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Office of the Superintendent

March 8, 2021

Subject: School Safety Request Application Update

Dear San Dieguito Union High School District Community,

Last night, on Sunday evening, our district received [an email](#) from Governor Newsom's representative Dr. Naomi Bardach, Lead of the Safe Schools for All Team for the State of California that our request to expand in-person teaching and learning for students was not approved. In an effort to simplify this correspondence SDUHSD received, we were not approved to move forward with the plan we submitted. Instead, we were told that we must adhere to the cohort guidance previously issued by the California Department of Public Health.

We are incredibly frustrated and displeased by this decision as our San Diego County Public Health Officer, Dr. Wilma Wooten, and her team after a thorough review [approved](#) our request prior to submitting it to the Safe Schools for All Team. We also believe that this decision is inconsistent with the message coming from Governor Newsom that he supports the expansion of school reopenings.

The same letter we received denying our request was also sent to Carlsbad Unified School District and Poway Unified School District. Last night I met directly with Dr. Naomi Bardach, head of the CDPH Safe Schools for All Team, and Brooks Allen of the State Board of Education to appeal the decision. Dr. Bardach was unwilling to change the ruling and said it was final. If you have a concern about this decision, you may use the [Safe Schools for All Portal](#) to register it. You can contact [Governor Newsom's office](#) as well with any questions or concerns you may have.

Our district administration, principals and site administrators, teachers, counselors, and support staff have worked tirelessly to establish safe reopening plans that adhere to all local and state requirements. All of our plans have been reviewed and approved by San Diego County Public Health. Additionally, we have successfully advocated for the prioritization of vaccinations for our staff. Based on this, we will continue to advocate for our authorization to expand general in-person instruction for our students. In the meantime, each school will continue to offer students opportunities to participate in activities, athletics, and distance learning from campus.

We remain optimistic and confident that San Diego County will move out of Purple Tier and into the Red Tier, sometime in the near future, which will then allow us to implement the plan for expanded general in-person instruction. We will continue to keep our SDUHSD community informed.

Robert Haley
Superintendent
Committed to the Future