

June 10, 2020

Dear SMUSD Parents/Guardians,

Officially, the 2019-2020 academic school year is a wrap! Thank you for the countless hours each and every member of Team SMUSD put in over the last 9 months, and in particular over the last 3 months, to get our students, families, and our district colleagues to the finish line. I'd also like to thank and acknowledge our parents and families for partnering with us and helping our students navigate and engage in school during distance learning. As the old adage states, it truly takes a village!

An eternal optimist, I'm always looking for the silver lining even in the toughest of circumstances, and now, more than ever, the importance of the educational system as a whole—on many levels—has been magnified in the homes of not just our 21,000 SMUSD students, but also in those of the more than 6 million students across the state of California and the over 50 million across our country. Nevertheless, despite the tremendous circumstances, everyone on our team rolled up their sleeves and pushed forward for the collective benefit of all of our students, and for that, I thank you!

As we close out this school year, I'd like to update you on our progress in designing the 2020-21 school year. We have launched the *SMUSD 2020-2021 School Year Design Process* that will bring together teachers, school counselors, social workers, classified personnel, nurses, students, parents, site and district administrators, along with our District's union leadership and District leadership to design student-centered models under which we will operate next school year. Attached, you will find the design process graphic that explains how our district will collaboratively create coherent systems/programs.

This framework consists of three main groups: Central Leadership Team, Structures/Models Team, and Leveled Workgroups.

The **Central Leadership Team's (CLT)** role is to set guiding principles for our work, communicate with stakeholders, ensure a coherent program, determine personnel roles, the timeline for the design process, and the selection process for Structures/Models Team and Workgroups.

Furthermore, we have created a set of core principles that will guide our collective work in designing next school year. These include:

- Student focused and equity-based decision making;
- Safe, clean campuses and learning spaces;
- Resources for the social, emotional and physical health of students and staff;
- Creativity, flexibility (nimble) and coherence across the system;
- Differentiated learning and support models for students and staff;
- Fiscally responsible/sustainable solutions;
- Maintain a high-quality instructional program; and
- Collaborative partnerships among all stakeholders

The **Structures/Models Team** includes elementary and secondary site and district personnel (yellow arrow). This team is using the community survey data, guiding principles, global/operational assumptions, best practices, design team goals, sample models and research to create a student-centered Hybrid, Distance Learning, and Modified Traditional models for the 2020-21 school year. These models, following the cycle of continuous improvement, will be reviewed by the CLT.



Nearly simultaneously, **Leveled Workgroups** will begin to address key components encompassing our models including instructional programs, health/safety/food services/childcare, and support programs.

The complexities of the work currently underway by our team is underscored by the delicate balance of the need for student and staff safety, a coherent educational program, and the gradual reopening of businesses that will inevitably lead to more parents returning to work. As mentioned in my previous update, our district will be offering Distance Learning as one of the options for the many families that have stated they'd like to continue with virtual learning next school year.

While our district Structures/Models team continues to work toward putting together school-model options for the 2020-2021 school year, and our leveled workgroups launch their work, our goal remains to present the school options to our community by mid-summer.

In closing, I want to wish you all a well-deserved, relaxing, and restful summer break as you begin to find the time to unwind and breathe deeply. Thank you to each of you for your commitment to our teachers, district personnel, schools, and most importantly, to our students.

My best,
Dr. García
Superintendent

P.S. Join me in congratulating our Class of 2020 graduates! A deep thank you to the teams at Mission Hills High School, Twin Oaks High School, Adult Education, Foothills High School, and San Marcos High School for celebrating our graduates in a very special way!

