



ORCUTT Union School District

Where a Dedicated Staff Means Kids Come First

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Assistant Superintendent

December 17, 2020

Hello OUSD Community,

I hope this message finds you well as we approach our Winter Break.

Last week, our Board of Trustees directed staff to continue to work toward reopening our school campuses. What this means is once our COVID-19 case counts decrease to a level when the county can move to the “red” tier and we remain there for 14 consecutive days, we will open our school campuses for Blended Learning.

While we do not know what that exact date is, we continue to monitor the case counts and will have approximately one month’s notice prior to reopening. The reason for this is the way the Blueprint for a Safer Economy is structured, the county will need to meet the metrics for the “red” tier for two weeks before it can move into that level. Once we are in that level, we need to remain there for 14 days before schools can re-open.

As we finalize our preparations, I want to thank our families for selecting an instructional model through the Aeries Parent Portal. This information has enabled us to address our last steps in the reopening process. We recognize a lot may change in the time before we open schools as we learn more about the virus, our community case counts, and we continue to adjust as more information becomes available.

As far as student class placement, we are not planning to move elementary students or students in our K-8 schools to a new teacher at this time. Elementary schools are in the middle of a grading period, and given we do not know when we will implement Blended Learning, our decision to keep students in their current placement for the time being will provide stability. We will continue to monitor the latest data and information and will provide plenty of notice to families prior to moving students to a new teacher.

Our junior high and high school students are wrapping up their grading period at the end of this week. Many of them would be moving to new classes with the new term starting January 11th and as such, we will be moving them into Blended Learning or Distance Learning tracks. Students will be able to check their schedules on Aeries prior to the start of the new term.

I want to thank you for your continued patience and support as we continue to navigate these challenging times. The Orcutt Union School District is an incredibly strong community because of the relationships we have, and that includes our relationship with each of you. I hope every member of our community has a safe and restful Winter Break. We look forward to seeing you in 2021!

Sincerely,

Holly C. Edds, Ed.D.
Superintendent



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November 16, 2020

Hello Orcutt Families,

Thank you for your continued partnership with our teachers, administrators, and staff as we navigate this school year. This has not been easy, for anyone, most especially our families.

Today I would like to provide you with an update about our plans to reopen our schools. The Board of Trustees continues to monitor our current case counts in Orcutt along with other factors as they determine how we move forward in the coming months. As of today, an exact start date has not been determined, but we are hopeful we will be able to offer Blended Learning at some point this school year. Part of our planning and preparation process includes gathering information from our families, and ensuring that you are fully informed about what school will look like when we do return.

Soon each of our schools will be sharing information about what the school day will look like including our schedules, safety procedures, and our expectations in our blended learning model. We will be asking each family to choose a learning model for each one of your students, and it is important you make that decision fully informed. We ask you to look at what option is truly the best for your student as none of the options are what students would normally experience in a typical school year.

The process of choosing a learning model will take place through our Aeries Parent Portal. This is the platform we use for families to check class placements, check student grades and work completion, and to register each school year. You will need to know your login and password to access the Portal. Instructions for how to do this will be available on our website for your information. The Portal is also where teacher assignments and class schedules will be posted when we are ready to launch the Blended Learning model.

As we have stated before, Distance Learning will remain an option for students in all grades for the remainder of this school year. We do ask that once you commit to an instructional model, you remain there for the duration of the school year as we will be assigning teachers based on the school model choice you have made.

Our elementary students will be asked to choose between the Distance Learning and Blended Learning models, however we have provided a third option that would be a request to stay with

their current teacher regardless of the instructional model. We understand our youngest students bond with their teacher and in some cases, that relationship may outweigh the choice for the instructional model. It is important to note that there is a possibility the teacher may need to change grade levels or may request a leave of absence which could necessitate changing teachers. For this reason, we ask parents to designate which model they prefer if the teacher is not available to teach that grade level. The bell schedule for elementary school students will be different, start times will be the same, however students will have a shorter day and will leave at lunch time. More information about the daily schedule can be found on the District's website. Please be sure to check the student's instructional schedule prior to making a choice

We are expecting there will be many changes at the junior high and high school with teacher assignments depending on what instructional model parents and students choose. There will also be changes to the bell schedule due to increased cleaning procedures between classes. The start and end times will remain the same. Students will be receiving a new schedule and while some of their teachers may be the same, some may be different. For the junior high, we are doing our best to cohort students so they remain with the same group of students. This is not possible at the high school due to the nature of single classes and mixed grades in classes.

Bus transportation may not be available to all students. Priority will be given to those bus routes that cross major thoroughfares such as Broadway/135. Information about bus routes will be posted on our District website as it becomes available.

Please watch for additional information that will be sent to you in the coming days and be sure to check our school and district websites regularly for new information.

I want to thank you on behalf of the Board of Trustees and our entire staff for your continued support. As we continue to navigate this incredibly challenging school year, we appreciate each and every one of you and look forward to the time when we can all be together again in our schools.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Holly Edds". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "H" and "E".

Holly Edds, Ed.D.
District Superintendent