

Measuring the Coronavirus Climb: SSDA (Small School Districts' Association) and PCG (Public Consulting Group) Join to Measure Educational Effectiveness of Small School Districts in California During COVID-19 Spring 2020 Pandemic

June 10, 2020



California Small School COVID-19 Innovation Survey

Sacramento, CA – Nationally recognized membership organization of small school districts, SSDA, and the Education division of Public Consulting Group, leading research, consulting and strategic implementation solution providers, announce the release of a statewide survey to measure the performance of small and rural districts in California during the COVID-19 Spring 2020 pandemic. The purpose of this study is to gather statistical data to inform school administrators, lawmakers and educational advocates in identifying best practices, successes, and challenges in order to better inform decision-making and planning for a Fall 2020 school re-opening.

Tim Taylor, Executive Director of the Small School Districts' Association, explained, *"Gathering the data that will demonstrate which methods and practices were the most effective and/or ineffective is critical to our planning for a safe and successful Fall 2020. Spring may not have been perfect, but schools that worked from the perspective that the personal relationship between the teacher and student is the most critical part of helping families and students get through this pandemic, also showed tremendous achievement in multiple categories."*

Dr. Jack McLaughlin, PCG Education Manager, stated *"Because reopening schools is everyone's business, PCG is partnering with the Small School Districts' Association to conduct in-depth research to gather the evidence necessary to determine the model of instruction that will be the most effective, powerful and our highest priority, authentic to the particular demands of local school districts."*

Planning and policy for reopening schools in the fall pose innumerable challenges, especially given the vacuum of reliable data with which to base decisions. Summarizing the question "What does the research tell us to do?" the Learning and Skills Education Bulletin states, "The short answer is nothing, or at least nothing conclusive" (Coryton, 2020). Small school districts have anecdotally reported significant areas of progress despite the challenges faced during the COVID-19 Spring 2020 Crisis. Small school districts are agile, community driven, highly invested, and in many cases ahead of the curve in technological innovation and digital learning.

The ingenuity seen in the stories of many small California school districts is inspiring during a time when so much of the news reported is discouraging and disturbing. Many small school districts have utilized technology to equalize educational opportunities for many years, thus enabling a quicker, more direct transition when schools closed. With task forces being gathered to develop a framework for Fall 2020, data and best practices are more critical than ever.

By gathering the data from these schools, we find possibility, we find evidence to make decisions, we expose innovations that may serve a larger population, and we allow ourselves the benefit of data to inform planning for the most challenging educational period in the world's history.

The California Small School COVID-19 Innovation Survey will be released directly to school superintendents the 3rd week of June.

About Public Consulting Group



EDPlan Accelerator™



Founded in 1986 and headquartered in Boston, Massachusetts. PCG's Education practice offers consulting services and technology solutions that help schools, school districts, and state education agencies to promote student success, improve programs and processes, and optimize financial resources.

To learn more, please visit <http://www.publicconsultinggroup.com/education/>.



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About Small School Districts' Association (SSDA)



Small School Districts' Association

The Small School Districts' Association is California's leading organization in terms of addressing, supporting, and lobbying on issues specific to the unique needs of small school districts.

The mission of the Small School Districts' Association is to provide relevant information and proactive assistance to small school district governing boards and superintendents through legislative advocacy, collaboration, professional development, and support services. To learn more, visit <https://www.ssda.org>.



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