



Sunnyside Union School District

21644 Avenue 196
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Below are some of the draft highlights of the Learning Continuity and Attendance Plan that will be part of a Public Hearing on September 8, 2020, at 6 PM. The full draft can be found at <https://tinyurl.com/yxvl2mw4>. Comments can be made at the hearing (social distancing and facial covering required) or sent to comments@sunnysideunion.com.

IMPACT ON LEARNERS The impact on Learners is immeasurable. Those students (junior high) who participated (by choice) in our extended Summer Long Enrichment program expressed severe thoughts and feelings about the isolation and lack of socialization that this Pandemic has created. In addition, learners with special needs, including but not limited to; (a) Physical; (b) Social Emotional; (c) Language; and, (d) Behavioral have suffered tremendous harm from the lack of face-to-face instruction. In addition, Learners who would normally be open and sharing about needs/problems **no longer have the outlet** that the school provided.

THE COVID – 19 IMPACT COMMUNITY

As clearly outlined in the responses the Pandemic impact can be summarized as **impacting children's education and emotional growth**. The lack of social interactions is having a significant impact. Parents are being both emotionally and financially challenged. Many in the community are spending more time with their families, but the focus is not always on the family. Worries about the everyday challenges dominate the day. Simple tasks like having to go to the grocery store have been changed due to the Pandemic. Trips like these now require multiple trips, or finding child care or both. Many community members feel they are fortunate to work, but at the same time are suffering hardship due to having to secure children care or alternative settings for their children.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

REACHOUT TO COMMUNITY (HOW) As the 2019-20 school year drew to a conclusion, the district utilized a variety of methods to include Stakeholder Feedback and Input. Surveys were sent out via our Districtwide communication system in the following formats; text (with direct links), Facebook, Live Feeds, and Twitter. All formats were available in English and Spanish. On other occasions hard copy letters were sent directly to the Stakeholders mailing address. This occurred when the district desired direct feedback, with names. The district also utilized the Save the Children program that has numerous direct contacts with community members.

The district used its voice communication system. As with any type of message, these messages were available in both English and Spanish. The district also solicited and interacted with parents and community during both pick-up and return of school materials and work. During the Pandemic, the district established an Email account comments@sunnysideunion.com. We were extremely pleased that stakeholders have been using the email to communicate comments, questions, and inquiries in both the English and Spanish language. The simple establishment of this account has allowed for greater and timelier feedback. The line is checked throughout the day by the District Administration Team and the email is included on ALL correspondences that are sent out to the community. The district most recently added a DROP BOX in the school parking lot to allow the school community to drop off printed surveys, forms and other school related materials in a convenient and safe manner.

CONTINUITY OF LEARNING: IN PERSON INSTRUCTION

Throughout the summer the district was working on bringing back students to campus who felt comfortable coming back. By mid-July the district had surveyed parents and felt approximately sixty (60) percent of the students would return and **practice all guidelines** as outlined by the State of



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California and the California Department of Education. Students who did not return for on campus instruction were going to receive daily instruction in the afternoon. On campus instruction would cease between 1:00 and 1:30 PM allowing certificated staff to address the needs of ALL students (onsite and off campus). The district felt comfortable and was ready to announce this plan on July 16, when rumors started that the big announcement to Distance Learning was coming. Based on the July 17th Press Conference, the district had no other choice but to open with a Distance Learning model.

The district turned its complete focus to the online delivery platform. Certificated staff had the opportunity throughout July to work an additional 5 workdays to prepare. We were fortunate enough that this process began early prior to the Press Conference. The staff was preparing instruction for the forty (40) percent or so students who the district anticipated would not be returning. The focus of those working the week of July 13 quickly pivoted into a full blown Distance Learning program.

Although not the focus the district continued to look back to early summer draft plans of different return to campus programs. The district focused on the following (A) TRADITIONAL RETURN WITH BEST PRACTICES; (B) HYBRID RETURN – MONDAY/WEDNESDAY AND TUESDAY/THURSDAY COHORTS; and (C) CONTINUED DISTANCE LEARNING format. The district focused mainly on the Traditional Return based on the survey results of the Hybrid plan been disliked by parents the most and that due to the size (population) of the school/district we could have opened up in the Traditional Format anyway, if it was allowed.

ACCESS TO DEVICES AND CONNECTIVITY

Once the COVID – 19 Pandemic became apparent, the district reached out to the community to analyze Internet Connection capabilities. For the remainder of the school year, the district provided a hybrid between online and traditional paper based packets. For the 2020-21 school year the district went to a full online curriculum to be delivered by all grade levels. The only exception is for Kindergarten aged students who will receive a hybrid version (approximately 1/3 paper based and 2/3 online based).

