



400 Encinal Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95060 • Tel (831) 466-5600 • Fax (831) 466-5607 • www.santacruzcoe.org

Date: July 15, 2020

To: Families of Santa Cruz County

Re: **Criteria for Offering a Distance Learning Model**

Dear Families of Santa Cruz County,

The health and wellness of students, staff, and families continue to be the highest priority of Santa Cruz County School Superintendents and Charter School Leaders as we plan for the 2020-2021 school year. Yesterday, [Governor Newsom announced that California must immediately re-implement restrictions](#) for certain activities including dine-in restaurants, bars, wineries, movie theatres, family entertainment centers, zoos, and museums due to the recent uptick in California's COVID-19 case data. Counties that are added to the [California Department of Public Health \(CDPH\) COVID-19 Monitoring List](#) will be required to shut down more activities including fitness centers, worship services, protests, offices for non-essential sectors, and personal care services. Santa Cruz County is not currently on the Monitoring List, but our county's public health modeling does project that our county is likely to be placed on this list and be subject to further restrictions soon. We believe the same indicators, grounded in science, should be utilized to determine if school campuses will be safe to allow groups of students to gather in classrooms and school campuses.

[Due to the continued upward trend of confirmed COVID-19 cases in Santa Cruz County](#) and the county's lack of capacity to provide COVID-19 testing for the school community, we will be utilizing the CDPH criteria for State monitoring to determine if schools should open the 2020/21 school year with a distance learning model. The criteria set by CDPH for Counties across California are determined by elevated levels in the areas of disease transmission, increasing hospitalization, and limited hospital capacity. **If Santa Cruz County is added to the list of counties being monitored by the state, we will recommend all school districts shift to a distance learning model for the start of the school year.**

While we wish to ensure that in-person learning is an option for students at the start of the 2020-2021 school year, which is particularly important for our most vulnerable students and families, we must take a course of action that both ensures the safety of our community and provides high-quality education and essential services to families. Santa Cruz County public schools are committed to ensuring that all learners have the resources they need to succeed and thrive during these challenging circumstances regardless of whether classroom learning continues to be an option for the start of the 2020-2021 school year.

With the incidence of COVID-19 on the rise in our county and state, it is more important than ever that we all do our best to avoid non-essential travel, comply with safe social distancing measures, wear face coverings when in the presence of others outside of our households, and practice healthy hand hygiene

that limits the transmission of infectious disease. For information on Santa Cruz County COVID-19 data and resources for how to prevent the spread of illness, please visit santacruzhealth.org/coronavirus

Yours in education and equity,

Laurie Bruton, Superintendent, San Lorenzo Valley Unified School District

Lorie Chamberland, Superintendent, Live Oak School District

Eric Gross, Superintendent, Pacific Elementary School District

Mike Heffner, Superintendent, Bonny Doon Union Elementary School District

Michelle McKinny, Superintendent, Happy Valley Elementary School District

Diane Morgenstern, Superintendent, Mountain Elementary School District

Kris Munro, Superintendent, Santa Cruz City Schools

Faris Sabbah, County Superintendent of Schools

Scott Turnbull, Superintendent, Soquel Union Elementary School District