



Joe M. Simas Elementary School

1875 N. Fitzgerald Lane, Hanford, CA 93230 (559) 585-3790

Kristina Baldwin, Principal • Jenn Levinson, Learning Director • Yolanda Gomes, School Operations Officer

August 1, 2020

Greetings Simas Families,

I hope you and your family had a safe and healthy summer. We have sure missed our Simas STARS! Thank you for your patience and understanding as we are constantly adapting to the changes in our environment during the last few months. I appreciate our students, parents, and Simas School Staff for their flexibility and resilience during these trying times. You will receive this letter and a packet of information in a yellow envelope at your home address this coming week.

Please extend a warm welcome to the newest members to our Simas Staff:

- ★ Shannon Shuklian, 2nd Grade Teacher
- ★ Elizabeth Mederos, 5th Grade Teacher
- ★ Janelle Ortega, 5th Grade Teacher
- ★ Brittani Balazy, Speech Pathologist
- ★ Nancy Acosta, READY Tutor
- ★ Dana Perry, READY Tutor

As you are aware, due to our status in Kings County of being on the "watch list", we are unable to open schools in a traditional manner. We will begin our school year on Thursday, August 13th in Distance Learning. However, I am confident that our Simas STAR students will continue to make academic gains this year. The setting may look and feel different, but our teachers' passion for their students to learn and grow, remains unchanged! We believe every child will taste success this year through participation in our High-Quality Distance Learning Model. Our district staff has been working tirelessly in preparation of our students' virtual arrival.

This year Distance Learning will look very different and I am confident and committed to providing a High-Quality Distance Learning Program to all our students that aligns with our school and district vision and goals. This includes full-day instruction with required daily attendance and participation where lessons, assignments, assessments, grades, progress reports, and reports cards will be given.

We look forward to the time when students and teachers are back together in the classrooms. In the meantime, know that Simas Staff is working hard to plan and deliver a well-rounded education for your child.

If you have questions regarding Distance Learning, materials, supplies, technology, etc., please don't hesitate to contact your child's teacher (name provided at the distribution of materials) or the school office.

On behalf of the Simas Teachers & Staff, WELCOME BACK!

Sincerely,
Mrs. Baldwin

Your PROUD Simas Principal

****Please see attached documents with important information****



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Please read this important information for our upcoming school year:

In anticipation of our High-Quality Distance Learning Model, we are preparing devices and instructional materials for our students. Attached to this document is a *Simas Pick-Up Schedule* that indicates the date and time that you are assigned to pick up your child(ren)'s belongings. We ask that you bring your completed forms that are provided in the packet you will be receiving.

Please take a moment to review the important information outlined in this document. Within this packet you will find your child's lunch/login cards and the required forms that need to be completed.

Please return the following completed forms during your assigned pick up time:

- ★ Library Media Use Permit Card
- ★ Emergency Card Supplemental Form
- ★ Supplemental Pupil Information Form
- ★ HESD Student Conduct Code Signature Page
- ★ Photo, Video, and Work Sample Release Form
- ★ Migrant Form (only for migrant families)

Please keep in mind that our office is open by appointment only. Please call our office at (559) 585-3790 to schedule an appointment.

Simas Pick Up for Device and Materials Distribution: 8/10/20-8/11/20

We ask that you please adhere to social distancing guidelines, wear a mask and arrive during your specified time. The drive thru pick-up of items will occur through our dedicated Bus Lane on Fitzgerald Lane. *This is a different location than our previous pick up in the Spring.* **Please drive up and remain in your vehicle. A Simas staff member will approach your vehicle and provide instructions.**

Items to pick up:

- Computer Device
 - Students in TK-1st will receive an iPad (with cord)
 - Students in 2nd-6th will receive an Acer Laptop (with cord)
- School Supplies
 - Textbooks and workbooks deemed essential for this time of the year for each grade level.
 - Basic learning materials to start your child off this school year. These materials may include: crayons, pencils, composition books, etc.
 - Additional pick up times for parents will be planned throughout the school year to provide instructional materials to students, as needed. More information coming...
- During the designated date and time, we will hand you the bag of items at the drive thru pick-up area at the front of the school.



