Preparing every student to thrive in a global society.

EAST SIDE UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

Maintenance and Operations Response:
Ventilation as Means of lowering COVID-19 Transmission Rates

East Side Union High School District's Maintenance and Operations team have prioritized indoor air quality and the proper operation of our Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC) systems prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. COVID-19 has propelled our efforts with the desire to keep our students, staff, and community as safe as possible during these trying times and into the future. To that effort, the district has focused on three primary strategies:

1. Indoor air filtration & ventilation
2. Indoor air monitoring and controls
3. and system testing and certification

The district contracted with multiple vendors to perform a comprehensive assessment of all HVAC units across the district as outlined in AB 841 (School Energy Efficiency Stimulus (SEES) Program – Assembly Bill 841) signed by the governor of California. Certified assessments are underway now for each campus and are necessary to ensure that all HVAC units supply the recommended amount of outside air to spaces as advised by ASHRAE, CDC, and AB 841.

HVAC units that bring in less outside air than recommended or are not operating correctly will be identified by the assessment, and a new allowable occupancy rating will be calculated. HVAC units will be repaired or replaced as soon as equipment and staffing are available.

As of Fall 2020, air filters in HVAC units across the district have been upgraded from MERV 8 to MERV 13 standards in accordance with recommendations from the Center For Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE).

The MERV 13 filters significantly increase the HVAC system's ability to capture smaller airborne contaminants, significantly reducing COVID-19 transmission rates. (Filtration and Disinfection FAQ)

As of Fall 2020, Pelican Thermostats were installed in more than 90% of the district's indoor spaces. These thermostats play a crucial role in ensuring ventilation is maintained while classrooms are occupied. The devices monitor CO2 levels in the school, a byproduct of the space's human occupancy. CO2 levels activate the HVAC system's fan, allowing fresh air into the indoor space and recirculated air to be filtered out more frequently. The Pelican Thermostats also enable the maintenance team members to remotely diagnose HVAC issues when they occur, speeding up troubleshooting and repairs.