

HEALDSBURG UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

RIGOR · RELEVANCE · COMMUNITY



March 22, 2020

Re: COVID-19 Update

Dear Healdsburg Community,

This last week has certainly been unprecedented as we all anxiously await the latest news and deal with the realities of sheltering in place. I hope this letter finds you and your family safe and healthy. I want to thank you for your patience in advance during this difficult time. I know we are all anxious for a return to normal or at least an idea as to when that might come. While there is no script for how to navigate this crisis, I am happy to report that we are working tirelessly to provide opportunities for learning and food security for our students.

As the COVID-19 situation is fluid, all information I provide may change, and we will keep you updated as it does. However, we do want to share the following information with you as it pertains to the “reopening” of our schools next week.

School-Based Activities

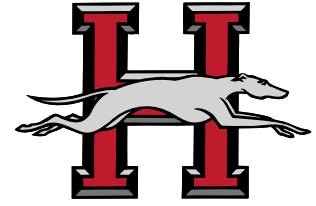
The Sonoma County Health Officer issued a social distancing and shelter-in-place order on March 18, 2020 through Tuesday, April 7. Then, Governor Newsom issued an executive order on March 19, that “orders all individuals living in the state of California to stay home or at their place of residence except as needed to maintain continuity of operations of the federal critical infrastructure sectors.” This executive order has no end date, and the Governor has stated that he is unsure if school will resume again before the fall. Therefore, it is very unclear as to when students might be able to return to our campuses for onsite learning.

As of today, we have canceled all school-based activities through the end of April. As we learn more in the coming days and weeks, we will determine next steps and provide an update with regard to athletic events, prom, dances, graduation, etc. Please understand that even if the current order (April 7, 2020) is lifted, a social distancing order will most likely be in effect, and this will impact the events described above. As such, it may be prudent for families that have visitors coming from long distances for graduation to prepare for a potential postponement.

Distance Learning

Prior to Spring Break, elementary aged students (TK-5) were all provided with learning packets to cover the weeks of March 23 – April 3rd. If your student was absent or did not receive the learning packet, please contact your school office to arrange to pick one up.

CHRIS VANDEN HEUVEL
superintendent
cvandenheuvel@husd.com



We are working on a plan to allow for some digital learning for our elementary aged students and will be conducting a survey regarding internet and computer access in the home. Our goal is to deploy Chromebooks by mid-April to families who don't have a computer at home and to work with families to arrange for internet access. We will obviously be creating new learning opportunities for elementary students for after April 3rd and our staff will be working this week to that end.

All students 6-12 have Chromebooks, and we are ensuring that families without internet access receive hot spots or enroll in free or low-cost internet service plans. All secondary teachers will be posting lessons and learning activities for their students on March 24th. Furthermore, they will be posting "office hours" when they will be available during the week to engage with student questions through email or other web-based applications.

We are working on specific plans for students that are part of our special education program. Families of those students can expect to be contacted by staff this coming week.

Finally, our counselors will be working to provide appointments through a variety of tools, such as Zoom conferencing or via telephone.

Grades/Testing

Distance learning activities provided to students will include enrichment, engagement, and review. We are working with staff to come up with a system that involves formative assessment of student learning and incorporates an equitable grading practice given our current context. Traditional means of student assessment, report cards and grades are not going to be possible. Thus, we will develop alternative ways to track student progress, and in the upper grades, allow for credit accumulation towards graduation and college entrance.

Testing

- California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) and the Summative English Language Proficiency Assessment of California (ELPAC) have been cancelled for 2020.
- SAT has cancelled its May 2nd date. Currently planning to still administer on June 6th.
- ACT has postponed its April 4th exam to June 13th.
- Advanced Placement (AP) exams remain scheduled, in an alternative format, for May 4-8, 11-15, with late testing scheduled for May 20-22. AP Program is reportedly finalizing streamlined AP Exam options that would allow students to test at home, depending on the situation in May.



Parent Participation

While the activities being provided will not require traditional tests or grading, there is the expectation that parents will support the learning of their child. Your child needs you now more than ever to be engaged in their learning. To that end, we will be posting a parent resource page for distance learning on our website at www.husd.com.

Two practices that are extremely important and will create a better home environment for all are the establishment of routines and incorporating reading time. **Establishing routines** will not only help break up the monotony of being stuck in the home, but will provide security to your child by providing some normalcy to an otherwise chaotic situation.

If you have younger children, building time to **read together** – at least 30 minutes a day – will not only produce family quality time, but also continue to develop important literacy skills. If your child is older, get them to **read for pleasure** on their own. It doesn't matter what language you read in – English or Spanish, or any other spoken at home - any language will be beneficial. Also, please take the time to ask them about their learning activities, and check in with them daily regarding their progress.

Breakfast/Lunch

Beginning March 23, breakfast and lunch will be offered at Healdsburg Elementary School, Healdsburg High School, and Westside School to all children 18 or younger. Additionally, we will provide meals in Geyserville schools as well.

Breakfast and lunch will be served in a “grab and go” format together and can be picked up between the hours of 9:00AM and 12:00PM daily Monday - Friday. If you are unable to pick up meals, but are in need, please contact erikamendoza@husd.com or call at 707.431.3434.

Internet Access

Should you currently lack internet access, the following companies are currently offering free internet for families:

- SONIC is offering 3 months of free internet to new customers: <https://www.sonic.com/cov19>
- Comcast is offering 2 months of free internet to new customers and increasing their speeds. They have also opened all xfinitywifi networks so anyone can use it without an account: <https://www.internetessentials.com>

Should you need assistance with signing up for internet access, please reach out to your School Principal. We will do our best to support you throughout the process.



Communication

There will be many questions as we continue forward into distance learning. Please feel free to reach out directly to your school site principal with any question or concern you may have.

- Healdsburg Elementary School Tk-2 – Principal Jeff Franey – ifraney@husd.com
- Fitch Mountain Campus 3-5 – Principal Erika McGuire – emcguire@husd.com
- Healdsburg Junior High School – Principal Chris Miller – cmiller@husd.com
- Healdsburg Junior High School – Dean Erin Ryan – eryan@husd.com
- Healdsburg High School – Principal Bill Halliday – bhalliday@husd.com
- Healdsburg High School – Assistant Principal Connie Marx – cmarx@husd.com

Also, we have set up a District Hotline to facilitate the flow of messages to our sites as most employees are working remotely. Please direct phone inquiries to 707.431.3480 and we will distribute messages as quickly as possible.

Thank you for your understanding and flexibility during this time. What we are trying to navigate right now is chaotic and unprecedented, and we are going to do all we can to best meet the needs of our students. While our focus has been on creating a structure to provide continuity of learning for the first month, we are beginning to transition to planning for additional time.

I cannot stress enough how important you, the parents and guardians, are to this process. Without your active engagement in the learning of your child, he or she is going to have a difficult time finding success through distance learning. Never will the school-home partnership be more important. We are in this together, and my sincere hope is that this experience will strengthen the relationship between HUSD and you, our students' families. Together, we will be stronger.

Sincerely,

Chris Vanden Heuvel
Superintendent