



## For Immediate Release

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### **Bay Area School Closures and Student Dismissals From Regular School Attendance To Be Extended Until May 1, 2020**

San Jose, CA – Seven Bay Area county health officers, in collaboration with their county superintendents have made a unified, regional decision to extend school closures and student dismissals from regular school attendance through May 1, 2020 to slow the spread of novel coronavirus (COVID-19) to the maximum extent. The safety and wellness of students, school personnel, and the community are the highest priorities of all schools and districts in these six counties.

Building on the regional coordination the Bay Area jurisdictions took on March 16, 2020 in issuing Health Officer orders requiring all residents to shelter in place, the following Bay Area County Offices of Education have been working together over the last several weeks to align strategies and practices during this unprecedented time for public education: Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, San Francisco, San Mateo and Santa Clara.

“As our schools continue to move through these extraordinary circumstances, regional educational leaders prioritized a unified approach for the appropriate extension of school closures,” said Alameda County Superintendent of Schools, L. Karen Monroe. “Being able to come to this collective decision as a region, with the involvement of our health officers, is an important step for our districts and our families in terms of safety, as well as planning and expectations.”

With the support and collaboration of the Public Health Officers in the respective jurisdictions, the County Superintendents of Schools, based on conversations with district leaders, recognized the need to extend the period of school closures and student dismissals through May 1, 2020. If further extensions become necessary, those decisions and announcements will be made at the appropriate time.

School facilities may remain open to staff for the purposes of performing tasks deemed essential by the school district and the county offices of education. Education will continue through flexible learning, meals will continue to be provided and, where possible, childcare may be arranged.

“Schools play a vital role in our communities and balancing that role with the need for additional planning for social distancing at school sites is essential at a time when community transmission is widespread in Alameda County,” said Dr. Erica Pan, Alameda County Public Interim Health Officer.

During this time, we expect our communities to continue adhering to the “Shelter in Place” Orders issued by the Public Health Officers on March 16 and stay home except for essential activities **until further notification from their local health department.**

In addition, all residents are urged to keep practicing the guidance provided by Public Health Officers including:

- Social distancing
- Washing hands often with soap and water
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth
- Staying home if you are feeling sick
- Contacting your healthcare provider if you are experiencing any symptoms such as fever, cough, or difficulty breathing.
- Engage in regular exercise or physical activity

County Offices of Education will continue to work in close partnership with local health departments and local school districts to support the children, parents, and essential workforce of the Bay Area.

“While we would like to get our students and staff back into classrooms as soon as possible, we understand where we are at this moment,” Superintendent Monroe said. “We continue to support our districts and the students and families they serve in every way possible to ensure they have critical learning opportunities and are equipped with the resources they need.”

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### About ACOE

The Alameda County Office of Education (ACOE), under the leadership of County Superintendent of Schools L. Karen Monroe, serves as liaison between the California Department of Education and the 18 Alameda County public school districts that serve more than 200,000 students and 10,000 teachers. ACOE provides oversight of district budgets and Local Control and Accountability Plans (LCAPs). ACOE also directly operates schools that serve Alameda County most vulnerable students: Court Schools at the Juvenile Justice Center, ACOE Opportunity Academy schools serving students 16 and older seeking a high school diploma, and Community Schools that serve foster youth, students in substance abuse treatment, pregnant and parenting teens, Probation-referred youth, and students expelled from their resident school districts. ACOE also runs the Infant & Family Support Program, which provides individualized service for children from birth to three years and their families. For more information, visit [www.acoe.org](http://www.acoe.org).