



December 23, 2020

Dear Sutter County and Yuba County Superintendents and School Boards:

In order to ensure our school leaders have the most current local health information so that they can continue to make informed decisions for their students and staff, I wanted to provide the following information. Our COVID-19 situation in Sutter County and Yuba County continues to be quite precarious. Test positivity rates in both counties are repeatedly among the worst in the State: Sutter at 23.7% and Yuba at 18.9% currently. According to State figures, Sutter County has an average of 86.6 new cases per 100,000 people and Yuba County has an average of 68.1 new cases per 100,000 people daily. To put the cases/100,000 in perspective, eligibility to move from the purple to red tier would require less than 7 new cases/100,000 daily countywide. For schools specifically, on any given day, we have at least 10 new cases identified among teachers, staff, and students.

We have two more holidays upcoming – Christmas and New Year's. As you all are aware, we are very concerned that there will be a surge upon a surge following two to three weeks after each of these holidays. The earliest timeline predicted for COVID-19 transmission to stabilize, but still at a high rate, would be end of January 2021. In addition, education and childcare COVID-19 vaccination eligibility will not occur until phase 1B which is estimated to begin in February 2021. At the earliest, vaccination completion would occur mid to late March 2021 because a second dose is required 3-4 weeks after the initial dose.

Based upon these factors, I am **strongly** recommending all Sutter County and Yuba County K-12 schools continue distant learning until Spring 2021, with exceptions for special student populations to resume in-person learning via cohorts. Special student populations include special needs students, homeless or foster care students, and English as a second language learners.

Again, please note that both Sutter County and Yuba County have the unenviable position of having the worse testing positivity in the State. In addition, the State has established a “deep” purple tier of case counts >14 new cases/100,000 daily and neither County is near meeting the

criteria to move out of the deep purple tier for several more months. Although other counties may be able to safely transition students back to in-person learning, the overall dire situation in both Sutter County and Yuba County is preventing this from occurring.

Thank you for your continued diligence in ensuring that our children are educated and all teachers, staff, and students remain safe.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "PL".

Phuong Luu, MD, MHS, FACP

Bi-County Health Officer

Yuba County and Sutter County