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September 1, 2020

Dear Buena Park School District Families,

As we continue to prepare for the return of in-person instruction, the elementary and middle schools focus remains on ensuring students and staff are safe. We have prepared mitigation plans, procured PPE equipment, and identified logistical supports to support our expanded safety precautions. For more information, please review the District Reopening Guidebook on our website.

Guidance and requirements are continually changing regarding when students can return and what type of instructional delivery model can be implemented. On August 18, I sent a letter to the community stating that *the Buena Park School District anticipates that we will not return to in-person instruction until November 30, 2020, unless the Orange County Health Care Agency (OCHCA) deems it safe to do so before then.* On August 24th, Governor Newsom announced a new framework for county monitoring. We are reviewing state and county public health guidance for clarification about what the new framework means for reopening schools. The new 4-tier reopening framework is a new color-coded system for monitoring COVID-19 progress by county, with revised criteria for easing and tightening restrictions on businesses, activities, and schools. Rather than being on or off a “watch list” for elevated coronavirus numbers, counties in California will be assigned to one of four tiers – purple, red, orange, or yellow – based on their rates of new cases and testing positivity percentages. As of this week, Orange County is in purple.

I am pleased that we have taken a prudent course of action which prioritizes safety, consistency, predictability, and continuity of learning. I will be meeting with the OCHCA Director, Dr. Chau, this week to discuss our district’s Reopening Plan and for consultation on COVID-19 data related to the Buena Park community. While we are all eager to return to open schools for in-person instruction, please know it is equally important that we have established the conditions necessary to decrease the likelihood of subsequent closures due to virus transmission. Not only do we want to reopen, but we also want to remain open. Our delayed reopening timeline improves our chances of doing so. We will be working closely with our parents, teachers, and staff on our transition to in-person instruction and we look forward to providing more information as it is available. Please note that until I meet with Dr. Chau and have clear directives about the conditions set forth by the new framework announced by Governor Newsom, our district cannot set a definite return date.

In advance of finalizing our plans for in-person instruction, we would like to ask for some additional feedback from parents. **Next week our district will be emailing a survey to our families. Please complete the survey for each of your school-age children attending school in the Buena Park School District.**

Hellen Keller once said, “Alone we can do so little, together we can do so much.” Many parents and family members continue to work hard to align their schedules to support their students in our first weeks of Distance Learning. I want to thank you for your role in our collective success for students - I am grateful for our amazing families in Buena Park.

Sincerely,

Dr. Ramon Miramontes
Superintendent