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Class Lists at Simas

This year, to not have gatherings by the office, we will not be posting Class Lists. During our "Simas Pick Up" on August 10th-12th, families will receive information as to which class their child is assigned to. Your child's teacher will be contacting you and providing information on the daily class schedule and directions on how your child will virtually participate in school prior to the first day of school.

Distance Learning

We are excited to offer a High-Quality Distance Learning experience at Simas. Our first official first day of school is **Thursday, August 13th, 2020**. Students will be expected to participate in live lessons, view pre-recorded lessons, and work independently and in small groups in a variety of programs and formats. Teachers will be communicating with parents their schedules and the programs they will be using. Teachers will be providing the lessons from their classrooms every day and will be taking attendance. Students will also receive instruction for PE, Art and Band (grade 6). The expectation is that students will be engaged in content during the class times as indicated below:

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday Class Schedules:

- ★ TK and Kindergarten: 8:00 a.m.-1:37 p.m.
- ★ 1st-3rd Grades: 8:00 a.m.-1:57 p.m.
- ★ 4th-6th Grades: 8:00 a.m.-2:17 p.m.

Wednesday/Minimum Day Class Schedule:

- ★ TK and Kindergarten: 8:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.
- ★ 1st-3rd Grades: 8:00 a.m.-12:10 p.m.
- ★ 4th-6th Grades: 8:00 a.m.-12:20 p.m.

We fully understand that this poses challenges to some of our families. Please let us know your unique challenges, so we can support and help you navigate the resources available. We do believe that your child will have the ability to receive a quality education with instruction from the teacher, even with working families and busy schedules.

Students will receive instruction virtually through their computer device. We will be distributing devices and materials to students by grade level. Please note that we are not providing students with work packets. All instruction will occur through an online platform and students will be expected to demonstrate their understanding through their work completion online.



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Extra-Curricular Activities

Extra-curricular activities and other school functions will be postponed until further notice. This includes school-wide awards, sports, and parent volunteers. Art, Band (for 6th graders), and PE will be provided and integrated into each student's instructional schedule.

Meet Your Child's Teacher Virtually!

On Wednesday, August 12th, teachers will be sending out a link (via Remind) to a quick video introducing themselves to you and your children. This will allow you to get to know your child's teacher prior to the first day. Please know that we will host a virtual back to school night on **August 27th** where teachers will share in detail their expectations, schedules and review the programs and materials that they will use during the year.

Attendance and Participation

Students are expected to participate in virtual instruction daily. Under Senate Bill 98, teachers are expected to take attendance and log student participation daily. When a student fails to participate our support staff will contact the parent and make arrangements to support the student with strategies to increase engagement. Our school support staff (Student Specialist, Counselor, Psychologist and/or School Social Worker) will collaborate with you to ensure your student receives distance learning instruction.

Meal Service at Simas School

We will be distributing breakfasts and lunches twice a week on Tuesdays and Thursdays. They will be grab and go pre-packaged meals. Meals will only be provided for current Simas Students. When the student or parent picks up the meals, they will need to provide their school identification number. In your packet, you will receive a lunch card that has the ID number that you will need to receive meal packets.

When: Thursdays and Tuesdays (Begins Thursday, August 13th)

Time: 7:30 a.m. to 8:30 a.m.

Location: Simas Bus Lane (close to office entrance on Fitzgerald Lane)

Communication is Essential!

Our school will continue to use the Remind app to communicate important information about our school. I encourage you to download the application or call



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the office to be added. In addition, we will be updating our public website to be used as a resource for these documents that have been sent out to our Simas community. And as always, we welcome feedback and seek to refine our practice of keeping you informed of your child's education.

Important Dates

- ★ Monday, August 10th: Device & Materials Pick-up (4th-6th grades)
- ★ Tuesday, August 11th: Device & Materials Pick-up (TK-3rd grades)
- ★ Wednesday, August 12th: Families will have the opportunity to meet their child's teacher virtually! (more information to be provided)
- ★ Wednesday, August 12th: TK & Kindergarten Orientation (this will be virtual - more information to be provided)
- ★ Thursday, August 13th: 1st Day of School (instruction to begin at 8:00 a.m.)
- ★ Thursday, August 27th: Simas Back to School Night (this will be virtual – more information to be provided)