

**August 30, 2021**

Dear Parents/Guardians, Students, and Community Members:

As we enter into the 2021-2022 school year, we collectively want to take this opportunity to share with you our **excitement** that all public schools in San Benito County are open for full in-person instruction. This includes all 11 school districts, Alternative Education, Hollister Prep Charter School and Sacred Heart Parish School. We understand how difficult the Pandemic has been on our students, families, educators, and community. We have worked tirelessly to ensure we were prepared to safely open our schools. We have worked with our staff to guarantee all safety mitigation processes have been put into place to keep our students and staff safe.

To help our students safely return to full in-person instruction, we are committed to complying with all COVID-19 safety guidelines, mandates, and regulations adopted by the California Department of Public Health, the San Benito County Department of Public Health, and Cal/OSHA (*including, but not limited to requiring face coverings while indoors in all schools, washing hands often, staying home when showing symptoms or exposed to COVID, active/passive screening, etc.*). Adherence to these safety measures is not only a legal obligation for our public educational agencies, but also necessary to minimize the exposure and/or spread of COVID-19, including the current Delta variant, and is in the best interests of our students, staff, and communities. For further information about these mandates, please visit the CA Safe Schools for All Hub and click on the Safe Schools Parent Page. [CA Covid-19 School Readiness Hub](#)

To assist in this endeavor, we have taken the following actions for each of our respective agencies:

- Worked directly with our State and Local Public Health Officers to receive information and guidance
- Board adopted Safety Plans aligned to COVID-19 and Cal/OSHA required safety measures
- Board adopted Injury and Illness Prevention Plans; and
- Board adopted options for families to access a Long-Term Independent Study option
- Offering face covering exemptions that must be approved by a health care provider

We **thank you** in advance for your efforts in helping to make the 2021-2022 school year safe and successful for all our students, and their families. **Together**, we will get through this Pandemic! Your student's academic success and safety is our number one priority.

If you have any questions, please contact the district directly.

Sincerely,

Dr. Michele Huntoon, Superintendent, Aromas-San Juan Unified School District  
Candance Brewen, Teacher/Principal, Bitterwater-Tully School District  
Hallie Ochoa, Teacher/Principal, Cienega School District  
Erika Sanchez, Superintendent, Hollister School District  
Kevin Sved, Chief Executive Officer, Navigator Charter School  
Elizabeth Volmer, Teacher/Principal, Jefferson School District  
Jenny Bernosky, Principal/Superintendent, North County Joint Union School District  
Amanda McCraw, Teacher/Principal, Panoche School District  
Dr. Rachel McKenna, Principal, Sacred Heart Parish School  
Krystal Lomanto, County Superintendent, San Benito County Office of Education  
Tracey Belton, Director, San Benito County Health and Human Services  
Dr. Shawn Tennenbaum, Superintendent, San Benito High School District  
Dr. John Schilling, Superintendent, Southside School District  
Bronson Lobue, Superintendent, Tres Pinos School District  
Linda Smith, Principal, Willow Grove School District