



NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

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Bay Area School Closures and Student Dismissals From Regular School Attendance To Be Extended Through May 1, 2020



**MARIN COUNTY
OFFICE OF EDUCATION**
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San Rafael, CA –Marin County has aligned with seven Bay Area county health officers, and county superintendents to make a unified, regional decision to extend school closures and student dismissals from regular school attendance through May 1, 2020 to slow the spread of novel coronavirus (COVID-19) to the maximum extent. The safety and wellness of students, school personnel, and the community are the highest priorities of all schools and districts in these six counties.

Building on the regional coordination the Bay Area jurisdictions took on March 16, 2020 in issuing Health Officer orders requiring all residents to shelter in place, the following Bay Area County Offices of Education have been working together over the last several weeks to align strategies and practices during this unprecedented time for public education: Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, San Francisco, San Mateo and Santa Clara.

“To maintain a consistent and coordinated response regionally, Public Health officials and school leaders have determined that extending the suspension of classroom learning is vital to the safety and well-being of our students and community,” said Mary Jane Burke, Marin County Superintendent of Schools. “This unified decision is a reflection of the importance of our mitigation efforts and to help our families plan for the longer term.”

With the support and collaboration of the Public Health Officers in the respective jurisdictions, the County Superintendents of Schools, based on conversations with district leaders, recognized the need to extend the period of school closures and student dismissals through May 1, 2020. If further extensions become necessary, those decisions and announcements will be made at the appropriate time.

School facilities may remain open to staff for the purposes of performing tasks deemed essential by the school district and the county offices of education. Education will continue through flexible learning, meals will continue to be provided and, where possible, childcare may be arranged.

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“As we work to reduce the spread of the COVID-19 virus, any efforts to reduce community exposure will help ease the burden on our healthcare system and protect those at greatest risk,” said Main County Public Health Officer Dr. Matt Willis. “This unified effort should serve as a model for our state.”

The best way for the public to further stop the spread of germs in our community is to practice the following steps:

- Abide by the current shelter in place order, limiting activity to only essential needs. When completing essential activity, keep your distance from others, especially anyone showing symptoms of a cold;
- Wash your hands *frequently* with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially before eating, after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing;
- Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer when soap and water is not available;
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue or crook of your elbow (not your hands). If you use a tissue, throw it away and wash your hands afterward;
- Avoid touching your face;
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe;

Visit the official [Marin County Coronavirus webpage](https://www.marinhhs.org/coronavirus) (MarinHHS.org/coronavirus) to review answers to frequently asked questions or subscribe to receive email updates. In addition, individuals can contact Marin HHS with non-medical COVID-19 questions by calling a dedicated [information call center](tel:4154737191) at (415) 473-7191 or by [email](mailto:info@marinhhs.org).

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