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*To inspire each student to
extraordinary achievement
every day*

Oct. 16, 2020

To Staff and the Twin Rivers School Community,

As counties throughout the state continue to progress toward more in-person operations, I am sure that you, like me, follow the news closely with a key question in mind, “When may we return to in-person instruction?”

I suppose the question is not simply when “may” we return, which would be answered by the health statistics and county conditions. The more important and nuanced question is when “should” we return, given that we have stated from the outset that our highest and unshakeable priority is the health and well-being of our employees and students.

This question will be answered by the Twin Rivers Unified Board of Trustees. Our Board will study the facts and consider the health rating in our county, with deep consideration for the areas of our county that have been more impacted by COVID-19. They will thoughtfully consider the opinions of students, families and our employees, and our proper implementation of public health guidelines.

You may be aware of the letter that teachers union presidents from Sacramento area school districts, including Twin Rivers, issued to me, the superintendents of Natomas Unified School District and Sacramento City Unified School District, Dave Gordon, Sacramento County Superintendent of Schools, and the media, which expressed concerns about returning to school before January. In the message—signed by Rebecca LeDoux, President of Twin Rivers United Educators (TRUE)—I heard a clear request for a slow and steady return.

Essentially, the teachers union leaders are asking that we not move too fast and possibly risk public health. As I read the letter, the union leaders also clearly expressed that they feel it would be best to return to school in January for hybrid instruction.

While some may have heard resistance to reopening schools in their letter, I am encouraged they set a start date of January 4 (being that this is after the New Year). I believe this is not the outcome many of our staff, parents or students were hopeful for, but at the minimum, now we know a probable reopening date.

I appreciate TRUE’s desire to reopen when we are confident that all health precautions are in place. Given the work that our staff is doing to ready our schools, I am confident that we will be ready to bring all students back by January, if that is when the Board of Trustees gives District staff direction to deploy a phased approach to returning to campus.

Ultimately, the Board will determine the most prudent return date and process. Trustees will meet in a special session at 5:30 p.m. Tuesday, October 20, to discuss and determine when to return to in-person instruction. As always, the public is welcome to attend the virtual meeting to hear the Board's deliberations.

Prior to implementing a districtwide plan for returning students to in-person instruction, we will be bringing small groups of students onto campuses to address their specific learning needs and learning loss due to the distance learning model. Some students are identified as having special needs that are very clearly best met with in-person service, and it is our objective to bring these students into in-person learning settings by November 9.

I hope that you will attend next week's virtual school board meeting. I am confident their thoughtful and robust discussion will reinforce to our full school community their deep commitment to student and staff health.

Key Updates

Student Engagement

- Student progress reports are out. Please do not hesitate to contact your child's teacher if you have questions about your child's progress or how to help your child succeed.
- During distance learning, your child will be asked to take assessments from home. Your child's teacher will schedule the dates and times of assessments throughout the school year. If you have questions or concerns, please reach out to your child's teacher for more information. Please see the linked documents for guidance on students taking assessments from home:
 - [Testing from Home - Parent Notice](#)
 - [Testing from Home - Student Protocols](#)

Outreach & Engagement

- We still have slots available for our TR Preschool Program! We currently offer virtual programming with the hope of resuming in-person programming in the near future for many of our programs. Click [HERE](#) to start the application process or email EnrollPK@twinriversusd.org. Our Family & Community Liaison, Rosa Rivera is available to help guide families in our enrollment procedures and can be reached at rosa.rivera@twinriversusd.org or 916-666-5624. All families are invited to utilize our [PK Distance Learning](#) website which provides many resources, activities and videos for young learners as well as their parents and caregivers.
- Attendance letters will be mailed beginning Oct. 20 to families of students who have been absent for a significant number of days during distance learning.
- Over 3,500 parents have responded that they would like to keep their children in distance learning for the school year. If you have not yet submitted your distance learning request, please do so by clicking on the following links:
 - [Parent Survey \(English\)](#)
 - [Parent Survey \(Spanish\)](#)

- Free childcare for TR families—four childcare centers across the district are targeted to open on Oct. 19. Enrollment is full and waiting lists have been established. Additional centers will begin enrolling next week. Click [HERE](#) for more information.

District Operations

- Centralized COVID-19 voluntary saliva testing for employees begins today at different sites, days and times. TR employees should visit the [Health Services page](#) in the TRUSD Staff Room for more information and to schedule an appointment. If you have questions, please contact Health Services at (916) 566-1787.
- The District began removing excess classroom furniture from our schools on Monday, Oct. 12. Sites throughout the district are being reconfigured to meet CDC guidelines of 6 feet of social distancing. Rooms should be reconfigured by mid-November. In addition, plexiglass and signage will be added throughout sites. Installation will occur over the next few months.

With deep respect,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Steve Martinez".

Steve Martinez, Ed.D.
Superintendent, Twin Rivers Unified

Every Student, Every Day. Leaving No One Behind!