

Dear CSD Families,

The impacts of the coronavirus are touching every aspect of our lives and forcing all of us to find creative ways to adapt to this unprecedented situation. We know the disruption in normal school operations has created many issues and uncertainties for you and your families, from childcare and meals to working from home and schooling. In this letter, we will answer some of your most pressing questions related to these concerns as best as we can at this time.

First, and most importantly, please take a minute to think about the bigger picture of what you want to accomplish and pour into your children over these next few months. What do you want them to remember? A time of stress, conflict, anger and tension in the home, or that this was a time when we pulled together as a family, did our best and loved each other through a very crazy and sometimes scary time? This opportunity is much bigger than the academic tasks you may feel compelled to check off a list. It is also about modeling for your children how we get through hard times, how we work together and treat each other under stress. It's about building character and being patient, finding peace in the midst of chaos and things we can't control. I would challenge you to focus on these things over everything else because these will have more lasting value and lifelong impact than anything else you do.

When will school reopen?

Due to safety concerns and the need for ongoing social distancing the Governor, State Superintendent and County Superintendent have issued a directive that all schools in San Bernardino County will keep schools closed for the remainder of the school year. At this time schools will be closed until further notice since we have not been given a specific date in which it will be safe to return.

Are School sites and the District office open and how can I get updated information?

Although schools and district offices will be closed to the public, we will have staff members available who can address the needs of our students and families between the hours of 8 a.m. and 12 p.m., Monday through Friday, unless we are otherwise directed by state or county officials. Principals, teachers and counselors will have virtual office hours during this time when they will be reaching out to students and responding to emails they have received. If you have questions, concerns or thoughts please email or leave a voice message at the school and staff will return your call.

Will 8th grade promotion ceremonies be held?

Like all of you, we want nothing more than to honor our students for their accomplishments. The thought of end of the year activities and promotion ceremonies being cancelled is heartbreaking. Unfortunately, we will not be able to hold any of our planned events for this school year.

What is distance learning?

Distance Learning means instruction in which the student and instructor are in different locations. The California Department of Education has offered guidance regarding distance learning that includes providing educational opportunities in a variety of ways as long as it is feasible and accessible to all students.

How will distance learning be provided for students at home?

Beginning April 6th, we will resume providing independent work instruction for Grades TK-8, as we did prior to Spring Break. This independent work, developed by your students' classroom teacher, will continue through May 29th, the last day of school. If you have any difficulty accessing lesson plans or other suggested instructional materials, please contact your student's teacher via email or teacher communication system.

Will Chromebooks be checked out for student use?

No, although technology options are available, our Weekly Learning Activity Plans are specifically designed to provide access for all students without requiring technology or the need to check-out student laptops.

Are students required to participate in distance learning?

It is important that students engage daily, to the greatest extent possible, so that they can make progress toward achieving the academic goals for their grade level. However, we understand some families may have situations that make participation difficult; we are prepared to discuss those situations on a case by case basis. Teachers will continue to reach out to students daily to ensure that a plan is developed that will allow them to engage in home learning. Please contact your school if your student is experiencing difficulty accessing the grade level lessons on the school website or materials they need to complete their coursework.

Will distance learning work be graded?

After much consideration we have decided to align our district with all of the elementary districts in our city and most of the state. All students will receive NM indicating No Mark, along with a comment stating, "No Marks (NM) reported in Trimester 3 as a result of the COVID-19 school closure" on the Trimester 3 report card. For this reason, report cards will not be sent home, but they will be filed in your student's cumulative file. Although changes will not be made in the Aeries gradebook, teachers are working hard to keep students engaged in the learning process and will continue to provide feedback to students. Please know the district very carefully reflected on the impact for students and weighed various approaches before finalizing this important decision.

How do I contact my student's counselor?

Our school counselors are skilled at assisting students experiencing personal difficulties and their help during our closure will be invaluable to our students' well-being. Counselors at every school will be available during their virtual office hours of 8 a.m.-12 p.m. Monday-Friday. Please email your school counselor directly using your school's staff directory on the school web page or email your school principal if you need additional assistance.

Will I have access to my student's classroom to retrieve my student's belongings?

At this time we are encouraging all staff and families to practice social distancing, avoid public places, and limit contact with others whenever possible so that together we can prevent the spread of this virus. For this reason we will not be allowing access to classrooms at this time.

Will we be able to get school meals for our children?

Yes. Grab and Go school meals will be available for all children (ages 2 to 18) at all school sites from 10:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Monday -Friday. Children must be present to receive a meal. Please check school/district websites for additional information.

How do we create a schedule for at home learning?

One thing to remember here is that although your child is at school for 6-7 hours per day, it will take you far less time to accomplish the learning activities at home. No matter how you decide to structure your day, there are a few things to keep in mind:

- Kids need a break. Don't expect them to sit for extended periods of time without breaking it up.
- Allow them to be a part of the planning – create a list of what needs to get done and let them help decide how and when. Maybe do a little bit of each subject every day, or maybe assign a subject to each day. When students have some control and choice in the matter, they are often more likely to buy in and own it.
- Help them set goals and build in incentives for reaching them.
- Limit distractions as much as possible. No TV while doing school work.
- One of the most important things you can be doing with your elementary aged children right now is to be reading to them, with them and having them read at their independent level on their own.
- Lastly, this is a wonderful opportunity to have your child authentically write. Have them keep a journal – depending on their age, help them learn about what is going on in the world and have them respond/react. These journals/scrapbooks will be keepsakes for generations to come.

How do we partner through this?

Stay connected and informed as much as you can with your child's teacher and the supports, learning opportunities and resources he/she is offering. We are here to help you. Do not hesitate to call if you have questions or need help.

Please remember that we are all in this together and school communities all over the country are struggling and overwhelmed, we are not alone. No one is going to hold anything against you for what you were not able to do so learn to celebrate what you can do. Think outside the box. You are not expected to replicate the school day at home. It's impossible. Do what works for you and your family. Perhaps for your family the time you interact with your children on learning is after dinner. It doesn't have to look like their normal school day. Relax, give yourself and your children some grace.

Most importantly, please take care of yourself and your family.

Sincerely,

Donna Libutti

Central School District Superintendent

