



July 17, 2020

Dear Jefferson School District Community:

As we moved into July, JSD hoped to send communication that we would be offering families a choice between full-time regular instruction with numerous health/safety precautions and full-time distance learning. However, as I have said from the beginning, we believe schools can only reopen when we can ensure the safety of students, staff, and families.

Unfortunately, over the past month we have been provided incomplete, vague, and contradictory guidance on what it takes to safely reopen schools. In addition, California and San Joaquin County (SJC) specifically have seen skyrocketing infection rates and hospitalizations that make it clear this pandemic is not under control. Currently, SJC has the fifth highest COVID-19 case rate per 100,000 residents.

Month to Month Comparison of COVID-19 Pandemic

	June 16, 2020	July 14, 2020
Total Cases in SJC	1,919	7,216
New Cases per Day * 14 day average	55	328
Rate of Cases Doubling	NA	12 days
Daily Hospitalizations	47	204 20 over capacity 0 beds for children in SJC
Cases for 0-17 age group Cases for 18-49 age group	NA	9.1% 62.6%
CA State Positivity Rate *Goal less than 5%	4.7%	7.7%

Therefore, based upon a recommendation from San Joaquin County Public Health Services and the San Joaquin County Office of Education, JSD will start the year in Distance Learning for all students. Instruction will resume on August 11, 2020, as previously scheduled. The district will continue planning for a return to in-person learning during the 2020-21 academic year, as soon as public health conditions allow. When that becomes possible we will allow parents to make a choice whether to return their students to in-person learning or remain in Distance Learning.

We understand the challenges that our students and families may be facing, but it is very important that we follow the directions given by the health experts. While we are eager to see everyone in person, Jefferson School District has a detailed plan in place to deliver high-quality education to our students while they are learning from home. JSD staff are here to help guide students and families through the uncertainty we are facing over the next several months as we do our part to reduce the spread of the disease.

When the state and county health departments allow for in-person instruction, it is likely that social distancing requirements and other safety protocols will make it impossible for all students to return at the same time. If this is the case, students will attend class in-person two shortened days per week and will engage in distance learning the other three days.

JSD will comply with all California Department of Public Health and San Joaquin County Public Health Services orders when schools reopen. Safety measures will include, but are not limited to, the following: mandatory wearing of masks for staff and/or students, social distancing requirements, limiting access to campus by parents and visitors, daily self-health screenings for staff and/or students, restricted movement on campus, modified bell schedules, and elimination of non-essential activities.

In closing, we thank you all once again for your continued patience and support as we navigate these challenging and unprecedented times together. JSD is committed to providing in-person instruction this year as soon as it is deemed safe to do so by state and local health professionals. Our district continues to strive for its mission of taking collective responsibility for ensuring all students achieve at high levels. All of you and our community at large deserve nothing less.

Sincerely,

James W. Bridges
Superintendent