



Reopening Update #17; December 3, 2020

Dear SVUSD Families,

Today, December 3rd, Governor Newsom ordered a [Regional Stay Home Order](#) that goes into effect if Intensive Care Unit (ICU) capacity drops below 15% in a region. Counties in the region will be subject to new restrictions, due to the rising number of COVID-19 cases in the state. **The Stay Home Order does not include schools that are currently open for in-person instruction, as has been confirmed by [Governor Newsom](#) and [Dr. Chau](#), the Director of the Orange County Health Care Agency (OCHCA), and as a result, all SVUSD schools will continue to operate both the Hybrid and Distance Learning models of instruction if/when the Orange County Region's ICU capacity drops below 15%.**

The health and safety of our students and staff remain our priority and it is imperative that our community understands the rationale for keeping our schools open for in-person instruction. According to the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) and Dr. Ghaly, Secretary of California's Health and Human Services Agency, schools are not the source of the recent COVID-19 surges. This is due to effective health and safety mitigation strategies, which include physical distancing, masks, ventilation enhancements, smaller cohorts, and enhanced cleaning, and disinfecting protocols. All of these measures have been instituted as a part of the SVUSD Reopening and Safety Plan when our schools opened for on-campus Hybrid learning on September 29th. Additionally, the Orange County Department of Education (OCDE) has also confirmed that all 27 Orange County public school districts have a "low percentage of positive cases".

It is also important to note that while SVUSD did shift all instruction to Full Distance learning during the first statewide shutdown in March 2020, this was at a time when little was known about the virus, transmission, and mitigation strategies. Since that time, in collaboration with the California Department of Public Health, Orange County Health Care Agency (OCHCA), and local and state educational agencies, we have a much better understanding of how the virus is transmitted. It is clear that the implementation and following of all the health and safety protocols that SVUSD has instituted since reopening on-campus instruction in September has led to the low positive case rate we now see within our schools. This is a direct result of the diligent efforts of all of our students, staff and families, and I thank you for your adherence to these protocols, which will be even more imperative to follow as we enter this new phase of the pandemic.

As we have done since the beginning of the pandemic, SVUSD will continue to collaborate with local and state health agencies and provide you with updates as available. Again, thank you for your continued support and encouragement of your student's adherence to our established health and safety protocols.

Crystal Turner, Ed.D.
Superintendent