



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**  
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**CONTACT:**  
Trevor McDonald  
805-742-3320

## **LOMPOC UNIFIED RELEASES DETAILS ON IMPROVED DISTANCE LEARNING PLANS**

Over the summer Lompoc Unified School District (LUSD) worked in parallel on two different instructional models (hybrid and distance learning) so they would be ready for instruction to start the 2020-2021 school year. On July 17, 2020 Governor Newsom issued a mandate with the requirements for offering any in-person education. With Santa Barbara County being on the monitoring list of the State of California, this meant that LUSD must begin the school year with a 100% distance learning model. LUSD shelved their hybrid model plans and pivoted quickly to put all their effort into distance learning.

“We spent quite a bit of time working on a hybrid model and consulting with our labor unions so we would be ready when it was time to bring our kids back on campus. We had hoped that would happen in August, but we will be ready when the time comes,” said Superintendent Trevor McDonald. “In the meantime, we have developed a robust distance learning program to ensure our students continue to learn and grow.”

Distance learning will look quite a bit different on August 17 when school starts than it did in March.

- The California Department of Education did not grant any leniency for this new school year. The school year must be 180 days, which is why the school year had to start on the original start date of August 17, 2020.
- Daily instructional minute requirements are the same, regardless of whether the instruction is in-person or distance learning.
- Attendance will be taken daily. If a student misses three (3) days, the schools will be making contact with each family to assist.
- Grades will matter. Unlike March-June, students will be graded on their assignments during distance learning.

“Given these significant changes, LUSD has been working on a plan to assist families and staff in transitioning to this more demanding version of distance learning. We recognize the need to help our families understand this new format of instruction and will work to accommodate them,” said Brian Jaramillo, Executive Director for LUSD. “For instance, sites will collaborate with families to help them with connectivity issues, among other things.” Sites will be distributing Chromebooks to any family who needs them. Supplies have been purchased for students to use at home (pencils, dry erase markers, paper, etc.) and these will be distributed to each student. Zoom licenses have been purchased for all LUSD teachers and students to provide increased security.

Schedules look different for our secondary students, with each student having eight (8) classes over the course of a school year; four (4) unique classes in semester one and a different four (4) classes for second semester. During each semester students will be taught a year's worth of curriculum. "This schedule provides our students access to more electives and allows us to transition to a hybrid model, with ample sanitation opportunities between cohorts," said Paul Bommersbach, Coordinator for Education Services.

Elementary students' schedule will look much like it did when students participated in "traditional" school. There is dedicated small group time which will allow staff to work with students based on their needs. In addition, the whole group time will be comprised of opportunities for activities, projects, as well as direct instruction. Students will continue to have PE, recess time, science, and art.

For our staff, over 40 professional development sessions were provided on distance learning in the Spring, with additional sessions planned for August. All professional development trainings are recorded for staff to continuously access. Sites are working on plans to help families and students with the adjustment and to provide opportunities to get to know the teacher(s) and support staff. Student instructional time will include direct instruction, small group, independent work, and even opportunities for 1:1 instruction for students who are struggling. An example could be that a student is provided instruction, then given a task to work on for a certain duration of time (age-dependent) and then rejoins the class and they discuss that activity.

"In order to ensure that students have engaging, interactive, fun lessons throughout the day and are not merely staring at a computer screen, teachers will have the opportunity to participate in two (2) days of professional development before school starts and then each week will be provided two (2) hours of additional professional development," said Bree Valla Deputy Superintendent.

School sites will be reaching out to families the week of August 10<sup>th</sup> with information about picking up materials, schedules, etc. Families may also call their school site offices for additional information or visit [www.lusd.org](http://www.lusd.org).

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