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Maintenance and Operations HVAC & Custodial Response to COVID-19

The East Side Union High School District's Maintenance and Operation's team in response to COVID – 19 has been focusing on ensuring that our Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC) systems and our custodial teams are ready for the return of our students, staff and community.

HVAC systems not only provide a comfortable temperature, they ensure the proper amount of fresh air is available in a space. Increasing ventilation rates means exchanging the air inside the space with fresh outside air more often. This removes airborne respiratory droplets from an infected person from the space more quickly and lessens the risk they will infect someone else. The maintenance team has been working with researchers from UC Berkeley and following ASHRAE's and CDC's guidelines to ensure that our HVAC systems are operating as effectively as possible. We've increased the installation of new thermostats which measure CO2 levels, this allows us to verify that proper ventilation levels are achieved. We now have over 1,000 thermostats installed and are working to install them in spaces as quickly as possible. We've updated our air filter specifications from MERV 8 to MERV 13 standards to provide a finer particle filtration and we're monitoring and testing classrooms to ensure proper operation of HVAC units and fresh air exchange.

Ensuring spaces are clean and sanitized is a critical element in stopping COVID – 19. We've worked with site administrators to help ensure that custodians have the training they need to keep spaces clean and ready for use. Custodians are providing more frequent cleaning and disinfection of common touch points such as door handles, tabletops, restrooms, and sinks and site administrators are working with their teams to develop cross check procedures to ensure all spaces are touched. We have provided additional COVID – 19 specific training to custodial team members and APA's at each campus and are currently developing additional training for these positions.

Each classroom and workspace have been provided a disinfectant bottle and roll of paper towels. Each site has also set up filling stations so staff members can retrieve disinfectant when needed for their daily use. In addition, we have installed hand sanitizer dispensers in every classroom and most common areas. We have also installed new soap dispensers in restrooms throughout the district.

We have also purchased 350,000 disposable facemasks for staff or students who do not bring their own mask to work or school. We have also purchased face shields for every employee who would like to wear one. For our office staff, counselors and speech psychologists, we have purchased portable plexiglass barriers for any one on one meetings that take place. All of these products are available through the warehouse at no cost.