

COVID-19 Operations Written Report for Palm Springs Unified School District

Local Educational Agency (LEA) Name	Contact Name and Title	Email and Phone	Date of Adoption
Palm Springs Unified School District	Mike Swize Asst. Superintendent	mswize@psusd.us (760) 883-2703	June 23, 2020

Descriptions provided should include sufficient detail yet be sufficiently succinct to promote a broader understanding of the changes your LEA has put in place. LEAs are strongly encouraged to provide descriptions that do not exceed 300 words.

Provide an overview explaining the changes to program offerings that the LEA has made in response to school closures to address the COVID-19 emergency and the major impacts of the closures on students and families.

Palm Springs Unified School District’s Board of Education, administration, and staff were continually committed and diligent in their efforts during the COVID-19 Pandemic to provide educational, social-emotional, and health and nutrition resources and support to students and families.

PSUSD recognized the fact that many of our families were experiencing a number of challenges during the COVID-19 Pandemic. Those challenges included parents who had lost employment which in-turn caused financial challenges, access to nutritional food and meals, lack of technology and internet services, keeping students physically and emotionally safe, and difficulties supporting their child’s at home learning.

In PSUSD’s commitment to educational continuity and rigorous learning opportunities for its students, our Educational Services team developed a 3-Phase Educational Continuity Plan focused on equity of access and exposure to standards. The plan is discussed in more detail in Prompt 3.

In order to ensure that all students in grades TK-12 had equitable access to technology our Educational Technology Department worked with site principals to set up distribution centers for students and families to pick up Chromebooks and iPads. Hot Spots were also provided to families with internet access challenges. Additionally, paper packets and workbooks for primary grade students were distributed. Following spring break, our technology department provided tech repair “depots” where students and families could bring their devices to be repaired or exchanged.

To support student and family well-being and nutrition, our Nutrition Services Department, in collaboration with our First Student bus drivers and site administrators and support staff, worked to ensure that all of our PSUSD students, as well as any children 18 years old and younger, had access to five breakfasts and five lunches each week.

To support students' social and emotional needs school counselors were available via email or phone. District Mental Health therapists were also available to provide services. Additionally, messages were sent to families reminding them that PSUSD partners with Care Solace which provides virtual mental health support resources.

Outreach and communication to students and families in both English and Spanish were provided through multiple methods including phone calls, emails, newsletters, and social media updates.

Provide a description of how the LEA is meeting the needs of its English learners, foster youth and low-income students.

PSUSD had a system in place which allowed us to monitor which students were regularly logging into the online instructional opportunities. We then had a multi-tiered approach to support students, with a focus on our English learners, foster youth, and low-income students, who were not engaging in online sessions. School and district staff worked to identify what obstacles were in place for these students and how the district could support the students and families in overcoming them.

All lessons included in the Supplemental Learning Resources site included strategies to address the needs of English learners for both Integrated and Designated English Language Development. Teachers began to further differentiate lessons based on the individual needs of English learners during Phase II of the Educational Continuity Plan which began May 4th. Additionally, all English learners in grades TK-8 had access to an online program called “Language and Literacy for Designated ELD,” to enhance and enrich their English skills.

Our English learner and foster youth Counselors on Special Assignment (COSA) closely monitored the participation in online learning opportunities of our English learner and foster youth high school students and made regular phone calls to the students and families supporting them in developing a plan for ensuring academic progress. Additionally the COSAs regularly monitored the A-G on-track indicators for our EL and FY students and supported them in credit recovery utilizing the Edgenuity program.

Our Foster Youth Services Liaison worked with our community liaisons and prevention specialists to ensure continued outreach to foster youth and homeless students through calls, texts, and emails. Weekly contact was made with each foster youth and homeless student in our district.

The district’s Supplemental Intervention and Support Program, which targets additional support to low-income, English learner, and foster youth students, provided FEV tutoring for identified middle and high school students and the iReady at-home program to identified elementary students.

