



Saturday, March 21, 2020

Dear Colleagues,

What a crazy week it's been, full of emotions and uncertainties. As you may already know, on Thursday, March 19, Governor Newsom announced a statewide "stay-at-home" order in an attempt to prevent the further spread of COVID-19. Californians are asked to continue practicing social distancing and to stay at home unless necessary for essential activities or work.

What does that mean for us in the educational system?

As all of you might have read our district along with other districts in San Diego County have closed indefinitely. This means that our schools will remain closed until the governor lifts the "stay-at-home" order. As a third grade teacher myself, I share in your pain of the unknown. How are my students doing at home? When will I see them again? Are my students getting any learning done?

It is important to remember a few things. First, at this time **we have not been given a directive to assign learning to our students**. This was done by the TOSAs and is being shared by the district. Additionally, we don't know what distance learning will look like in the near future. We need to remember that **this is something that will need to be discussed with the bargaining team** as it is a change in working conditions.

It is also important to remember that **as of today we are on Spring Break**. This should be a time for you to recharge, so when you are able to return to work you can give your students your all. Over the next two weeks enjoy your time at home with family, while practicing social distancing. STAY HOME!! Maybe read that book that you've been wanting to read for months or catch up on your favorite shows. Don't worry about work. I know that is easier said than done, but remember our mental health is important.

Lastly, it is also important to think about our students. They are just as scared as we are right now. This isn't the vacation that they are used to. Our students are hearing and seeing everything that is going on. They are probably feeling the constant tension and anxiety. What our students need right now is to feel comforted and loved. To feel like it is going to be okay. During this time **our students' mental health is more important** than their academic skills!

IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING DISTANCE LEARNING AND EQUITY

We appreciate your eagerness to provide lessons for students; however, **AT THIS TIME DO NOT PUSH OUT REQUIRED LESSONS OR WORK TO YOUR STUDENTS.**

Teachers are asking: Why can't I just email parents with instructions for student work?

ANSWER: Please be patient and refer parents to optional work provided by SBUSD [Click HERE](#)

Keep in mind that school districts statewide must abide by the LEGAL guidelines that are currently being defined legislatively and approved by the Governor. Yesterday, Senate Bill 117 unanimously passed by the legislature will soon be signed by the Governor. Furthermore, our SBUSD students are diverse. Factors under consideration as we move forward with "REQUIRED" lessons/work/projects include, but are not limited to the following:

- Access to the internet
- Access to a computer
- Access for English Language Learners
- Access for our Students with Special Needs
- Access to materials

ELECTIONS

Earlier this week the SWTA Executive team held a special board meeting at which time they voted to suspend the current elections until further notice. We will resume the elections when we return to work.

BARGAINING UPDATE AS OF THURSDAY, MARCH 19, 2020 @ 6PM

Bargaining Chair, Brenda Robles, CTA staff, Helen Farias and myself held a teleconference with SBUSD's bargaining team on Thursday to further discuss the MOU-COVID-19 ensuring the safety and health of our unit members, clarifying leave provisions, as well as expectations regarding distance learning. Additionally, we sought clarification of the district's communication (sent via email) regarding Government Code 3100, which declares public sector employees are designated disaster workers.

As of today, the district was not willing to agree to an MOU; however, the District did confirm the following:

- SWTA members were not asked to do any work this week (3/16-3/20)
- There are no plans of having unit members come in to work.
- Districts including SBUSD are focused on ensuring the following:
 - Continuing opportunities for student learning, to the highest degree possible
 - Ensuring students are fed
 - Supporting families-child care
 - Continuing to pay employees
- Learning in the state of California will continue even after school closures. Do we know the role of teachers at this time? No, we don't.
- If a member had requested a leave for this week (3/16-3/20) prior to the state of emergency, the district is granting and approving the removal of any of those leaves.
- Unit members' compensation and benefits will not be reduced during the school closure period as the District is still receiving ADA

We will teleconference again next **Tuesday, March 24th** and expect further clarification, and are hopeful we can reach agreement on a short term MOU addressing specific concerns around distance learning and working during the COVID

19 pandemic.

Updates will continue to be shared via email and or through your Site Rep.

**United We Stand,
Vanessa Barrera
SWTA, President**