

LANCASTER SCHOOL DISTRICT

Written Report to the Community required by EXECUTIVE Order N-56-20

Executive Summary for Board Information June 16, 2020

Executive Order N-56-20, issued by Governor Newsom on April 22, 2020, empowers schools to focus on responding to COVID-19 and to provide transparency to their communities. The order requires LEAs to develop a written report to the community that explains how the Local Educational Agency (LEA) responded to school closures beginning in March 2020.

The Order extends from July 1, 2020 to December 15, 2020, the deadline for a school district governing board (*or governing body of a charter school*) to adopt the Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) and the budget overview for parents. The Order also requires the governing board of the LEA to adopt, during the same meeting at which the governing board adopts the annual budget, due July 1, 2020, a written report to the community that explains the changes to program offerings that the LEA has made in response to school closures to address the COVID-19 emergency and the major impacts of such closures on students and families. The Report must detail how the LEA is meeting the needs of unduplicated pupils during the period of school closures and the steps taken by the LEA to support the following: delivery of high-quality distance learning opportunities; providing school meals in non-congregate settings; and arranging for supervision of students during ordinary school hours. The content to be included in the report aligns with the prior Executive Order N-26-20 which outlined the conditions under which California public local education agencies retained state funding in the event of physical school closure.

School districts are required to submit the written report in conjunction with submission of the adopted annual budget to the county office of education. (*Charter schools submit the written report adopted pursuant to its authorizer.*)

School districts and charter schools must post a copy of the written report on the homepage of their internet website.

Date of Board Approval June 16, 2020

COVID-19 Operations Written Report

Local Educational Agency (LEA) Name	Contact Name and Title	Email and Phone	Date of Adoption
Lancaster Elementary	Dr. Jordan Goines Director of Special Programs	goinesj@lancsd.org 661-948-4661	6/16/2020

Descriptions provided should include sufficient detail yet be sufficiently succinct to promote a broader understanding of the changes your LEA has put in place. LEAs are strongly encouraged to provide descriptions that do not exceed 300 words.

Provide an overview explaining the changes to program offerings that the LEA has made in response to school closures to address the COVID-19 emergency and the major impacts of the closures on students and families.

On March 13, 2020, Lancaster School District was met with the challenge of closing schools due to the COVID 19 health pandemic. After making the decision to close schools, Lancaster schools began the process of changing program offerings in order for students to continue learning, while remaining in compliance with the Safer at Home order. Lancaster administration began to work along-side the Teachers Association of Lancaster (TAL) to provide offerings to students throughout the district. A team of Lancaster School District teachers were identified by TAL and were responsible for creating online remote learning plans for core content areas. Additionally, in order to ensure equitable access to quality learning materials for all students, teachers created learning packets which were mailed to all students the first 3 weeks of school closures. Since that time, we provided more than 5000 chromebooks and 2500 hotspots for students to access online resources, lessons and support at home and we continued to mail packets to all TK-2 students and on request to student in grades 3-8. All lessons and learning materials, online and packets, were standards-based and grade level aligned. Teachers and bilingual para educators were also responsible for supporting English language learners with designated work pertaining to English language development. We provided students in our special education program with differentiated work that included regular communication with their case managers and service providers in order to meet the requirements of their Individualized Education Program. In order to meet social emotional needs of our low income, foster and homeless students, the district counselors worked to create and provide SEL lessons to both students and families. Counselors also provided access to social services for families and counseling support.

Board policy changes were enacted that provided for access to distance learning, the ability for teachers to work from home (in order to maintain the fidelity of the Safer at Home order), and modified grading policies for students during this period allowing third quarter grades to be frozen. The grading policy provided additional clarity and went on to state that grades could reflect increases based on work completed during the school closures, however, grades could not be lowered.

Lancaster School District prioritized regular communication with families through teachers, various written forms such as letters to the community, the "Standing Strong" Newsletter, through radio appearances on AM1470 and FM 96.9, and finally by increasing our social media presence on Facebook, and via our "Standing Strong" website, along with updates on our district website. District sites continued to meet with school site councils and English language advisory councils via web-based tools such as Google Hangout, and Zoom.

Provide a description of how the LEA is meeting the needs of its English learners, foster youth and low-income students.

Support to our EL population was addressed in multiple ways. Through increased access to our district wide bilingual para educators, students were provided opportunities to review and practice English language development. We also provided English language development work through our remote learning website and work packets that included ELD assignments. The grade specific work, based on the English Language Development Standards, was modified by our teachers and bilingual paras.

