



**COVID-19 Operations Written Report  
Benicia Unified School District**

<b>Local Education Agency (LEA) Name</b>	<b>Contact Name &amp; Title</b>	<b>Email &amp; Phone</b>	<b>Date of Adoption</b>
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*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.*

**1. 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.**

The goal of the distance learning plan in BUSD was to keep our students **engaged**, **supported** and **progressing** as much as possible. Daily instruction took different forms such as written instructions, “How To” videos, pre-recorded teaching videos, or live teaching sessions via platforms like ZOOM or Google Meets. Teachers then used daily office hours for additional support, via email, ZOOM, Google Meets or a phone call. Each grade level was limiting content work for students to a manageable amount of time which differs by grade level and is outlined in the [Distance Learning Plan](#).

Special Education teachers continued to meet the needs of students with disabilities. Specialized Academic Instruction (SAI) and related services were offered through distance instruction provided virtually, online, or telephonically. All services may not have been provided in the same manner as they would typically have been provided. However, many disability-related modifications and services were effectively provided online. These included, extension of time for assignments, shortened

assignments, videos with accurate captioning, accessible reading materials, and speech or language services through video conferencing.

BUSD made the decision to continue with our existing grading systems at each level, albeit modified, with letter grades for the grading period at the middle and high school levels, and a narrative report card at the elementary level. Teachers and administrators are using flexibility as needed when grading to support students in learning while understanding the variances in home situations. This flexibility may look like things such as extended time, accepting late work without penalty, allowing make-ups, reducing the amount of work required, etc. The decision to continue to use grades at the secondary level was because it was a feedback system of which students, staff and parents are imminently familiar. Our primary goal was to provide students with feedback to further their learning in a **flexible, non-punitive** manner that was **empathetic** to the variances of home situations. After soliciting feedback from parents, students and staff, reviewing our 6-12 student performance data, and much discussion, one adjustment was made to the grading policy. It was decided to offer students in grades 6-12 an Incomplete in place of a D range or F grade for semester 2. Students who chose the option of Incomplete would have opportunities to make up the learning and work for the 4th quarter any time during their “career” at that school (middle school or high school) and have that Incomplete replaced with a grade. This decision was made to ensure that students had every opportunity to learn the essential content taught during 4th quarter and earn the grade.

Students reported that they were spending between 1.5 focused hours (elementary) and 3.5 focused hours (high school) daily on schoolwork. This amount of time fell in line with the BUSD recommended learning time outlined in the [Distance Learning Plan](#).

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

Small group instruction was provided to students in ELD and reading by the District intervention teachers. Site leaders, counselors and staff monitored student success and struggles closely during school closure. Additional outreach was done to support students and families and to ensure they stayed connected to school.

Site administrators made personal phone calls and deliveries of technology or school materials and packets to students and families. Site staff were also calling families of English learners to check in and offer support. Staff kept track through the use of shared Google Documents and log entries of family contacts and the efforts made for outreach so that continual follow-up could occur. According to survey data, more than 80% of students reported hearing from their teacher weekly. This was important as that student-teacher connection not only supported student learning, but student well-being, as noted by our survey.

BUSD counselors and Special Friends/Second Step staff were providing small group and individual counseling to students as needed. Information about the needs of students was shared with these staff members who did outreach. Additionally, information on small group sessions were sent out to all students at the different sites.

Parent, staff, and student (grades 4-12) surveys were sent out. Based on the feedback, 99% of our students had access to a device and 97% had reliable internet access. As a District we distributed more than 300 devices to families who requested one. Our comprehensive High School was already a 1:1 school; therefore those students already had their device at home. Additional feedback was also gleaned from our District English Language Parent Advisory Committee about what was working and what needed attention as we planned for the future.

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

Several weeks prior to school closure, the BUSD Ed. Services and IT teams worked together to create a plan for Google Classroom needs and then about 48 hours prior to the actual closure IT built and loaded Google Classrooms for every teacher in the District. Many teachers already had these, but this was an assurance that every teacher had the technology platform in case of school closure. Additionally, Ed. Services began to compile a list of resources and ensure that CLEVER was loaded with access to each online program used.

As school closure became a reality, BUSD sent out a survey to all families to solicit feedback on device and internet access for students. The data from this survey was used to do an initial deployment of devices to families that had no access. A second survey was sent out in the second week of closure soliciting input from families about their need for additional access (i.e. multiple family members needing to share a device.) Deployment days were established at the District Office where families could come and check out devices. Additionally, site leaders delivered devices or had devices for checkout at their school sites.

