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Date: November 16, 2020

To: Families of Santa Cruz County

Re: **Santa Cruz County Moves to the Widespread (Purple) Tier, School Implications**

Dear Families of Santa Cruz County,

As a result of the recent dramatic increase of COVID-19 cases in California, Governor Newsom has announced that **Santa Cruz County is one of many counties to move to the Widespread (Purple) Tier** within the [California Blueprint for a Safer Economy](#). This announcement immediately increases restrictions for a range of economic activities, including prohibiting schools from expanding to a hybrid schedule. Santa Cruz County Districts and Charter Schools are now reviewing the impact of this announcement on our timelines for expansion of in-person instruction.

While in the purple tier, schools are unable to begin implementing a hybrid schedule where most students return to in-person instruction without a waiver from their local public health department for TK-6 grades. Such waivers are not authorized within Santa Cruz County at this time. However, under the Governor's Blueprint and [California Department of Public Health \(CDPH\) Guidance](#) schools **are able to continue offering in-person instruction to small stable cohorts of students with the highest need.**

In order to disrupt the upward trend of COVID-19 in our community, we must remain vigilant, especially this holiday season, to prevent the spread of COVID-19 by taking all precautions possible to stop the spread of the virus. On November 13, the CDPH released a new [travel advisory](#) and [guidance regarding gatherings](#) related to travel and gatherings. This guidance states that all people traveling out of state or country should quarantine for 14 days upon their return and sets parameters to minimize social situations that bring together people from different households at the same time in a single space or place. The guidance mandates that no more than three households gather for social situations, and recommends the utilization of distancing, face coverings, handwashing, minimizing time span, and other guidance to minimize the

risks to those gathered. Working in conjunction with Public Health, our schools will also continue to strengthen our readiness protocols including surveillance testing, rapid access testing, contact tracing, isolation, quarantining, and cleaning/disinfecting systems.

We recognize that the ongoing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, including prolonged distance learning, continues to be extraordinarily difficult for students and their families. Santa Cruz County schools will continue to work closely with our local and state public health authorities and our school community to monitor COVID-19 data to determine when health conditions would permit us to resume planning for hybrid instruction.

Please remain informed with updated information and guidance via the following public health websites:

- [Santa Cruz County Health Services Agency](#)
- [California Department of Public Health \(CDPH\)](#)
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#)
- [Santa Cruz County Office of Education](#)

In community,

Laurie Bruton, Superintendent, San Lorenzo Valley Unified School District
Lorie Chamberland, Superintendent, Live Oak School District
Eric Gross, Superintendent, Pacific Elementary School District
Mike Heffner, Superintendent, Bonny Doon Union Elementary School District
Tanya Krause, Superintendent, Scotts Valley Unified School District
Michelle McKinny, Superintendent, Happy Valley Elementary School District
Diane Morgenstern, Superintendent, Mountain Elementary School District
Kris Munro, Superintendent, Santa Cruz City Schools
Maria Reitano, Head of School, Pacific Collegiate School
Michelle Rodriguez, Superintendent, Pajaro Valley Unified School District
Faris Sabbah, County Superintendent of Schools
Scott Turnbull, Superintendent, Soquel Union Elementary School District