

03-31-20
School Closure Extended

Dear PUSD Families,

As conditions surrounding COVID-19 continue to progress, it is our mission to continue to inform our community in a timely manner. This includes any updates to our emergency school closure timeline. As I mentioned in my last email to you, while we had hoped to re-open our schools by April 6, that is no longer realistic, given the continued spread of COVID-19 in our city, county, state, and country.

Over the weekend, the President announced that social distancing guidelines should extend through April 30. Additionally, Governor Newsom's "stay at home" order remains in place. In a meeting today, all San Diego County superintendents agreed that schools and school districts need to remain closed until further notice to help slow the spread of COVID-19. This joint decision is supported by the San Diego County Public Health Department and the San Diego County Superintendent of Schools. At this time, we do not have an estimated date of return. I know that school districts in other counties have indicated they will be closed through May 1. I believe it is safe to assume the school closures here in San Diego County will be extended at least until the end of April. San Diego County is choosing to keep the closures open-ended because the COVID-19 situation is changing and developing so rapidly. Thus, we are assessing the closure timeline on a weekly basis, and we will bring you any future updates as soon as they are available. If circumstances permit us to reopen schools, you will be given as much advance notice as possible.

We realize the huge impact this public health crisis is having on everyone - parents, students, staff, and our community. We want our students back in school as soon as possible, but not at the risk of their health and safety.

Please see the following updates, given the extension of our emergency school closures:

MEALS

- Free meal distribution will continue every week during the closures, including Spring Break. Lunch and Breakfast are served together, Monday through Friday, 11:00 am to 1:00 pm at these 12 sites: Del Norte High School, Los Penasquitos Elementary School, Meadowbrook Middle School, Midland Elementary School, Mt. Carmel High School, Pomerado Elementary School, Poway High School, Rancho Bernardo High School, Twin Peak Middle School, Valley Elementary School, Westview High School, Westwood Elementary School.

DEVICE CHECKOUT

- Students who do not have access to a device must fill out the [Device Checkout Form](#) by April 1 at 12:00 pm. For those who have completed the Device Checkout form in advance, students can pick up a Chromebook from their school

site using their student ID number on April 2 between 9:00 am and 12:00 pm. Please see assigned pick up windows and additional information and requirements [here](#).

- Families without internet access should take advantage of [these internet resources](#) provided by the San Diego County Office of Education before next week.

DISTANCE LEARNING

- Distance Learning is launching Monday, April 6. You will receive additional communication from your school principal this week, including FAQs, student expectations and parents as partners. This is considered a soft launch to allow us to continue to work through any challenges or issues prior to the scheduled Spring Break, so that we are ready to fully embark on distance learning for an extended period of time beginning April 20.
- We ask for your patience as we start a new chapter in public education. There may be a huge learning curve for all those navigating distance learning for the first time. Please work with your child's teacher, keeping in mind that we ALL want what's best for your child and to ensure a successful distance learning experience for everyone.

PREVENTION

Again, we cannot stress enough how important it is for families to remain at home except for essential activities until further notice. Please continue to practice the guidance provided by Public Health Officers including:

- Social distancing (stay at least 6 feet apart from others outside your home)
- Washing hands often with soap and water
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth
- Do not leave your home if you are feeling sick
- Contact your healthcare provider if you are experiencing any symptoms such as fever, cough, or difficulty breathing
- Engage in regular exercise or physical activity

With the extension of school closures, we want to remind the community that school campuses are closed to the public. In collaboration with city and county agencies, we are requesting that community members do not come onto school campuses, which includes play structures, blacktop spaces, and fields.

VIRTUAL BOARD MEETING

- The next regularly scheduled meeting of the PUSD Board of Education, on Thursday, April 23 at 6 pm, will be conducted online to adhere to social distancing guidelines. Details will be posted on our website powayusd.com.

I am grateful for the staff and families who are demonstrating their unwavering commitment in support of our 36,500 students in Poway Unified, while trying to maintain a sense of routine and optimism through these exceptionally challenging times. I am so proud to be a part of this resilient community.

Take care of each other,
Marian Kim Phelps, Ed.D.
Superintendent