March 13, 2020

Dear PVUSD Teachers, Staff and Administrators,

The safety and wellness of students, families, and school personnel are the highest priority of all Santa Cruz County schools and districts. In advance of more COVID-19 cases that are anticipated to follow, School District Superintendents and the Santa Cruz County Office of Education have decided in concurrence with the Santa Cruz County Health Services Agency to close all Santa Cruz County schools for the week of March 16-20. This includes all programs including all District-run programs such as Early Childhood Education and Adult Education, after school programs, and all sports practices and games. We will reassess with Santa Cruz County Health Services Agency at the end of next week whether extension of school closures beyond March 20th will be necessary.

With the concurrence of the Santa Cruz County Public Health Officer, Dr. Gail Newel, on the closure of the schools, PVUSD will submit a waiver for this first week of closure, therefore, requiring us to not make up the week of instruction lost between March 16-20. During this time, staff will continue to be at their worksites, will continue to be paid and will not see a change in their base pay and health and welfare benefits. Certificated staff will prepare for the deployment of distance learning resources to ensure continuity of learning if it becomes necessary to be closed for additional weeks. Teachers will have access to available K-12 resources through a specialized website prepared by the District as a support to the development of these resources. The majority of classified staff will continue to work in their normal departments to provide continuity of services for our students. Instructionally-based staff will be assigned small group projects and training aligned with their job descriptions. For individual questions, all employees may contact their site principal or supervisor.

School personnel who are not experiencing symptoms of illness are to report to work. If staff experience a direct exposure to a confirmed case of COVID-19, they will be asked to quarantine for an amount of time determined by the Santa Cruz County Health Services Agency. We ask all staff who are ill to stay home, and contact their health provider. Sick leave will be honored for staff who are out sick. Those who are sent home due to exposure COVID-19, with a doctor's note, will not be required to use sick leave. We are currently working on a Memorandum of Understanding with PVFT and CSEA on additional details regarding the impact of COVID-19.

While we recognize this decision will pose challenges and hardship to many families and staff members in our county, the most effective way to slow and disrupt the transmission of this pandemic is by implementing social distancing practices. We are grateful to our teachers, administrators, and staff members throughout the District for their tremendous effort, patience, and flexibility during these challenging times. On a case by case basis, all employees may bring their own children to work during the closure if the children can be supervised in a safe environment and maintain social distancing protocols. Employees should consult their immediate supervisor.

This is a dynamic situation where information and circumstances can evolve quickly. For the latest updates, visit the Centers for Disease Control 2019 novel coronavirus website at: https://www.cdc.gov/COVID19. The Santa Cruz County Office of Education continues to update its web page at www.sccoe.link/coronavirus. For ideas on how to talk to your children about COVID-19 please visit: sccoe.link/talking_about_COVID19. For local information, residents may visit www.santacruzhealth.org/coronavirus, call 211 or text "coronavirus" to 211211.

Sincerely,

Michelle Rodriguez, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools