with feelings of loneliness this Spring when his school closed down for purposes of "Social Distancing," and he performed poorly with online "distance learning." For these reasons, we enrolled him in your school for the Fall 2020 semester, hoping that he would have an in-person school to go to.

Please work to secure an Elementary School Waiver for Chico Hope Academy as soon as possible.

Kind Regards,

MATT TENNIS

I would like to state my position with Hope Academy opening for this school year. I support hope academy opening the school year. The plan that has been put into place is going to facilitate keeping the teachers staff and children safe. I am a registered nurse and feel confident in the school plan. My daughter is also immunocompromised and I am comfortable sending her to school with the precautions in place. There will be screening , social distancing and other items that will keep the kids safe.

Stacey Passalacqua

August 7, 2020

To whom it may concern,

Hello! I have two children enrolled and attending Hope Academy here in Chico. I wanted to write a letter to show my support of the school opening despite the Governor's orders to close schools. Hope Academy has a very small amount of students and a huge building with lots of rooms at their disposal so they can really spread the kids out. There are also going to be four teachers this year so the breakdown of the groups are going to be even smaller. Jodi George, Hope Academy's director, ordered hats with shields for each kid and has kept in regular communication with all of us parents about the CDC guidelines the school will be following for hand sanitizing, social distancing and other measures like hand washing, sanitizing desks and equipment and providing each student with their own materials so they will not have to share. I feel confident that Hope Academy is in the position to hold school while keeping the kids and staff safe. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Kim Jacobi

Hope Academy parent



We are all quite frustrated by this prolonged course of over-zealous restriction for a virus that is proving to be about as statistically significant as other pathogens that we encounter on an annual basis. Many in our population do need to be more wary and take measures to protect themselves. However, the politics of this disease is doing far more damage to the economy and welfare of our children than any honest level of analysis can support.

We should all take measures to protect the weak and vulnerable in our community by voluntarily wearing face masks around the elderly and those with comorbid conditions. Children are the LEAST affected by this virus. Anybody that argues this point differently is gaslighting the public and their motivation must be questioned.

Adequate spacing, hand hygiene, and proper handling of fomite material are as important with this particular virus as with any other seasonal microbe that causes illness.

Fear mongering by politicians and the media at large does not 'control the outbreak' or change the usual and NORMAL course of a pathogen. Recent literature explains T-Cell immunity to Covid, demonstrating a certain level of 'herd immunity' has already been attained!

Closing down schools--**especially private institutions** that have **FAR FEWER pupils per classroom**, better supervision for proper hygienic measures, and have more spacing available--is not conducive to promoting trust in our political leaders or educating our children.

We collectively request that Hope Academy is allowed to remain open considering the mitigating factors listed above.

Sincerely,

Darrin Taylor, MPAS, PA-C
Laura Taylor, MPAS, PA-C

After careful consideration and thought we have decided as a family that having our child, Madison, return to in-person education is the best option. We believe having a traditional academic support system, available 5 days a week with pen to paper (not over a computer) provides the most optimal learning experience. Additionally, the social support of peers, teachers, and spiritual leaders aids in the development of children that is impossible to achieve with distant learning.

Both myself and spouse (Madison's mother and father) are essential workers.

Continuing to provide services for our community AND ensuring our child is receiving the best possible education is not achievable. Our options have narrowed to me ending my career as a RN to teach our children or praying that a waiver is extended to Hope Academy with safety measures in place.

Thank you

Tiffany Garcia, Parent of Madison Garcia

CDPH/To Whom It May Concern

We support Hope Academy re-opening in a traditional format. It is in the best interest of all children to do so. Please authorize the waiver so that families and staff can finalize plans for this school year. Our community is eager and committed to provide the best education possible. Children have endured changes in all aspects of their lives this year. Please facilitate a return to stable and supported education.

Sincerely,

Ronald and Kandida Madery

Butte County Public Health
Parental Support Letter
Hope Academy
Chico, CA

To the Butte County Public Health Department,

My name is Sarah Collins. My daughter, Ember Collins, is enrolled at Hope Academy this year for her Kindergarten year. She is very excited to start school this year!! I am writing this letter in support of Hope Academy being able to hold in-person classes during the Covid-19 pandemic. Hope Academy has been in constant contact with us as parents informing us of the requirements they have put in place to keep the kids and staff as safe as possible as well as the requirements we need to follow at home as a family to stay safe. We are ready, willing and able to follow the guidelines we have been given and any others necessary to keep everyone safe while school is in being held on the Hope Academy premises. Thank you for your time 😊

Sincerely,

Sarah Collins