

# Soledad Unified School District

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## ADMINISTRATION

Randy Bangs  
*Interim Superintendent*

1261 Metz Rd., Soledad, CA 93960

March 5, 2021

Dear Soledad Unified School District Parents and Family

### **RE: State Plan for School Reopening**

On March 1, it was announced that the Governor and the Legislature had reached an agreement to incentivize school reopening. It is expected that the agreement will be signed by March 5.

The agreement does not require schools to reopen, but provides incentives for districts to reopen schools for in-person instruction beginning between April 1 and May 15. The agreement addresses issues such as timelines, timing, COVID cadence testing and vaccines.

The agreement provides two types of funding: (1) funding to incentivize schools to reopen and provide in-person instruction and (2) funding for more learning time and academic interventions.

### **School Reopening & In-Person Instruction**

The funding for school reopening is linked to district Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) targets (unduplicated student count). To be eligible for funding, districts must begin to provide in-person instruction by April 1 through May 15. Funding levels would be on a sliding scale depending on how early in the window schools reopen (more funding for an earlier date, less funding for a later date). In-person instruction is defined as instruction supervised by a certificated employee. Districts below the COVID case rate of 25/100,000 (purple tier) must offer instruction to prioritized student cohorts (English learners, homeless/foster children, students with disabilities, disengaged students, and students who do not have adequate access to the internet) and all students in TK-2nd grades. Districts in the red/yellow/orange tiers must offer in-person instruction for prioritized student cohorts and students in grades TK-12 to be eligible for funding.

Districts in the purple tier are required to follow California Department of Public Health testing cadences for students and staff. Districts in the red/orange/yellow tiers must follow local COVID Safety Plans regarding testing. Once open, schools must provide continuous instruction through the end of the 2020-2021 school year. There would be no penalty if a district was required to close schools which had been reopened in the event of an increase in COVID case rate.

The agreement prioritizes vaccinations of school staff providing in-person services, but does not require a vaccination as a prerequisite for providing in-person instruction. The agreement does not make reference to "collective bargaining" or "memorandum of understanding".

### **Expanded Learning Time & Academic Interventions**

The agreement provides separate funding to support in-person instruction and distance learning. Funds can be spent on extending learning time (instructional days or instructional minutes), summer school or other actions which increase instructional time; accelerating student progress to close learning gaps which may include tutoring, small group learning, and other strategies as provided by certificated or classified staff; integrated supports to address barriers to learning including health, counseling, mental health services, meal programs, social emotional learning and supports for families; community learning hubs providing students with access to the internet and other academic supports; support for credit-deficient secondary students to complete promotion or graduation requirements to improve college eligibility; additional academic services for students such as diagnostic testing, progress monitoring and benchmark assessments; and training for school staff on strategies, trauma-informed practices, student/family engagement and addressing student academic and social emotional needs. The plan for use of the funds must be submitted to the state by June 1, 2021.

### **What Does This Mean for Soledad USD?**

Monterey County and Soledad USD remains in the purple tier (the last announced COVID case rate was 10/100,000.) As such; we would be eligible to reopen for in-person instruction for grades TK-2 and prioritized student cohorts in other grades. As of this message, a date for reopening has not yet been set. We have begun the process to plan for reopening of our schools. Meetings to address instruction, health and safety, operations, student engagement and family support are being scheduled to update the School Reopening Framework approved by our Board in July 2020. We will also be scheduling meetings with our bargaining units to establish Memorandums of Understanding for the reopening of school. And as was messaged earlier this week, our district is providing a COVID vaccination clinic for employees on March 8 to receive the first dose. The second dose clinic will be scheduled for the first part of April.

We will be engaging parent representatives regarding school reopening. Our COVID Safety Plan will be reviewed with parent stakeholders. We will also survey our parents on preferences for their students to return to in-person instruction (for allowed grades) or remain in distance learning.

We want to express appreciation to our parents and families who have supported their students in distance learning over the period of school closure. Your support has been very much appreciated by our teachers and staff.

We will continue to provide additional information as it becomes available.

Sincerely,

*Randy Bangs*

Randy Bangs  
Interim Superintendent