

Dear SYSD Colleagues,

May this message bring glimmers of hope to you and your families as notable progress to successfully combat the COVID pandemic have been made by the collective efforts of our country, state, county and community within the months of February and March.

On March 12th, the County announced that the state had met a mark of vaccinating 2 million people in the communities hardest hit by COVID-19 and San Diego is expected to move to the Red Tier on March 17th. This means that schools throughout the County will be able to reopen within the California Department of Public Health's COVID safety guidelines. Thankfully, our district's zip code COVID case rates have also significantly dropped to 9/100,000 in 92173 and 10.2/100,000 in 92154, for the period of February 21st-27th.

The County Supervisors announced in early March that all educators in San Diego would be prioritized to receive access to the COVID vaccine. The district anticipates that by about April 2nd all SYSD employees will have had an opportunity to schedule the second vaccine appointment, if desired.

Our district is also grateful to our Maintenance, Operations, Transportation and Facilities Team for the remarkable work they have completed in preparing our schools to safely reopen in accordance to the safety guidelines outlined in our [COVID Safety Plan](#) and approved by the county health department for our district.

On March 11th, the SYSD Governing Board authorized the district to continue the Distance Learning Program for families who prefer their students remain learning online. In addition, the Board also approved the start date of the Hybrid Learning Programs the week of April 12th for those families interested in selecting a mixture of in person and online instruction.

Depending upon staffing availability, families choosing the Hybrid Learning Program will either receive 1 day per week or 2 days per week of in person instruction. In preparation for the launch of Hybrid Learning Programs the district has reserved the week of April 5th to: 1) Notify families in both the Distance Learning Program and Hybrid Learning Program of their child's new weekly school schedule beginning the week of April 12th; 2) Provide students with virtual in class training regarding the district's COVID safety procedures; 3) Conduct a districtwide voluntary Virtual Staff District School Reopening Kick Off Event on Tuesday, April 6th from 4:30-5:30pm (time cards may be submitted for 1 hour if this event is occurring during an employee's non-work hours); and 4) District leadership will provide a Virtual District School Reopening Parent Telebriefing.

Adherence of COVID safety guidelines will be required for all staff and students participating in a Hybrid Learning Program at our schools, such as, but not limited to: Face Masks, Social Distancing, Hand Washing, Health Screenings, COVID Testing for Staff and Students (w/ parent permission). All staff returning to a school or department facility for the first time in person or after spring break will be required to provide proof of a negative COVID test prior to arrival via

email to Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services, Pupil Services and Safety, Dr. David Farkas.

The district and schools will be closed for instruction during the week of spring break from Monday, March 22nd through Friday, April 2nd. All certificated staff are scheduled to return to work on Friday, April 2nd for a districtwide Virtual Professional Development 2 Hour Session and then for preparation time the balance of the workday. All students will resume online instruction within the Distance Learning Academy on Monday, April 5th.

The week of April 12th Hybrid Learning Programs will begin, and all students in both the Distance Learning Academy and Hybrid Learning Programs will begin new weekly school schedules. Regardless of the instructional program choice, most students will remain with their current teacher/s districtwide. For students attending school in person they will be provided a "Grab and Go" lunch at the end of their school day as they go home. Additionally, the weekly drive through children's free meal service provided for all schools will continue.

I am proud of our staff for their resilience, perseverance, and strength during this difficult school year. Our district extends a sincere, heartfelt "thank you" to you and your families for the tremendous support and sacrifices you have made to ensure the children of our community are cared for and continue to learn despite the challenges this year has brought. Together our district will continue to survive the pandemic and we will emerge stronger as a community.

With Hope & Gratitude,

Gina Potter, Ed.D.  
Superintendent