Provide a description of the steps that have been taken by the LEA to continue delivering high-quality distance learning opportunities.

The first phase of the 3-Phase Educational Continuity Plan included the provision of links to TK-12 resources. Our district website provided a link to the Supplemental Learning Resources Site which provided learning opportunities for each grade span in all subject areas. Sample schedules were provided to assist families in planning learning at home.

In preparation for Phase II of our Educational Continuity Plan, the District Technology TOSAs developed and delivered professional development to all certificated staff focused on ensuring that each classroom teacher was able to create a Google or SeeSaw (primary grades) classroom which allowed them to provide lessons, support and “check-ins” for their students. In addition, a comprehensive teacher support website was developed for teachers to use to build their expertise in online learning platforms.

During our scheduled Spring Break online core content lessons, aligned to identified priority grade level and subject standards, were created by teams of teachers, TOSAs, academic coaches and intervention teachers. The core content lessons ensured that all classroom teachers and students had the same access to high quality grade level content.

After Spring Break, all teachers reached out to parents and students to communicate their plans for providing instruction and support via virtual platforms. Also this week, certificated staff were engaged in a second round of professional development to ensure that all teachers had the necessary skills and strategies to provide effective Distance Learning. This professional development was focused on creating interactive and engaging lessons and connecting with students using various tools. Clear expectations were set for how teachers were to provide consistent and regular communication to their students.

In our efforts to counterbalance against learning loss from the school closures, Phase III of our Educational Continuity Plan is focused on providing summer learning opportunities to all district students TK-12. All elementary students will be provided access to Imagine Learning in ELA and math and middle school students will be provided access for math. Additionally, small group targeted interventions facilitated by classroom teachers and implemented virtually will be provided to identified TK-5 students. Targeted middle school students will have the opportunity to participate in the Virtual Extreme Summer Learning Program. High School students will have credit earning opportunities provided to them via Edgenuity.

Provide a description of the steps that have been taken by the LEA to provide school meals while maintaining social distancing practices.

Modifications to our meal distribution plan began on March 16th. The modifications began with daily distribution of meals at 14 sites and 80 school bus routes. Distribution was streamlined to once a week meal distribution at all morning bus stops and the number of school sites across the district was reduced to 12 locations. A weeks’ worth of breakfast and lunch meals were distributed every Wednesday during school closures. All attempts were made during this weekly service to limit staff, parent, and student exposure.

School meals were offered curbside via drive-up or walk-up service. Parents and guardians arriving by car were asked to remain in their car. All staff kept a minimum of 6 feet of distance while asking the driver the number of students needing meals. Parents were then asked to open their trunk or roll down a backseat window for district staff to then place meals inside, working to ensure no physical contact. The driver then proceeded to the service station where employees placed pre-bagged meals into the trunk or passenger/back seat window. The driver then exited the service area.

Parents arriving on foot were directed to a walk-up station. They were kept 6 feet from the serving table where the employees recorded the number of students needing meals. The meals were placed on the table and the employee stepped back 6 feet, allowing the parent to retrieve the meals. Once the parent left, the employee sanitized the table before the next group was served.

Meal distribution will continue over the summer with some additional modifications including no bus route delivery service and school site distribution will be reduced to 8 locations.

Provide a description of the steps that have been taken by the LEA to arrange for supervision of students during ordinary school hours.

PSUSD recognized the fact that school closures put an incredible strain on working parents and essential workers who were in need of child care. PSUSD worked with our community partners to determine how to best mitigate the impact closing schools was having on working families.

Information was sent to families notifying them that they should contact the PSUSD District Office if they were in need of supervision for their child(ren). Families and essential workers who contacted the district office were provided assistance in securing appropriate child care during the regularly scheduled school day. One of our community partners, Borrego Health, provided daily supervision to approximately 60 students.

Various resource links, including links to child care support being offered through Riverside County Public Health and Riverside County Office of Education, were sent to families which provided them with safe and reliable child care options.