

April 29, 2020

Dear PUSD,

You may have heard, at a news conference yesterday, California Governor Gavin Newsom mentioned that he was considering starting the 2020-2021 school year earlier in July. This was the first time Poway Unified or any California school district had heard about this possibility. As State Superintendent Tony Thurmond mentioned yesterday, we have some major questions that need to be answered before we consider physically re-opening schools, such as maintaining the health and safety of our students and staff.

Additionally, school calendars take a great deal of planning and coordination; any changes also could have major fiscal implications. At this point, we do not see starting the 2020-2021 school year in July as a likely option for us. The Poway Unified School District is already scheduled to return mid-August, on the 19th. That has not changed. During the summer, summer school and the Extended School Year for PUSD students in special education will likely be offered in a distance learning format. We will provide further information on summer school in the future. In the meantime, we will continue to work with the San Diego County Office of Education and San Diego County Public Health Department in determining how and when to return students and staff safely to school.

On that note, the Governor did provide an update on the state's [roadmap](#) to reopen the economy and public services in a phase by phase approach:

Stage 1: Safety and Preparedness

Stage 2: Lower Risk Workplaces

Stage 3: Higher Risk Workplaces

Stage 4: End of Stay at Home Order

Under Stage 2, he included schools and childcare facilities opening in a modified manner to provide support for parents transitioning back the workforce and address gaps in students' education, provided that the following conditions have been met:

- Have stable hospitalization and ICU trends
- Have hospital surge capacity to meet demand
- Have sufficient personal protective equipment supply to meet demand
- Have sufficient testing capacity to meet demand
- Have contact tracing capacity statewide

Even if these conditions have been met, social distancing in schools may require students and staff to wear personal protective equipment, as well as smaller class sizes and staggered schedules. Our team is actively working on a plan for these modifications, should they be necessary. We will also be conducting a districtwide survey to gather information to determine which families may choose to keep their children at home for continued distance learning even when our schools are ready to reopen. This information will help us to best plan for different scenarios, for example, a combination of in-person and distance learning. I will continue to keep you updated on any changes as they emerge.

Sincerely,

Marian Kim Phelps, Ed.D.

Superintendent