

PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Delay in Full In Person Student Instruction

On November 10, 2020, the Board of Trustees took action to open up to full in person instruction effective January 11, 2021 if conditions were safe and we met safety elements of our Memorandum of Understanding with the Faculty Association of declining COVID-19 cases.

Since that date, we have all watched the County move from the Orange Tier to the Red Tier and now the Purple Tier. As we all know, effective today due to very limited capacity in hospital ICUs, our Region was moved into a stay-at-home order for a minimum of three weeks.

Looking ahead at the winter holidays, we do not anticipate that cases will dramatically decline. We need to see dropping and stable COVID-19 numbers to reopen to full in person instruction.

In addition, El Dorado County is facing a shortage of substitute teachers. Due to Public Health quarantining protocols, students and staff must be placed on quarantine for 14 days after being exposed to a known positive person for 15 minutes in a 24-hour period indoors when six-feet of social distancing was not maintained. Returning to full in person instruction with the current rate of community transmission in the Purple Tier does not allow us to effectively manage the disruption for students and staff.

The District has to weigh the safety of students and staff with the need for student learning and emotional support. The District also recognizes that teachers, staff and families also need time to plan ahead.

Given the rapid increases in cases, the District will not be moving the high schools to full cohort in person learning as hoped for on January 11, 2021, as conditions are currently not stable enough to do so.

We plan to open in our current hybrid model the week of January 4, 2021, and will review COVID-19 community data at our January 12, 2021 Board Meeting to see if trends help clarify our next steps towards moving to full in person instruction.

We know this disappoints some, but we are committed to moving to full in person instruction as soon as we see declining numbers and we determine it is safe for students and staff to do so. We believe the Red Tier provides us a path forward, but we need to see decreasing numbers and stabilization before implementing full in person instruction.

We wish you safety and peace during this very different Holiday Season.