

March 21, 2021

Dear Natomas Unified Families,

Yesterday, March 20, 2021, the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) updated its guidance to follow the Center for Disease Control's (CDC) recommendation to reduce social distancing in schools from 6 feet to 3 feet. This revision permits school districts to increase the number of students that can receive in-person instruction. Natomas Unified will provide families/students the opportunity to return to 5 day a week in-person learning instruction effective Monday April 12, 2021. And yes, for our working families, we feel we must expand the in-person elementary school day. Placer County's Department of Public Health has allowed for less than 6 feet for quite some time. This new California guidance allows Natomas Unified, for the first time in this pandemic, to implement our own 5 day a week program. We have shared with our colleagues at the Natomas Teachers Association that a 5 day a week option and longer elementary school day like some of our neighboring county districts is necessary. Now that we can socially distance at 3 feet, our elementary students deserve more.

A few things important for you to know:

- Why April 12th? We need to pull desks and materials out of storage and set up the rooms to follow the state/county guidelines. Spring Break (including weekends) runs from April 3rd-April 11th. April 12th is just 10 more school days from today.
- Our district safety plan allows for decreased social distancing in classes based on new guidance like we just received.
- The other, significant safety measures will continue such as masks, daily cleaning, and families keeping their students home if they have any symptoms.
- Every staff member in NUSD has been offered opportunities to take the vaccine multiple times. If they have not taken that opportunity yet, they still can.
- In California, some of these changes require bargaining and negotiations. In our October 31, 2020 MOU, we have language that states we meet and confer with our labor partners when guidance changes.
- We recognize a percentage of our families will want to remain in Distance Learning. That option will remain. We have allowed 40 teachers to work from home while we provide substitutes for them, so it seems fair that students can continue in Distance Learning.
- We will need to work with our Before/After School partners and see what their guidance allows. The Board of Trustees has approved expenditures to make sure the money to this is not a barrier. Facilities space and conflicting guidance have and will likely continue to be challenging.

While not over, there does seem to be a larger light at the end of the COVID tunnel. For example, some more good news for seniors and their families. This past week, our incredibly hard working team came to an agreement with Sutter Health Park to use their venue for this year's graduations. While we cannot control COVID cases or pandemic changes out of our



control, our team has taken steps to provide an in-person, socially distant graduation ceremony for Natomas High School, Inderkum High School, Leroy Greene Academy and Discovery High School. Site principals will communicate more about this in the weeks ahead.

This past year has been a year like no other. And while I do feel our students have learned coping skills, how to be adaptive, and utilized workplace tools like no students ever before, I know we all recognize that our students have missed out on events, experiences and opportunities. Although that is not anyone's fault, I will still genuinely say that "I am sorry for those lost experiences." And while this change for more in-person instruction is a significant one, it still does not mean this pandemic is at an end. It is not. We all need to do our part at school and elsewhere.

So what is next? If your student is already attending in-person learning right now in elementary or secondary, we will assume you will want to move into the 5 day a week model and you need to do nothing. If you are in Distance Learning and wish to remain, you will not have to do anything. A "survey" will be coming to you later this week. If you choose to move from Distance Learning to the 5 day a week in-person option or move out of in-person to Distance Learning, you can also make those choices.

We know that you have a number of questions that we probably cannot answer this moment. Please be aware, the state just changed the guidance YESTERDAY. Our team has been working over the weekend to identify all of the next steps. When we have answers, we will let you know. I have asked you to be patient this past 12+ months. This NUSD community has been incredibly gracious and patient. Thank you for that and look for more information as soon as we have it.

Thank you,

Superintendent

