



# Monterey County Office of Education

*Leadership, Support, and Service to Prepare All Students for Success*

*Dr. Deneen Guss  
County Superintendent of Schools*

March 26, 2020

Monterey County School Communities,

On Thursday, March 26, 2020, the Monterey County Health Department reported 24 positive COVID-19 cases and one death in Monterey County. On Tuesday, March 24, California Governor Gavin Newsom shared in an online press conference that a teenager in Lancaster, California had died of coronavirus.

With more and more confirmed cases in our County, our state and our nation, now more than ever, we need to heed the **Stay at Home/Shelter in Place Orders** to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

**It is with this intent that the Monterey County Office of Education (MCOE), most of the school districts, and charter schools, in concurrence with the Monterey County Health Department, announce we do not anticipate schools returning earlier than Monday, May 4, 2020.** If the State and Monterey County Health Officer Stay at Home/Shelter in Place Orders are lifted sooner than May 4, 2020, you will be notified by your school district at least one week prior to the reopening date. Schools will not reopen until state and local officials have determined it is safe to do so.

School leaders recognize that potentially schools may need to stay closed for the remainder of the academic year and will provide regular updates as the situation evolves. Extending a school closure is a local decision that will be made by each individual school district.

In the interest of public safety and the health of every resident, we are asking families to help reduce the spread of the virus by doing the following:

- Heed the strict Stay at Home/Shelter in Place Orders by staying home except to obtain or provide essential services. The Monterey County Health Department Health Officer's full Order can be read at <https://www.co.monterey.ca.us/home/showdocument?id=87957>. (Please note, in light of the Governor's announcement of a state-wide Stay Home Order with no end date, Monterey County Health Officer Dr. Edward Moreno reissued his Shelter in Place Order that went into effect on Wednesday, March 18th. The only change made to the order was to remove the end date of April 7th to align with the state's direction. Both the state and local orders are open-ended with no end date.)
- Do not allow students to socialize in person with friends. This includes congregating for sports, games, or any other outings. Students, and all residents, must stay in their homes unless traveling for an essential function.
- Help students find new ways to connect with friends using age-appropriate apps, phones, videos, etc. See below for some technology ideas to connect us all.
- **Remember, the less time we all spend in public, the more lives we will save.**

During this time, our school leaders and their staff, students and families are doing all they can to ensure that learning continues and that vital nutrition and meal services are provided. Our educators are working hard to provide instructional resources for distance learning opportunities for every student they serve. To find where and when your school is distributing meals for students 18 and younger, please visit our Nutrition Services summary page at <https://www.montereycoe.org/resources/alerts/coronavirus/nutrition/>.

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If any family is in need of food, shelter, or any other resources during this difficult time, please visit your district's website, dial "2-1-1" or visit United Way's comprehensive 211 webpage at <https://www.unitedwaymcca.org/211>. For essential employees that need to work and need child care, please reach out to the Monterey County Child Care Resource and Referral on (831) 757-0775 or use the online referral at <http://montereycountychildcare.org/> for available child care in your area.

While we recognize this extension of school facility closures poses challenges and hardship to many families in Monterey County, the most effective way to slow and disrupt the transmission of this pandemic is by continuing to implement social distancing practices. We are grateful to community members throughout Monterey County for their tremendous prevention efforts during this unique and difficult time.

Sincerely,

Dr. Deneen Guss, Monterey County Superintendent of Schools

Jim Koenig, Alisal Union School District

Jonathan Sison, Big Sur Unified School District

Ian Trejo, Bradley Union School District

Dr. Barbara Dill-Varga, Carmel Unified School District

Roberto Rios, Chualar Union School District

Yvette Irving, Gonzales Unified School District

Rosemarie Grounds, Graves School District

Zandra Jo Galvan, Greenfield Union School District

Daniel Stonebloom, Lagunita School District

Dr. Jinane Annous, Mission Union School District

Dr. PK Diffenbaugh, Monterey Peninsula Unified School District

Kari Yeater, North Monterey County Unified School District

Dr. Ralph Gómez Porras, Pacific Grove Unified School District

Martha L. Martinez, Salinas City Elementary School District

Dan Burns, Salinas Union High School District

Josh Van Norman, San Antonio Union School District

Dr. Catherine Reimer, San Ardo Union School District

Jessica Riley, San Lucas Union School District

Tim Ryan, Santa Rita Union School District

Tim Vanoli, Soledad Unified School District

Dr. Brian Walker, South Monterey County Joint Union High School District

Eric Tarallo, Spreckels Union School District

Gina Uccelli, Washington Union School District

Karina Barger, Bay View Academy

Aimee Alling, Big Sur Charter School

Sean Madden, International School of Monterey

Kenneth Lawrence-Emanuel, Learning for Life Charter School

Cassandra Bridge, Monterey Bay Charter School

Justin McCollum, Monterey County Home County Charter School