



Santa Maria Joint Union High School District

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Antonio Garcia, Superintendent

August 2020

Dear SMJUHS D Students, Families, and Staff,

I hope this message finds you and your family doing well. Welcome to the 2020-21 school year. While this is arguably the most unusual school opening any of us have ever experienced or imagined in our lifetimes, staff have worked hard to make this new educational setting the best possible experience for all of our students.

Due to the current COVID-19 pandemic, our schools have diverted from an in-person school setting to distance learning for the Fall 2020 semester, with the rest of the school year under review. The district's Reopening Plan which contains much of the specifics of our distance learning plan can be accessed on the district and school websites, with a hard copy available upon request.

It is important for you to know that our district and school campuses are open to the public, particularly for students and parents who need to access support services on an individual basis. Safety measures have been put in place to address health risks for staff and students as per the guidelines set forth by the Department of Public Health. However, in order to be as safe as possible, it is critical that everyone follow the public health guidelines and state mandates, most especially wearing your face covering, respecting our new personal space of 6 feet, and washing or disinfecting your hands regularly. We are doing the best to ensure that students and staff have the necessary technology to function effectively in a distance learning environment, and the ability to respond rapidly to any tech problems that might arise.

Moving forward, we know that we will need to make adjustments as we confront unexpected challenges. We also understand that circumstances due to the pandemic will continue to change. Nonetheless, we will continue to anchor our decision-making on the same three critical principles we have before:

- The safety of students and staff
- Student learning and well-being, and
- Equitable access to a quality program.

Success during the 2020-21 school-year will require determination, patience, and lots of hard work on the part of every student and staff member. Perhaps above all else, we must maintain our sense of community and our compassion for one another. If we do, we can emerge from this unprecedented crisis stronger and more resilient than we were before it occurred.

Thank you for your continued patience, adaptability, and resiliency during these uncertain, challenging times – we will get through this together. I look forward to a positive and meaningful school year with your support.

Antonio Garcia
Superintendent