The district secured 58 T-Mobile Hotspots for student use and trial ran the devices during our Summer Program. The feedback on the connectivity of the devices was Fair to Good. The district was approached by Porterville Unified School District (PUSD), late in the summer, and was offered potential connectivity to their district wide WI-FI system that was still being installed. The two districts overlap geographically. The district conducted another survey to determine how many students would not have access either by their own internet contract, or through a high school sibling attending PUSD. Sunnyside ultimately decided to hold off on the offer from PUSD and invest in an additional twenty (20) T-Mobile Hotspots, giving the district a total of 78 devices to deploy out to the community. As of August 19, 2020, all Sunnyside school aged children are connecting through some internet device.

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The district incurred connectivity issues at the onset of the program with the Hot Spot devices. Much of this was found to be (a) just a poor connectivity area (no strong internet with any program); (b) learning to use the Hot Spot; (c) the Hot Spot itself (needed some fine tuning), and (d) overloading of the system when school opened (statewide). As of August 24, 2020, the district possesses approximately nine (9) unused Hot Spots that are available for student use. Of those distributed to families, four (4) families took two hot spots and one (1) family is using three Hot Spots. This is based on the number of students attempting to log-on in the household.

The district entered into a twelve (12) month contract with T-Mobile to provide unlimited data to all HotSpot devices to ensure that all school-aged children in the district have connectivity throughout the school year. The district will monitor throughout the year the Connectivity Strength of the devices, cost and the availability of other potential solutions. The district did participate in the survey conducted by the Tulare County Office of Education, who is working at providing county wide internet access within the next 18 months. It will also revisit the possibility of joining the PUSD network, if still available following the 2020-2021 school year.

The district is also looking at purchasing devices for both staff and students to have an effective distance learning program. The need for students' devices can be referenced in almost all surveys. The purchase of Laptops (Teacher), chromebooks and MacBooks is currently planned. The staff needs devices (i.e. iPads) other hardware (i.e. Document Cameras) and a variety of support apps/software (Edcreations, Raz Plus, Units of Study ELA Distance Learning Videos, SEESAW, etc.) to support distance learning. The district has also purchased at this time 25 paid accounts for ZOOM allowing Preschool through Eighth Grade the capability of ZOOM lessons and meetings. A license was also purchased for the County Resource Teacher to conduct IEP meetings and RSP classes as needed.

The district will also ensure connectivity and delivery by looking at upgrades to its current infrastructure. The dated equipment is susceptible to breakdowns and overload.

Any additional funding or under budgeting would be targeted towards additional devices and/or PPEs.

Supports for Pupils with Unique Needs

Another of the district's key priorities of distance learning is to maintain the inclusion of each and every learner. The expectations of the district for the implementation of this priority during distance learning is as follows:

Appropriate supports for students receiving Special Education



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- Ensure students with disabilities are included in all offerings of school education models by using the IEP process to customize educational opportunities and support when necessary.

Targeted student support and intervention

- Supports and instruction for small groups of students who need additional instructional and/or social and emotional attention.

Support for English Learners

- Designated and integrated instruction in English language development including assessment of progress toward language proficiency and targeted support to access curriculum.

Sunnyside is committed to ensuring equitable access to engaging, grade-level content and instructional rigor for all students. The district feels that it is important to reiterate, as often as possible, that in making content more accessible for students with disabilities and other students with unique needs, ALL students will benefit. To make grade-level content accessible for all students, the district is prioritizing the planning of all lessons using multiple teaching practices designed for distance learning. Sunnyside teachers and staff will engage in ongoing professional development on the use of these practices to support this effort.

English Learners will receive both integrated and designated English Language Development (ELD) instruction during distance and in-person learning. For Designated ELD, English Learners will receive regular instruction targeted at their proficiency level and based on the California ELD standards. Designated ELD Instruction will meet or exceed the following amounts:

- Kindergarten: 40 minutes/week (80 minutes/week for newcomers)
- Grades 1-5: 60 minutes/week (120 minutes/week for newcomers)
- Grades 6-8: Designated class or 60 minutes/week (Designated class for newcomers)

For Integrated ELD, English Learners will receive regular instruction during core coursework. These short, more frequent lessons are provided to support English Learners with the language of the core lesson. Teachers will receive professional development on ELD instruction.

Distance Learning supports specific to Homeless Youth will include:

1. Coordination & communication with shelters to engage students in distance learning
2. Coordination & communication with homeless agencies to make them aware of the districts Homeless Services
3. Contact with parents/students to determine if they have special or unmet needs for accessing distance learning and address their technology needs, including provision of Wi-Fi hotspots on a case-by-case basis.
4. Communication with schools/teachers & parents/students to locate 'missing' students or students who are not engaged in distance learning, and identification of special needs or services



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5. Coordination with parents/students & schools as necessary for optional distance learning delivery of assignment materials and provision of necessary school supplies.
6. Provision of community resource information for parents/students, such as shelter, housing, food, clothing, health, COVID resources, etc. and refer parents/students to appropriate community agencies and/or district departments/services when educational, health, or welfare needs are identified.
7. Coordination with County LEA Homeless Liaisons to provide continuity of educational services as students' transfer Distance Learning supports specific to Foster Youth will include:
 - Case management to support all eligible foster youth
 - Regular check-ins with students and foster parents via phone, zoom, and e-mail.
 - Monitoring of attendance/engagement and communication with teachers and administrators when needed.
 - Referrals to both district and community agencies for additional support/resources as needed.
 - Online tutoring services will be offered to eligible foster youth.
 - Collaboration with Student Hearing and Placement and Special Education offices so that any new youth entering the district are placed in the appropriate school in a timely manner.

