

October 1, 2020

Good Evening SMUSD Families,

Welcome to October! The fall season is upon us, and it is my sincerest hope that we are able to move into the end of 2020 with more hope, optimism, and stability than what the spring and summer afforded us. With that in mind, I have updates to share regarding our safe reopening plan.

### Return to In-Person Learning

On Tuesday, 9/30, we learned that County COVID numbers have remained relatively stable and our County remains in the red designation. We remain optimistic that this trend will continue into next week's critical "week three" analysis, which determines movement among the tiers.

Our schools have begun reintroducing small cohorts of students back onto campus, and we will soon be expanding our back to school return for our elementary students and some of our students with IEPs who have more significant individual instructional needs. Our timeline is as follows:

October 12-16

- Elementary conference days postponed until February

October 19

- TK/K/1 Students return to in-person learning in AM/PM model\* (10/14, 10/15, 10/16 TK/K/1 teachers participate in on-site prep days and training/Asynchronous instructional days for TK/K/1)
- Elementary Mod/Severe and Special Ed Preschool return to in-person learning (Teacher on-site prep days and training 10/14, 10/15, 10/16)

October 26

- Secondary Mod/Severe return to in-person learning in small cohort hybrid model (10/21, 10/22, 10/23 on-site prep days and training/Asynchronous instructional days for secondary mod/severe students)

November 2

- Grades 2 and 3 students return to in-person learning in 2-Day A/B Hybrid model (10/28, 10/29, 10/30 on-site prep days and training/Asynchronous instructional days for grades 2 & 3)

November 9

- Grades 4 and 5 students return to in-person learning in 2-Day A/B Hybrid Model (11/4, 11/5, 11/6 on-site prep days and training/Asynchronous instructional days for grades 4 & 5)

\* Note: Site specific context may allow an alternative model; your school administration will communicate the specifics for your campus.

\*\* Your site/teachers will offer more information on the specifics of these days when they are closer.

### The “What Next”

As we return to in-person learning, it is important to remember that school will look and feel differently for both staff and students upon the return to in-person instruction.

Implementation of our school site safety plans will include mandatory screening processes; masks requirements for all (most times of the day excluding lunch, recess, and during times of physical exertion); signage and wayfaring to encourage social distancing and proper hygiene; and classrooms set up to maximize safety mitigation including 6 foot distancing between persons in the room and tri-fold partitions on desks.

In upcoming district and/or site updates you will receive information to prepare you and your student for in-person return including masks and screening protocols, in-person attendance agreements, and hybrid cohort information.

Finally, as we embark on this next phase of instruction for our students, we acknowledge that we will be unable to satisfy all members of our SMUSD community. Our community’s division on how best to approach the return to school is a reflection of the divide we see in our state and in our nation. Along with research of best practices to date in school districts near and far, we have also taken into consideration the input of our stakeholders to develop a safe school return plan that follows state and County health guidelines; is prudent and balanced; and puts the physical health of our SMUSD community and instructional needs of our students at the forefront. The decisions we make today and into the future regarding school attendance and instruction during this pandemic will be difficult and not always popular; however, we commit to making them thoughtfully and with our students’ best interests in mind. May we find common ground in our collective want for what is best for each and every child under our care.

We appreciate your continued patience and flexibility as we navigate these uncertain times.

Be kind to each other and to yourselves,

Tiffany Campbell  
Acting Superintendent  
San Marcos Unified School District