

COVID-19 Operations Written Report

Local Educational Agency (LEA) Name	Contact Name and Title	Email and Phone	Date of Adoption
Emery Unified School District	Dr. Mila Kell, Director, Instructional Programs	Mila.kell@emeryusd.org	6/24/2020

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.

After closing schools in compliance with the Shelter-in-Place Order due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Emery Unified School District restructured all program offerings to facilitate instruction via virtual delivery. During Phase 1 of our shelter-in-place period, the district’s academic focus was primarily on reviewing with students the previously taught content and maintaining their learning skills. Beginning on April 27, the EUSD entered a new phase of its Distance Learning Plan which included teaching new content and skills aligned with the California content standards. The goal of the EUSD during this time of extended distance learning was, to the extent feasible, to provide continuity of high-quality educational offerings for the district students. In response to the new reality of COVID-19 pandemic, the modes of content delivery changed as students were unable to have face-to-face instruction from their teachers and in person collaboration and peer tutoring opportunities with their classmates. To ensure equitable access to learning, the district immediately began the distribution of electronic devices and hotspots to those of the district students who were in need of technology and access to the Internet. The EUSD teachers and staff truly raised to the occasion as they transitioned to virtual teaching by adopting instructional delivery and incorporating various technologies, such as Zoom Meetings, Google Hangouts, Google Classroom, and Sceencastify. The EUSD staff offered office hours and conducted individual check-ins with children and their parents. Many teachers produced customized instructional videos in addition to distributing paper-and-pencil work packets. According to the survey responses from our stakeholders –families, students, and teachers, about 92% of our youngsters participated in live virtual instruction, 49.12% took part in live small group learning, and 73.68% used paper-and-pencil packets either distributed by teachers or electronically sent for printing out at home.

It is important to acknowledge that the school closures during this pandemic exacted significant hardships on our students and families. Many of our parents lost employment as non-essential businesses were shut down during the COVID-19 pandemic. Considering that most of the families in our district were already low-income, the economic impact on our community was particularly devastating. In addition, as in many neighborhoods around the country, our community suffered as some of its members were infected with the virus. Some of our students lost family members; others witnessed their loved ones getting sick and had to step in as caretakers for their parents and siblings. At the same time, while participating in distance learning, many of our students, especially the younger children, needed additional monitoring and supervision from their parents. All the while, many of their parents worked as first responders; others had to continue full time work from home while simultaneously providing additional support and supervision to their children during school distance learning hours. These adverse conditions exacted an even greater burden on already stretched-out family resources.

To support our hard-working and dedicated staff in making the shift to remote teaching and learning during this challenging time, the district developed a EUSD Distance Learning Plan. While the district administration and staff understood that distance learning could not offer the quality of experiences students would have in a classroom setting with the face-to-face attention from their teachers and through interaction with their peers, to maximize the quality of teaching and learning during the shelter-in-place order, some of the essential components of this plan were professional learning resources and ongoing collaboration and support provided by English Learner teachers, SPED specialists, school principals and district administrators. The EUSD Plan was developed in congruence with the California Department of Education Guidelines for Distance Learning and was aligned with the Memorandum of Understanding between EUSD and ETA signed on April 20,2020.

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

During these challenging times the district was making every effort to meet the needs of our unduplicated students – English Learners, low-income children, and foster youth. Our English Language Development (ELD) teachers continued collaboration with the general education instructors to provide maximum support for our English Learners in content areas. The ELD teachers provided one-on-one and small group assistance for our English Learners. The district ELD Coordinator/Elementary ELD teacher and the ELD middle school /high school teacher met regularly to plan support for our students. The English Learners at the high school and at the middle school received designated ELD instruction via Google Classroom. The ELD instructor modified *English 3D* curriculum, so that students could continue building academic vocabulary and engage in academic reading, writing, and listening tasks embedded within units. These tasks were supplemented with TED talks and with NewsELA articles and videos. In addition, the students had online discussions on Padlet. The ELD teacher and the students met during office hours on Google Hangouts to go over any material that needed clarification. In addition, our newcomers read and took quizzes on *Raz Kids*, and they were asked to submit one recording of themselves reading each week. Students also joined the teacher on Google Hangouts for integrated language support in content areas. The ELD teacher at AYE tracked English Learners and their participation in online instruction based on *IReady* data. Students received weekly assignments and prompts to respond to. In addition, the teacher facilitated electronic chats with individual students and small groups of students via Google Hangouts, FaceTime, and Zoom. The teacher sent emails and made ongoing phone calls to parents or guardians with ideas for supporting student learning.

Since the majority of our students come from low-income families, we used district-wide approach in addressing the needs of this population so that all the efforts described above were geared towards our low-income students as well. The same approach, coupled with frequent check-ins, applied to our Foster Youth student.

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

To support our teaching staff and our families and to help them engage students in quality instructional learning opportunities, the district created curated collection of electronic resources intended for teachers, parents, and community. These resources were updated daily and were grouped into various applicable categories – by subject, by developmental level, by audience, etc. This support, along with the opportunities to collaborate with colleagues virtually and plan instruction together, contributed to quality instructional offerings during distance learning. Blended learning opportunities offered by the district included online face-to-face live interactions (Google Hangouts/Meet/Zoom), participation in live instruction using Google Slides, watching videos pre-recorded by teachers, workbook time, independent work, project work, group work, online resources (YouTube, Khan Academy, and various video platforms). The district students were encouraged to engage in independent daily reading in addition to participating in guided and independent learning during the school hours. Teachers used various digital platforms to offer times for students to work in small groups and to have very much needed social interactions. Many teachers lead students in

mindfulness and other social-emotional activities and conferenced students in need of emotional support. In response to the survey questions sent out by the district, students indicated that they became more proactive in their learning, actively pursuing teachers for support and developing greater agency in the learning process.

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

To meet the needs of our community, the district distributed over 25,000 meals – breakfasts, lunches, and snacks, which were made available to all of the community, regardless of whether or not the recipients were families that had students in the district. The boxed meals were distributed on Mondays and Thursdays and provided families with the surplus of food to last for the whole week. While handing out meals, the district staff were very intentional and responsible about adhering to social distancing practices. The district staff wore masks and gloves; special markers placed on the ground six feet apart helped to remind community members about social distancing procedures. If parents, students or community members were not wearing protective gear, they were given masks by the district employees and were asked to put them on. The tables used for the meal distribution were placed at least 6 feet apart. According to the respondents of the surveys sent out by the district, at least 22% of students took advantage of this meals program.

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

Supervision of students during the school day took a form of in-person virtual instruction as well as assignments for independent work. All these activities were planned with an intention of taking place during ordinary school hours. Our teaching staff and school administrators communicated with parents and guardians and our staff and provided guidance on how to monitor student work, support their learning, and increase students' engagement and participation. Without on-going and consistent two-way communication with parents initiated by our teachers, counselors, and administrators, our distance learning program would not be possible.