

**JOINT PRESS STATEMENT**

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**Bay Area School Closures and Student Dismissals  
From Regular School Attendance to be Extended Through May 1, 2020**

**San Jose, CA** – Seven Bay Area county health officers, in collaboration with their six county superintendents of schools have made a unified, regional decision to extend school closures and student dismissals from regular school attendance through May 1, 2020 to slow the spread of COVID-19 to the maximum extent possible. The safety and wellness of students, school personnel, and the community are the highest priorities of all schools and districts in these six counties.

Building on the regional coordination the Bay Area jurisdictions took on March 16, 2020 in issuing Health Officer orders requiring all residents to shelter-in-place, the following Bay Area county agencies have been working together over the last several weeks to align strategies and practices during this unprecedented time for public education:

- Alameda County Office of Education
- Contra Costa County Office of Education
- Marin County Office of Education
- San Francisco Unified School District
- San Mateo County Office of Education
- Santa Clara County Office of Education

With the support and collaboration of the Public Health Officers in the respective counties, the County Superintendents of Schools recognized the need to extend the period of school closures and student dismissals through May 1, 2020. School facilities may remain open to staff for the purposes of performing tasks deemed essential by the school district and county offices of education. Education will continue through flexible learning, meals will continue to be provided and, where possible, childcare may be arranged.

During this time, residents are expected to strictly adhere to the “Shelter-in-place” Orders issued by the Public Health Officers on March 16 and stay home except for essential activities until further notification from their local health department.

In addition, all residents are urged to keep practicing the guidance provided by Public Health Officers including:

- Social distancing
- Washing hands often with soap and water
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth
- Staying home if you are feeling sick
- Contacting your healthcare provider if you are experiencing any symptoms such as fever, cough, or difficulty breathing.
- Engage in regular exercise or physical activity

The regional connections across our most populous counties in the Bay Area require a coordinated approach. County Offices of Education will continue to work in close partnership with local health departments and local school districts to support the children, parents, and essential workforce of the Bay Area.

“The well-being of our student’s, families and communities is our primary concern. We will continue to take all necessary steps to prepare schools for reopening,” said Dr. Mary Ann Dewan, County Superintendent of Schools at the Santa Clara Office of Education. “Meanwhile, it is absolutely crucial that we work together to slow the spread of COVID-19, by adhering to the shelter-in-place orders and continuing to support learning at home.”

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*About the Santa Clara County Office of Education*

*Working collaboratively with school and community partners, the Santa Clara County Office of Education (SCCOE) is a regional service agency that provides instructional, business, and technology services to the 31 school districts of Santa Clara County. The County Office of Education directly serves students through special education programs, alternative schools, Head Start and State Preschool programs, migrant education, and Opportunity Youth Academy. The SCCOE also provides academic and fiscal oversight and monitoring to districts in addition to the 22 Santa Clara County Board of Education authorized charter schools.*