Based on input from families and staff, we identified two primary barriers facing our low income, foster, and homeless populations. One challenge was access to tutoring assistance for students/families. Through a partnership developed with UCLA's Pritzker Center, we were able to work with UCLA students to provide families help in assisting their child(ren) in their coursework. The other barrier experienced by these populations is lack of social emotional support. In order to address this, Lancaster counselors provided students and families with access to social emotional learning lessons based from our district adopted SEL programs, Second Step and Kelso's Choice. To further assist foster students, our counselors provided targeted, individualized support for each student. Targeted assistance for students experiencing homelessness was provided by our family ambassadors. Family ambassadors and counselors also served an important role by reaching out to families, as appropriate, to assist in securing additional resources i.e. food, clothing, and shelter.

Foster, homeless and low income students sometimes lack supplies in the home, therefore primary teachers identified that need early on. We were able to provide our primary students with needed supplies such as crayons, glue sticks, pencils, erasers, sharpeners, scissors and paper. These items were compiled and placed in an envelope and mailed out to over three thousand students in our community based on parent requests. In addition, supplies for upper grade students were also identified, purchased and delivered to each site in support of their remote learning needs.

Provide a description of the steps that have been taken by the LEA to continue delivering high-quality distance learning opportunities.

In order to initially bring about a distance learning environment in Lancaster, we initiated a collaborative effort with more than 100 teachers across 10 grade levels in order to create consistent, rigorous, and engaging weekly learning activities that could be accessed both digitally and in print. For students with digital resources, access to a plethora of enrichment resources was encouraged and shared. Students without technology were given rigorous learning activities based on grade level standards, and were provided multiple ways to share their learning and progress with their teacher. Google Classroom was used as the core platform to deliver instruction, and provide feedback. In order to address student privacy concerns, the LEA opted for teachers to make phone calls and individually guide students through the learning process. Upon learning that there was a true need for our teachers to be in front of students on a more regular basis, we began the process of adopting Webex. Teachers communicated with their students, and site administration contacted families when students were not being responsive.

The Innovation and Technology department surveyed parents to inquire about their technology needs and provided that information to all schools. They then provided students and teachers with technology and Wi-Fi access as requested, ensured teacher and student access to new resources and platforms, and secured free accounts for the duration of the school year. The district went about distributing technology based on schedules provided by the school sites to the public. We were able to secure extra licenses from various programs such as iReady, Nearpod, and Renzulli Learning. Training was provided to teachers and staff on an ongoing basis and support for technology was provided via the districts IT department and site techs. Lancaster requested additional technology support for TK- 2 students from the California Department of Education.

Lancaster sought feedback from the community and staff as to the success of the online program provided. To date, we have had a good response and continue to get survey responses back that will inform decisions on distance learning. Thus far, the survey findings indicate that over 49% of our families state that they would want to continue with some sort of distance or hybrid learning environment moving forward.

Provide a description of the steps that have been taken by the LEA to provide school meals while maintaining social distancing practices.

Lancaster began servicing our students and families by serving both breakfast and lunch within the first week of closures. We served meals at 12 sites, every day of the week. Meals are prepared in accordance with state mandated social distancing measures in place. Cafeteria workers are required to wear masks and gloves at all times. In order to facilitate an efficient Grab-N-Go meal and pick up routine, families have been asked to drive through our school site parking lots in a designated fashion predetermined by staff. Meals are served to each family who drives through, allowing for walk ups when necessary. Any family that comes seeking meals, we ask that they wear masks for the safety of our employees, the students who accompany them, and our families. The districts supervision aides place prepared meals either on a tray or cart brought up to the edge of the car door and meals are taken by a family member, limiting any contact with the public.

In order to safely complete this food distribution program, staff was trained by the district office in appropriate social distancing procedures, as well as how specifically to hand food out to families as they went through the food service line. All food preparation and support staff serving the meals are provided with personal protective equipment and are required to wear it at all times.

The LEA utilized sites that were located in our most impacted communities. This allowed for our most vulnerable families who were low income, and lacking transportation, to access and pick up food for their students. During the process we took on the spot feedback from families regarding food distribution procedures, and employed much of the feedback into our practices.

We communicated with families via phone calls alerting families to the presence of food at local schools. Facebook, the district weekly newsletter, through text, and through digital and print fliers, as well as through radio spots.

Provide a description of the steps that have been taken by the LEA to arrange for supervision of students during ordinary school hours.

Daycare options:

Understanding that the Lancaster School District population of students has many families whose work called them out of the home during this period, we found it necessary to assist families in providing options for day care. Upon coming back from Spring break, district staff identified every child care provider in the area and worked through multiple departments to individually contact each provider and identify which providers were actively taking children and planned to offer continuous service to families. The teams identified the details from each provider and compiled a master list that was communicated to parents targeting care for families of first responders, as well as, any parent in need of child care.

Child care process:

During this time, families who called our office inquiring about childcare were provided with the abovementioned list providing families with the relevant resources to secure the help needed to watch their children during the day.