



## solana beach school district

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Jodee Brentlinger

June 16, 2020

Dear Solana Beach School District Families,

With students and families officially on summer break, District Office and select school staff members are focused on safely and successfully reopening our schools for the 2020-21 school year. An important part of this process is maintaining clear, ongoing communication with our families and community. Parents should have received an email last Friday about registering for ParentSquare, our new communication system. All 2020 Student Progress Reports are being delivered through ParentSquare beginning today, June 16. If you have not yet activated your ParentSquare account, please take 30 seconds to find your ParentSquare invitation email and activate your account.

The task of reopening schools during a worldwide pandemic is a monumental one. We have never faced anything like this as educators. The conditions for safely bringing students back to campus will be determined locally by school districts in collaboration with state and county officials based on recommended health guidelines. Our desire is to get as many students back on campus as many days as possible recognizing student and staff safety remains a top priority.

One of the biggest challenges we face in determining how to reopen schools is navigating, on almost a daily basis, the barrage of state and county information we receive, which is amended, revised, and often contradictory in its direction. We have received hundreds of pages of guidance in the past month from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the California Public Health Department, and the California Department of Education (CDE), each with their own specific guidelines. Some of these guidelines include:

- Social distancing of six feet; and,
- Staff or students wearing masks or face shields.
- temperature checks;
- frequent hand washing and cleaning;

In fact, we have learned that effective today, June 16, 2020, the San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency has amended its earlier health order, which now states:

All public, charter and private schools may hold classes or school business operations on the school campus, provided the school complies with the measures contained in the State COVID-19 Industry Guidance: Schools and School-Based Programs issued by the CDPH (including the face covering requirements contained therein), also incorporating where feasible the guidelines provided in *Stronger Together: A Guidebook for the Safe Reopening of California's Public Schools* issued by the California Department of Education.

In SBSB, we are reviewing these guidelines in addition to input from multiple stakeholders, including our families. We recently completed a parent/guardian survey, and we received 1,900 responses. Of those, 63 percent identified their first choice as children returning to school in class/in person; while 23 percent said they prefer a hybrid learning model, with some time spent in the classroom and some time engaged in remote learning. Finally, 14 percent stated a preference of an online remote model. With this data and comments already received over the last few months, our *Reopening Workgroups* are planning for a minimum of two learning models for fall 2020.

Please know we are taking staff and parent feedback, as well as health and safety guidelines, into consideration as we develop our plans. When we reopen our doors on August 25, 2020, based on state and county health guidelines, campuses will look much different post-COVID-19 compared to what we are used to in SBSB. While our desire remains focused on getting as many students back on campus as many days as possible; this may mean schedules need to be staggered or put into a rotation in order to limit the number of students at school to accommodate social distancing. Recess and lunch time will also require specific modifications. Believe me, both parents and educators are feeling unsettled; however, we will work together on behalf of what is best for student learning while adhering to health and safety measures as required.

As part of our current summer programming options (extended school year and intervention), we are also considering how best to implement existing guidelines. In order to maintain health and safety in our summer program, we are considering implementing the following:

- smaller adult-to-student ratios;
- frequent handwashing and sanitization of surfaces;
- more outdoor, open-air time; and,
- limited interaction between classes.

We look forward to piloting the summer program's small-scale learning model in order to assist us with reopening our schools in August for all students.

With all of this said, you may be asking, "What's next for our district?"

- The Board of Education will hear a staff update on reopening schools this Thursday, June 18, at its regularly scheduled Board meeting at 6:30 p.m. [To attend this meeting virtually, please link here.](#)
- The Board of Education will receive another status update at the June 25 regularly scheduled meeting at 6:30 p.m.
- Principals, District Office leadership staff, and I are scheduling individual school site information meetings regarding learning model options for the 2020-21 school year during the week of July 13-17.
- Families will be asked to commit to a learning model the week of July 20-24, 2020.

Over the summer break, please continue to check your email for any important updates. I will also use official district social media to update families and community members about important school reopening messages.

While we are clearly wrestling with many unknowns right now, we are also approaching this unprecedented task by embracing these challenges as opportunities. Yes, our schools will look different in the fall, however, your Board of Education, district leadership, principals, teachers, and staff remain committed to providing the highest quality education possible for your children.

Sincerely,

Jodee Brentlinger  
Superintendent

