



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

Date: July 20, 2020

To: Families of Santa Cruz County

Re: **Distance Learning Only for K-12 Schools for 2020-2021 School Year, County Guidance**

Dear Families of Santa Cruz County,

Due to the continued upward trend of confirmed COVID-19 cases in California, Governor Newsom set forth a new mandate for California K-12 schools last week that provides long awaited clarity to educators and parents as we look to the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year. Newsom's order mandates all counties who qualify for the [California Department of Public Health COVID-19 Monitoring List](#) to continue with distance learning only until they are able to remain off this list for 14 consecutive days. The CDPH monitoring list criteria is determined by elevated levels in the areas of disease transmission, increasing hospitalization, and limited hospital capacity specific to each county. Santa Cruz County has met the criteria to be on the state monitoring list as of July 20, 2020. **Therefore, school districts, charter schools, and private schools are now required to provide distance learning instructional services only.** Schools may reopen for in-person instruction once Santa Cruz County has not been on the county monitoring list within the prior 14 days. Santa Cruz County schools will reopen when local public health data demonstrates that it is safe to do so, with reduced transmission levels and the availability of testing and contact tracing for the school community. Based on the trajectory of the pandemic in our county, it is unlikely schools will be able to re-open for in-person instruction prior to January 2021.

This summer, the Santa Cruz County Office of Education and County school district Superintendents have been working in partnership with our local public health authorities to prepare guidelines for Santa Cruz County educational institutions that will facilitate a safe return to site-based classroom instruction for when local public health conditions allow. We are pleased to announce that this document is ready for distribution, and is applicable to all K-12 schools, public or private, throughout Santa Cruz County. **View the Full Reopening Framework for Santa Cruz County Schools [here](#).** We are grateful for the collaborative efforts of our local public health department and the many teams of school personnel in the development of this framework.

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented tremendous challenges to our education system and to the students and families that our schools serve, bearing disproportionate challenges for our

most vulnerable youth. We recognize that the rapid emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic and sudden changes it has imposed on families has been extremely disruptive and a source of significant hardship. When our local COVID-19 data no longer places us on the CDPH monitoring list for the requirement of 14 consecutive days, Santa Cruz County schools will transition to in-person educational models that allow for the reintegration of limited, small group in-class learning opportunities for students. In the interim, Santa Cruz County public schools are committed to ensuring that all learners have the resources and access to essential services they need to succeed and thrive via distance learning.

Essential services including daily free meal and grocery programs, social and emotional support services, and free and reduced-cost internet connectivity will continue to be provided to students and families throughout the extended school closures. Parents can expect to be contacted by their child's school for specific information and resources pertaining to their distance learning program as the first day of school draws nearer.

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
Tanya Kraus, Superintendent, Scotts Valley Unified School District
Michelle McKinny, Superintendent, Happy Valley Elementary School District
Diane Moregenstern, Superintendent, Mountain Elementary School District
Kris Munro, Superintendent, Santa Cruz City Schools
Michelle Rodriguez, Superintendent, Pajaro Valley Unified School District
Faris Sabbah, County Superintendent of Schools
Scott Turnbull, Superintendent, Soquel Union Elementary School District