



Santa Maria Joint Union High School District

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June 2020

Dear SMJUHSD Parents and Students,

I hope all is well with you and your loved ones. As the Superintendent of the Santa Maria Joint Union High School District, I'd like to take this opportunity to communicate with you about our plans for the re-opening of school next year. But first, I'd like to congratulate every one of our students for completing this year, as this has been a challenging and historic school year.

Our entire community has been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic in many ways, but particularly our schools. Our students and staff experienced multiple challenges, such as our facilities being closed for 12 weeks, the transition to distance learning literally overnight, relying on technology for just about all of our work, and the stresses of life worsened by this environment. In addition, the pandemic has had a great effect on our economy, meaning less funding for schools next year.

However, I want to reassure you that we will get through these challenging times, and we will do it while providing the best education we possibly can, in a safe learning environment. I believe these experiences will make us better and stronger, especially if we all do our part, work together, and support each other.

Our plans at the moment are to open school back up on August 12, 2020. In order to do this, we need to follow the lead of County and State agencies, including the Public Health Department, ensure that our students have what they need to learn in a safe setting, and finalize our plans for re-opening school with different scenarios depending on the circumstances at that time. These plans include traditional instruction in the classroom, distance learning, or a combination of both. The principles that will drive our plans are: 1) the safety of students and staff; 2) student learning and well-being; and 3) equitable access to high quality programs and services. We will communicate again with you as soon as we have detailed plans later this summer.

Change is difficult, but we must continue to stay hopeful as we look forward to the 2020-21 school year. I want to thank you for your patience, adaptability, and support during these difficult times. Finally, I'd like to extend a warm welcome to our incoming Freshmen, and a heartfelt congratulations to our graduating Seniors – I wish you all the best!

Have a safe and enjoyable summer.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Antonio Garcia', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Antonio Garcia
Superintendent
Santa Maria Joint Union High School District