Students with Disabilities

Sunnyside works with the Tulare County Office of Education (SELPA) to ensure that the needs of all students are met, including students with disabilities.

- **Individualized Education Program (IEP) Addenda:** The district resource teacher (an employee of the Tulare County Office of Education) will maintain and keep up to date IEPs during distance learning. Per new legislation district IEPs will, moving forward, address both a proposed IEP program in the event of full in-person learning and a plan outlining the student's program in the event of future physical school closure in excess of ten school days.
- **Modification of IEP Goals:** Any changes to Goals and Objectives must be an IEP Team decision. If goals and objectives are not realistic during distance learning or in the event of a shutdown in excess of ten days (after reopening) they may be brought to the attention of the team, by any member. IEPs will focus on individual needs and not the model of instruction.
- **Ensuring a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE):** IEPs should include statements outlining the plan in the event of school closure exceeding ten days. Amendments can be made to the IEP, team decision, in the event the delivery method changes affecting the ability to implement the IEP. As needed, students will be provided necessary tools and assistance to maintain the engagement and learning process.

Funding

The district has allocated \$10,000 specifically for Special Education students, and students with disabilities, or a student who is High Risk due to language barriers. The funding for specific items will be on an as needed basis as we progress through the different Learning Environments in the



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upcoming months (August - December). Items should be specific hardware devices, applications, programs and any support materials needed to improve learning outcomes.

LEARNING LOSS

Another important key priority of the district is to identify and address gaps in learning through the monitoring of students' progress on grade level appropriate assessments and adjust supports based on student results. Families and students should expect assessments during learning and throughout the school year that evaluate how students are progressing both in the moment and over time to address learning loss before and after the school closure.

The district assessment calendar for the year 2020-2021 is provided in this document. These assessments will be used as key means of assessing learning loss, along with the daily formative assessment conducted by teachers during live instruction and asynchronous activities. Over the course of the year, regular benchmark assessments in both ELA and Math will allow teachers to continue monitoring student learning status, including the rate at which students are making up for any learning loss. Teachers are provided with the assessment calendar and are given support during the assessments.

The district encourages teachers to effectively establish a safe learning environment and re-engage students in school prior to beginning assessments. The district believes it is important to reiterate that assessment of students' learning status began on the first day of school and will continue each day. The formative data being gathered by teachers throughout instruction is a critical component to understanding what learning loss has occurred and each student's individual learning needs. Teachers will collaborate during data zoom meetings and examine the data in order to make adjustments to learning to support students greatest needs.

Beginning in September the district will provide support for students and families by providing online tutorial support and assistance in English Language Arts, Mathematics a minimum of twice per week. In addition, the district will provide general online assistance in all subject areas and grade levels weekly. These online resources will be available after school hours and once on weekends. The district will solicit certified teachers first for the positions, followed by classified paraprofessionals.

The district will utilize a variety of software platforms to enhance learning and engage students. This will include using items such as Edcreations (engaging students with video), Seesaw (digital portfolios and parent communication), Thirvely (identifying student strengths and interests), Raz Plus (leveled reading and teacher resources), Units of Study Online Video Lessons (virtual teaching resources to support ELA curriculum), Edpuzzle (creating interactive video lessons), Netop (secure remote access), and STAR Reading and Math (online assessment for student growth).

MENTAL HEALTH AND SOCIAL WELL BEING

School Psychological Services

The district Psychological Services program currently consists of two individuals. One assigned by the County Special Education SELPA. The other is self-contracted with a neighboring school district to provide additional support and services to our students and families. Both individuals are vital in not only supporting individuals but also identifying those in need of assistance. During these times it will be crucial for them to identify those who are most vulnerable. They will continue to provide support to other staff in areas such as behavior management and junior high suicide training.



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Social Worker Services

Our county contracted social worker will need to continually monitor and assess the trauma incurred by our students during the COVID-19 experience. The closure of the school for an extended period has greatly impacted the emotional well being of our students. The social worker will pay particular attention to students in demographic groups that may be disproportionately represented.

Nursing and Health Services

These services which are provided in the regular school environment are of even greater importance during the COVID-19 Pandemic. Our onsite Licensed Vocational Nurse will continue to provide services to students and families throughout the Distance Learning program. Those students who are low income, Foster youth and Homeless Youth will be a focal point for contact based on the fact they are less likely to have access to or have limited access to health services. Any preventive measures that our LVN and county assigned Nurse can provide will benefit all students. The ability or lack of attending "class" via online or on site is still vital to the success of the child. The role of the both the LVN and Nurse becomes even more important.