

Socorro Shiels,
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Trustees:
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PARENTS
Coronavirus Weekly Communication
April 10th, 2020 – Week 3

We hope that you and your family are safe and doing well. These unprecedented and uncharted times have tested our ability to adjust to a new and different way of life. We continue to explore and learn new and different ways to facilitate teaching and learning remotely. However, we consider the health and safety of our staff, students, and their families to be our highest priority. We recognize how hard it has been for parents to suddenly shift from having their children attend a traditional classroom setting to having them stay at home, and parents expected to manage their child's learning. Virtual classrooms cannot replace the social and personal connections we develop at school. We hope that the disruption caused by the Coronavirus pandemic will soon end, and normalcy will return.

All over the world, in our community, people are making tremendous sacrifices to support their communities and combat the ongoing pandemic. While early data has shown that sheltering at home is impeding the spread of infection, it is too soon to predict when our fight will be over. The current situation is a reminder of how interconnected we truly are and how the solutions to our most pressing issues are best achieved together. Please continue practicing social distance and follow the recommendations of federal and state health officials! We appreciate your patience and support during this time and welcome any suggestions and input on how we can continue to support you.

DISTANCE LEARNING PLAN: Our Board of Trustees approved our initial [Distance Learning Plan](#) this week. This plan will guide Distance Learning implementation and is the backbone. Two current discussions – scheduling and grading are being finalized with principals and teachers.

Please expect from your school principal the schedule information this week. The weekly schedule will be rolled out, published in each school's newsletter or communication home, and then posted on the district's remote learning page beginning early next week.

Guidelines for grading will be completed by next week and available soon after that. Each grade level- elementary, middle, and high school- are having important discussions about how to provide structure and expectations for students and how to also allow for crisis flexibility. Discussions about feedback this year, the instructional impact for next year, recouping any losses, and preparing for success after this crisis are taking place every day amongst all levels of staff.

GOOGLE CLASSROOMS AND GOOGLE HANGOUTS: To protect the safety and privacy of staff and students, Google classrooms and Google hangouts are the main platforms used by the district for remote learning. Teachers may use and explore other options to best communicate with families and students as we work to reach every student in the district.

INSTRUCTIONAL CALENDAR: Yesterday, April 10th, was initially scheduled as a "non-student/professional development day." However, it was reinstated as an "instructional day" so that the staff could continue to engage with students and plan for continued distance learning.

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Monday, April 13th, is a local holiday. Nevertheless, our dedicated staff will be available for lunch and instructional packet distribution in continued support of the community. The distribution of packets will continue to be at Sassarini, Altimira, and Adele schools from 11 am- 1 pm.

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES: We would like to remind you that psychologists, counselors, and nurses have begun checking in with students and their families. It is common for children and adults to experience anxiety and fear during crisis and uncertain times. If you feel that your child would benefit from the support of our staff, please call the phone numbers below:

- For non-emergency emotional and mental health support: School counselors, school psychologists, and district social workers are available to answer questions and connect families to mental health and family support resources in the community: Families can email svusdcares@sonomaschools.org or call (707) 234-7379. Anyone with a medical or psychiatric emergency should call 911 immediately.
- For non-emergency medical questions and health support: SVUSD district nurses and health staff are available to answer questions and connect families to medical resources in the community: Families can email svusdhealthy@sonomaschools.org or call (707) 200-8127. Anyone with a medical or psychiatric emergency should call 911 immediately.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT: Our Sonoma Valley community is fortunate to have community organizations and individuals dedicated to helping and improving the quality of life of all residents, particularly during these times of great need. We are grateful for the support of our Education Foundation and the work they are doing to assist our families in need. They have assisted the district in purchasing wifi hot spots for families and staff who cannot access the internet. They have also raised money to assist families with groceries.

DISTRICT MEAL DISTRIBUTION: The number of breakfasts and lunches served continues to increase each week. We encourage families to check the location of the mobile spots (look for the school bus) and get your children's meals.

COMMUNITY FOOD DISTRIBUTION: Hanna Boys Station 3990 drive-through food distribution will now be offered at Hanna Boys Center located at 17000 Arnold Drive in Sonoma on Mondays and Fridays from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm, beginning on Monday, April 13th. Please go to <https://getfood.refb.org/> for up-to-date information on all available food distributions – emergency pop-ups, temporary closures, and re-openings. For those without internet access, call (707) 523-7903.

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TIPS FOR PARENTS TO SUPPORT THEIR CHILDREN LEARNING AT HOME

MAKE SPACE FOR LEARNING:

- If possible, create a dedicated quiet space for learning
- Have supplies/materials accessible (i.e., markers, paper, rules, etc.)
- Be available to check-in, monitor progress, and help as needed

BEGIN/END EACH DAY WITH A CHECK-IN:

- Check-in with their virtual learning platforms to find any updates for the day
- Review assignments together and what needs to be completed
- Check if any of their teachers have office hours that day and write questions that need an answer
- Ask questions and engage in a conversation with your child
 - What are you learning today?
 - What questions do you have for your teacher or me?
 - How will you spend your time?
 - What supplies/materials do you need?
 - How can I help you?

ROUTINES AND EXPECTATIONS:

- Set regular hours for learning, preferably the same schedule every day
- Write down a schedule and include breaks for snacks, exercise, and playtime
- Put away cellphones during learning times
- Maintain regular sleep routines and wake times as if they were going to school

ENCOURAGE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY:

- Plan activities for your child to get up and move
- If safe, go outside and play

RESPONSIBLE USE OF TECHNOLOGY:

- Use respectful behavior and language
- Share only appropriate and relevant video transmissions
- Stick to appropriate topic discussions
- Use only appropriate icon, emoji, and avatar submissions
- Wear appropriate school clothing if participating in meetings with your teacher or peers
- Use academic integrity and be honest by not copying or plagiarizing others

LEARNING WITH OTHER MEDIUMS:

- Encourage print and book reading

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- Use hard copy packets of work and activities
- Use textbooks, activity books, etc.
- Encourage hands-on projects, creating and building, and hobbies that your children enjoy

CREATE A SUPPORT NETWORK:

- Have older siblings help their younger brothers and sisters with their learning
- Ask friends how they are managing their child's learning at home
- Reach out to school staff for support and questions about finding resources