

## Union Notes – April 7, 2021

We know that communications have been confusing and contradictory at times and that at some sites, members have felt pressure to get to pre-COVID class sizes. While no one wants to return to normal more than we do, we also know that it's only through strict mitigations that we will be able to prevent transmission on our campuses. This is why all of the safety mitigations, including physical distance are so critical.

On the question of distance our [agreement](#) is crystal clear: "Student chairs shall be positioned at least 6 feet away from one another. Under no circumstance should the distance between student chairs be less than 5 feet." With our agreement as with all other contract language, enforcement is essential. It is up to all of us to make sure safety protocols and mitigations are being utilized and followed at our sites.

There has been some confusion around the interpretation of the tentative agreement, as it relates to use of 5-ft. physical distancing between student chairs in order to determine classroom capacity. When interpreting the 5-ft. distancing language, we have seen many variations in understanding. Additionally, there have been many conversations regarding the limitations that present themselves due to room configurations and desk types and sizes. Reasonable classroom configurations should be used to maximize the classroom space to allow for students opting to return to onsite instruction--while staying true to the distancing requirements.

Originally, the district's interpretation of 5-ft. was determined by measuring from the center of the seat to the center of the seat, also known as 'nose-to-nose'. Many schools have been measuring seat distancing based on this interpretation. After further discussion with SDUSD leadership, there have been updates made on the standard used when measuring 5 ft. of distancing between student chairs in order to determine classroom capacity. To be clear there are no exceptions to the physical distancing rules, just as there are no exceptions to the use of masks, ventilation requirements, and COVID-19 testing.

If your classroom's capacity and classroom arrangements do not allow for the required 5-ft. distance between students, please notify your administrator using the following updated guidance:

- 5-ft. distance between students should be measured edge of seat to edge of seat to determine classroom capacity (classroom capacity = number of students who safely fit in the classroom).
- Once you have determined maximum capacity you may arrange student seating in a manner that makes sense for teaching and learning, including the use of alternative seating. Sites may work with PPO to explore options for procuring alternative furniture.
- 4-foot round tables may seat 2 students so long as the 5-ft. distancing criteria is used to determine overall classroom capacity.

It is critical that we move forward both collectively and responsibly for a safe and successful April 12th return to onsite instruction.

Together we are stronger and safer!