

April 9, 2021

Dear AUSD Staff and Families,

As we head into Spring Break I want to wish you all restful time with your families. I also want to give you some important updates about our spring schedule and our fall goals.

As many of you know, our middle and high schools begin their hybrid programs on April 19. It has taken a tremendous amount of collaboration and planning to get to the point that we can bring secondary students back to campus safely, and I'd like to thank our middle and high school teachers, classified staff, administrators, and counselors, along with our team here at the district office, for their hard work in making this happen.

I would especially like to thank the AEA for their partnership on developing and then ratifying an Memorandum of Understanding for this secondary re-opening. The AEA ratified the Tentative Agreement (TA) for that MOU on April 2; the Board of Education ratified the TA at its April 6 meeting. (We have more details about the MOU below.)

Also at the meeting, the Board voted 5-0 to maintain the current school schedules. We are aware that some families are deeply invested in expanding those schedules. After considerable discussion, however, the Board decided the best course of action is to keep the current schedules. Factors contributing to the decision include:

- Hundreds of our elementary families are choosing to keep their children in distance learning this spring due to their fears about the safety of in-class instruction. Expanding in-person synchronous learning will result in decreasing Zoom synchronous instruction for those families in distance. We cannot in good conscience decrease direct instruction for what amounts to an elementary schools' worth of our families.
- Changing the schedule would again disrupt the culture and routines (possibly even classroom assignments) set up by teachers and school site administrators this year - after a year of unending change and disruption. Those cultures and routines are fundamental to students' emotional and academic well-being. Ultimately, the Board decided it was better to support stability and to direct bandwidth and energy to a full 5-day opening in August versus managing another change for these last few weeks of schools.
- Currently the district needs to focus its efforts on the secondary re-opening at hand, an expanded summer school program, and, again, our goal of a full five-day in-person reopening in August. In the long run, students and staff will be best served by putting high-quality attention on these projects, rather than trying to simultaneously negotiate and implement another change this spring.

The goal of district staff, the Alameda Education Association, and Board of Education, however, is very much to open in full this fall. Given the current trend in health metrics and the evolving guidance from state and county public health agencies, we believe this is an attainable goal and are already devoting time, energy, and resources to working out the plan. I look forward to sharing more detail about this planning process with you in the coming weeks.

Again, I hope you all have a wonderful break next week.

Sincerely,

Pasquale Scuderi  
Superintendent