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Office of the Superintendent

March 11, 2020

Dear San Dieguito Union High School District Community,

The health and safety of our students is our priority and I want to thank our community for their patience and understanding as we work through the preparedness and prevention of COVID-19. District leadership and the appropriate staff have been participating in ongoing planning and communication led by the San Diego County Office of Education to receive the most recent and relevant guidance for schools. We are being guided in our response by The County of San Diego Health and Human Services Department.

We have a priority of providing up-to-date accurate information for everyone and we are posting it online at sduhsd.net/coronavirus.

Decision to Close a School

Many of the questions we are receiving have to do with closing schools - what is the criteria and process? The State of California put out guidelines for school closures. The full document is available on our website, at the location above, so all of our community can read it. They have outlined four scenarios that should be considered by each school district in order to protect students, families, and staff. This guidance is based on what is currently known about the transmission and severity of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19). The California Department of Public Health, in consultation with the California Department of Education, will update this guidance as needed and as additional information becomes available. A key component of the guidance, and an additional guidance sent to districts, is that school districts cannot unilaterally close schools. The decision to do so must involve the County Public Health Department, County Office of Education and the State of California.

All of the authorities involved in the decision to close a school understand that schools are a safe place for students to be as they are supervised, sheltered and cared for. If a school(s) is closed the overriding concern of the district will be the health and safety of our students and families. We want to know they are sheltered, supervised, and have resources. If needed, once health and safety is addressed, we will shift our focus to continuing education.

Travel and Field Trips

We have also received questions regarding planned field trips. Based on the guidance from San Diego County Office of Education, and San Diego Health and Human Services, we are not cancelling trips and travel.

In the current environment, travel to countries that are labeled by the CDC as Warning Level 3 or Alert Level 2 is strongly discouraged. If you visit a country or place that is at Warning Level 3 or Alert Level 2, you must report this to your Principal before returning to school. Your child will be required to stay home and away from fellow students for 14 days after your return to San Diego and before coming back to school. This is the standard self-quarantine period recommended by the CDC. At the moment these countries include China, Iran, Italy, South Korea, and Japan. Any absence due to quarantine or illness will be excused.

Please check here for up-to-date travel warning information:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html>

We fully understand this is a challenging situation and there are differing opinions on how we, and society, should proceed. Further, we understand the anxiety this situation may cause for students and families. The District will continue to work closely with expert authorities and provide our community with accurate and timely information as this situation evolves. I ask that our community do its part to assess and evaluate information you may be hearing on social media or in the community. It is important for us to spread knowledge, not rumors. If you have questions, please visit our website, and if needed, contact your school first.

Once again, I want to thank you for your patience and understanding as we continue to monitor this very challenging situation. By working together, we can support accurate information and help protect the public health of our community. Thank you for your partnership and support.

Robert A. Haley, Ed.D.
Superintendent
Committed to the Future