The last day of school before the closure was official, every teacher had their students log into their new Google Classroom. This was done to remove any barrier and work out any issues prior to school officially closing. The first two weeks of school closure, teachers posted assignments that were primarily review in nature. These were opportunities for students to practice and reinforce an already taught skill or concept and practice working from home. Once the decision was made that distance learning was extending, teachers worked in collaborative grade level and course alike teams to identify the [essential standards](#) that were absolutely necessary for students to master by the end of the school year. Primary grades focused on

reading, writing and math, upper elementary reading, writing math and science, and secondary the essential standards for each course. New content being taught was to be aligned with these identified essential standards.

Grade level Google Classrooms were created so that teachers could share resources with each other across the district. The District created a list of resources for teachers and families. This list of [resources](#) was for families who wanted additional opportunities for their students. Teachers worked collaboratively to provide instructional resources such as live zoom lessons, recorded videos, written instructions to students and with each other.

All teachers were using a digital platform such as Google Classroom, SeeSaw, or Class Dojo, CLEVER, or Google Meets. All teachers had office hours to answer questions from students and parents. Instructional assistants, with guidance from the teachers, provide individualized academic support to students with Disabilities through Google Classroom and Zoom. According to staff survey data, approximately 80% of students were regularly engaged with Distance Learning and 95% were engaged some of the time. Linked below are Board Presentations that were given throughout Distance Learning that provide updates and highlights.

[Distance Learning 4.23.20](#)

[Distance Learning 5.7.20](#)

[Distance Learning Update 5.21.20](#) (includes feedback results from parent, staff and student surveys)

[Distance Learning Update 5.28.20](#)

Teachers continued to meet on Fridays for collaboration, planning and student progress monitoring. These days were essential to keeping the instructional practices moving forward. Students were to expect new content Monday-Thursday. Students had Friday's to continue working on assignments or catch up. The District identified the approximate amount of time a student at each grade level should expect to work on school assignments or lessons.

Future planning for school re-opening in the Fall 2020 began in May. Administrators had brainstorming conversations with their staff regarding what school might look like in the Fall based on a variety of scenarios. A "reopening design team" made up of administrators, teachers and parents was then created and met three times to build models for reopening school. The team reviewed the data from the surveys, discussed the goals and vision that would drive the work and used the guidance set forth by the CDC, CDE and Health Departments as lenses as these models were developed. The [Future Planning: Returning to School Document](#) is linked here. The models were brought to the School Board for preliminary review on June 4, 2020. Feedback was solicited in the form of a survey. The reopening design team will reconvene later in the summer to continue to build out the details of the reopening models as new information surfaces and new information from surveys is gathered.

Reflecting on lessons learned and planning ahead has made the BUSD transition to distance learning as effective and smooth as possible. The partnership and collaboration between the administration and the teacher's union has proved invaluable in creating the most optimum conditions possible for teaching and learning.

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

BUSD provided breakfast and lunch meals from two of the school sites and one neighborhood site where many students lived. BUSD also provided meals during spring break and continued to provide breakfast and lunch through the remainder of the school year.

Families were able to pick up both breakfast and lunch during the hours that distribution occurs. BUSD food services provided one of these as a hot meal each day. The staff averaged about 450 breakfasts and 450 lunches served each day.

At each distribution site, there were tables set up at a drive through area. Staff were also on hand to direct traffic. The staff were on a rotating schedule to work from home (taking online classes) one day a week and serving four days a week. The food service and maintenance staff who worked these shifts are loved by our BUSD families. The food service staff even participated when spirit weeks occurred. Families showed their appreciation to the food services workers through notes, signs and even dropping off Starbucks Gift Cards, cookies and sweet treats.

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

BUSD did not directly provide supervision for students during ordinary work hours during the 2020 spring school closure. BUSD staff responded to inquiries and needs as they arose through working closely with First 5 Solano, Solano Family & Children Services, neighboring cities, Solano County Office of Education and the City of Benicia. Families who requested a need for child care were connected with one of the services aforementioned. Staff continued to monitor the need and requests throughout the spring. BUSD staff began planning for a [CDU Summer Gradual Reopening](#) in May. Several programs will be offered beginning in July to serve the students and families.