

**March 14, 2020**

**PRESS RELEASE**

Contact Info:

Shannon Chandler, Public Information Officer

Tel: (530) 541-2850 ext. 1025

Email: [schandler@ltusd.org](mailto:schandler@ltusd.org)

Dear LTUSD families,

As you have recently read, in the letter from all El Dorado County Schools Superintendents and County Office of Education, the safety and wellness of students, families, and school personnel are the highest priority. In conjunction with all El Dorado County School Districts, The Board of Trustees and Superintendent are closing all schools in the Lake Tahoe Unified School District to promote the health and safety of our community.

**It is the intent of our District to close schools to students for 3 weeks beginning Monday, March 16 through the end of the regularly scheduled Spring Break which ends Sunday, April 12. As indicated in the letter from all El Dorado County School Districts, we will be constantly monitoring this fluid situation on a week by week basis.** However, we also recognize that families need time to plan for having their students at home for an extended period of time. We will be advising you by Thursday each week, in the following weeks up to spring break, the plan to remain dismissed. LTUSD will continue to follow the recommended guidance provided by El Dorado County, State of California, and the Federal Government.

**Distance Learning Platform**

Lake Tahoe Unified School District is preparing to move to a distance learning platform in order to prevent the spread of COVID-19. While the school closure begins on Monday, March 16, we anticipate beginning distance learning on Tuesday March 17, 2020 when we will begin to have the teachers and staff implement continuity of learning through virtual and distance educational activities for all students.

In order to engage in distance learning, LTUSD students will have access to chrome books, chargers, and MiFi wireless access allowing for students to continue to receive a high quality education and access to their curriculum. Should you need a device or access to wireless internet, please contact your school site and all resources will be provided to you. Teachers will be communicating with students and families the expectations and learning objectives, access to services, and resources that will be utilized to support student learning beginning on Tuesday March 17, 2020.

**Continued Meal Service Plan**

We, in LTUSD are preparing to make sure that students continue to have access to breakfast and lunch. Our bus drivers and food service personnel will be delivering food to local bus stops and identified stations on a schedule that will be posted shortly. LTUSD will work with community partners to notify you of additional resources that are available to meet individual family needs as well.

### **Special Education**

Additionally, we want to create a continuity of learning that allows all students to participate. Therefore, we are working diligently to tailor the learning, access to services, and ensure educational progress for all of our students with disabilities. We want to reassure our parents of students with disabilities that we will do our best to continue special education services to the greatest extent possible. At this time we are closely monitoring the statewide situation and following guidance from the County Office of Education, California Department of Education, and the Federal Government. The plan to serve our students will evolve, but we want you to know that we are ensuring that your child's IEP and 504 services and supports are being considered in the development of distance learning access and activities.

If LTUSD decides to close entirely, *with no general education services being offered to students (ex. Snow Day)*, there will be no special education services provided.

In distance learning, your child will participate in the same manner as their school of attendance to the greatest extent possible. Your case manager/service providers will collaborate with you and your child's teachers to provide services in a manner that allows them to continue to access their general curriculum and make educational progress. This does constitute a change of placement, and we will work with you individually to determine what services will look like.

We recognize independent study and virtual education is not a possibility for all students. It is also not a viable platform for certain services (APE, PT, OT, and sometimes Speech). If your child can not access their education through this type of learning platform, and we can not devise a reasonable access plan, we will begin logging missed service minutes and compensatory education services will be provided. We are in the process of devising a compensatory education plan.

### **Reducing COVID-19 Transmission**

We in South Lake Tahoe know the most effective way to slow and disrupt the transmission of this pandemic is by implementing social distancing practices. During the time of the school closure, we are asking that students and families follow the County Public Health Officer's directive to stay home and minimize social contact to the extent possible.

To achieve the greatest effect in reducing COVID-19 transmission in South Lake Tahoe, we encourage students and their families during this time to:

- avoid large public gatherings such as malls, movie theaters, and other spaces, especially those that are indoors
- plan to spend the dismissal weeks with just their immediate family and a few friends

- use social media and phone to keep in touch with the rest of their family and friends
- postpone visits to older adult relatives and neighbors, and to people with compromised immune systems
- avoid traveling out of the county to other locations where COVID-19 is circulating more widely

**In closing...**

LTUSD recognizes this decision to move to a distance learning platform will pose challenges and hardship to many families in our South Lake Tahoe Community. We are committed to working with you and recognize that all plans have the potential to change. We will communicate frequently and listen for your feedback. We are an incredible community and know that we will overcome the challenges facing us today.

Sincerely,

Dr. James R. Tarwater, Superintendent  
Bob Grant, Director of Secondary Education  
Dr. Annamarie Cohen, Director of Special Services  
Kelly Martin, Education Technology and K-8 Curriculum Coordinator  
Shannon Chandler, Public Information Officer