

CHULA VISTA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT

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EACH CHILD IS AN INDIVIDUAL OF GREAT WORTH

June 9, 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians and Staff:

As we see the 2019-20 school year come to a close, I want to thank you and your children for your flexibility and adaptability as we quickly transitioned to distance learning and instruction. Everyone showed a true level of grit that was both inspiring and uplifting. Congratulations on a successful school year and best of luck to those moving on to the next stage of their educational pursuits.

Our attention turns now to the work of finalizing plans for the 2020-21 school session. At this time, we have targeted Monday, August 31, as the date school will begin. While we traditionally align our calendar with the Sweetwater Union High School District (SUHSD), we also understand the challenges and considerations regarding safely reopening schools and providing meaningful instruction via distance learning are different for elementary schools and secondary schools. It is our intention to align our future calendars with SUHSD once this pandemic is over.

The direction our reopening takes will depend on several important pieces: implementing school guidance and public health recommendations, countywide efforts to ensure COVID-19 is under control and cases are on the way down, progress along the Governor's multi-phased roadmap for ending the stay-at-home order, guidance from the newly released [Guidebook for the Safe Reopening of California's Public Schools](#), and, just as importantly, input from our stakeholder groups.

Recently, the Chula Vista Elementary School District (CVESD) reached out to our community and asked for input about the coming school year and the design of school reopenings. Over 9,000 responses have been received and that input has been critical to our work in crafting our plan for teaching and learning. Three specific results are worth noting.

When surveyed about potential learning models, our families indicated:

- 36% would prefer on-site instruction
- 19% would prefer virtual school
- 55% would prefer some form of blended learning model.

During the summer, our staff will create both online virtual school as well as live sessions to help recover lost learning. Starting July 15, we will send an update every two weeks regarding the status of these learning platforms. We want to keep you as informed and up to date as possible so that we start the new school year off on the right foot.

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No matter what form instruction and learning take in the coming school year, CVESD remains committed to protecting the health and safety of our entire school communities. Getting back to school is critically important, as you know, but doing so responsibly and with a focus on preventing the spread of this virus is paramount.

There is no doubt we find ourselves in challenging times and I would be remiss if I did not also comment on the events of the last few weeks with regard to social justice, protesting of police brutality, and demands for significant and meaningful change in our country. As protests continued for another weekend, I concentrated on listening. I listened to African-American school leaders in our District. I listened to African-American colleagues and friends. I also listened to teachers, staff members and school psychologists who were not African-American, as they shared with me their horror in watching video capturing the death of a bound George Floyd by a Minneapolis police officer. This was the latest in a string of killings and racial injustices targeting black Americans.

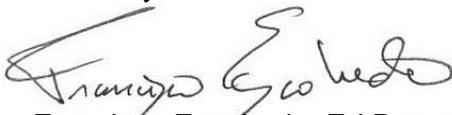
Like those from all walks of life and many sectors of industry, we as a District proudly acknowledge Black Lives Matter.

Many of our families are deeply hurting right now. We as educators and members of the larger community have a moral obligation to create safe spaces for discussion and learning so that we do not miss the lesson in these recent events. We need to listen to the voices crying out for change and understanding. We need to listen to our children's questions about the difficult images they are seeing on their screens. Together, we need to take action and assist in the process of developing strategies that will make a difference.

Our students need us now more than ever. They need guidance that is informed, authentic, and filled with compassion and understanding. Sometimes, additional resources can be a bridge when we do not feel fully equipped to assist our young people. Two valuable resources you might refer to come from our District's social workers (https://spark.adobe.com/page/NHyPzJjO0V1OP/?w=2_8038&fbclid=IwAR2ZMDD53eS2lkxpvDTjyWor9HWGij6qW-74OKvXKWleGOqPEdvlCxfKsuq) and from the San Diego County Office of Education (<https://www.sdcoe.net/Its/equity/Pages/equity-resources.aspx>). These are excellent resources that may assist in facilitating conversations between students and families.

I am hopeful we are ready to move forward as a District, a community, and a nation united in the belief that we can and will do better. Only then can we live up to our belief that each and every child is an individual of great worth.

Sincerely,



Francisco Escobedo, Ed.D.
Superintendent