



**June 2020**

**SSDA Coronavirus Innovation Survey  
of Small California School Districts**

SSDA The Small School Districts' Association- and long-time Associate Member PCG are pleased to showcase the innovative nature of small school districts in California through the California Small School District Coronavirus Innovation Survey.

Tim Taylor, Executive Director, Small School Districts Association  
Dr. Jack McLaughlin, Education Manager, Public Consulting Group  
Dr. Kimberly Bonniksen, Research Officer, Public Consulting Group

# SSDA Coronavirus Innovation Survey

June 2020

## SSDA Coronavirus Innovation Survey of Small California School Districts

### Introduction

SSDA and PCG are pleased to partner in the administration of this survey of small school districts in the State of California to measure the performance of these districts during the Spring 2020 Coronavirus. This analysis also reflects needs for District strategic roadmap planning to Re-open Schools.

We are pleased to report that small school districts operate as education Innovators, taking full advantage of the connective, small community nature of their programs to provide premier learning to their students.

Very little media attention has called attention to the rapid and efficient transformations completed by these districts during a time of crisis. The agility and pioneering nature of these schools provide a testing ground for important educational theory design and testing.

By capturing the best practices and ongoing challenges of these schools, conclusions may be drawn that may be of great advantage to all educational organizations.

Tim Taylor, Executive Director SSDA  
Dr. Jack McLaughlin, Education Manager, PCG  
Dr. Kimberly Bonniksen, Research Officer, PCG

## SSDA CORONAVIRUS Innovation Survey Background and Methodology

As co-advocates of localized education with community driven connectivity that makes our schools great, we seek through data and collaboration to reinforce all positive school leadership and guide leaders to potential solutions where they find need.

Target Population Studied: California Small School District Superintendents  
185 of 546 total California Small School Districts completed survey: 34%

Objective: Measure Small School District performance and concerns resulting from the Coronavirus school shutdown Spring 2020; Collect best practices from Small School District leaders for consolidated best practices framework; assess ongoing threats to 2020 reopening of schools.

### WINS

- Small Districts were in full instruction within an average of 5.3 days
- 20 schools were able to execute an immediate transition with 0 lost days, 28 started within 1 day.
- 81% rate of active student participation
- Only 30% of districts reported students digressing into the COVID Slide that was predicted to set students back up to a full academic year. A few small districts actually reported a COVID Climb as more achievement was seen that would be typical at the end of the year.
- Only 13% of respondents reported a poor state of social and emotional well-being.
- Though students, families and educators were subject to the social and emotional challenges in much the same ways as their peers, only 13.4% of students labelled their social and emotional wellness as poor and 0% as very poor.

### NEEDS

- 54% of Districts rated getting access to technology infrastructure as Difficult or Impossible with only 8% reporting the issue as Efficiently Handled.
- 88% respondents indicated need for enablement of In-District Capacity for Distance Learning Curriculum Development
- 84% expressed need for Professional Development to guide instructional practices in distance learning
- Administrators expressed a need for guidance in designing hybrid educational plans for reopening: 2.2% considered themselves expert and 16% advanced
- 89% of small Districts revealed serious challenges to reopening due to budget constraints



Solutions that Matter

June 2020 Survey  
Of Small California School Districts  
SSDA Coronavirus Innovation Survey

Special thanks to all the California Educators for their dedication to students and families during the Coronavirus Global Pandemic.

Your efforts are recognized and appreciated.

Your skills and your innovative thinking are the path to a successful future for our students and our nation.

**Tim Taylor**

Executive Director, Small School Districts Association

Website: [www.SSDA.org](http://www.SSDA.org)

Email: [tim@SSDA.org](mailto:tim@SSDA.org)

Phone: 916-662-7213

**Dr. Jack McLaughlin**

Education Manager, Public Consulting Group

Website: <https://publicconsultinggroup.com/education/>

Email: [jmclaughlin@pcgus.com](mailto:jmclaughlin@pcgus.com)

Phone: 775-313-3121

**Dr. Kimberly Bonniksen**

Research Officer, Public Consulting Group

Website: <https://publicconsultinggroup.com/education/>

Email: [kbonnicksen@pcgus.com](mailto:kbonnicksen@pcgus.com)