

COVID-19 Response Community Report



INTRODUCTION

The Governor's [Executive Order N-56-20](#) requires that the Board of Education adopt a written report to the community that explains the changes to program offerings that Los Angeles Unified has made in response to school physical closures to address the COVID-19 emergency. The written report must include the major impacts on students and families and, at minimum, describe how the District is meeting the needs of low-income students, foster youth and English learners.

OVERVIEW

Provide an overview explaining the changes to program offerings that the local education agency has made in response to school closures to address the COVID-19 emergency and the major impacts of the closures on students and families.

Los Angeles Unified closed school facilities beginning March 16, 2020 as a result of the COVID-19 emergency. Since that time, the 66,500+ District staff have continued to serve the community and its 557,000+ students across the District's 710 square miles. Los Angeles Unified has maintained constant communication with the community through weekly televised updates from the Superintendent, information posted on the District's website, regular automated phone calls, online town hall meetings and social media notices to inform the community about available resources and the District's progress in transitioning to student learning at home. A phone hotline was also established to provide one-stop support for any student, family and employee needs, and this hotline fields about 1,000 per day.

The District has taken a systematic approach to ensuring that all who are part of the school community are safe and that learning can continue at home.

1. Prioritizing Health & Safety - The District has continued to follow the guidance of public health experts. All 1,386 schools remain closed, and scheduled gatherings such as assemblies and meetings shifted to online venues or were cancelled. Accommodations were made for most employees to work remotely. Offices and sites that remain operational are sanitized regularly, and employees assigned to the sites are provided with appropriate personal protective equipment.

2. Providing a Safety Net - Beginning on March 18, Los Angeles Unified established 63 Grab & Go Food Centers across the District to provide breakfast and lunch meals to children and adults in need. As of May 28, the Grab & Go Food Centers had distributed over 25 million meals to children and adults. Beginning in mid-May, the District increased the number of meals provided each weekday from two to three for each child and adult who visited the centers.

3. Mobilizing the Community - In partnership with the California Community Foundation, the District established the [LA Students Most in Need Fund](#) to collect donations from the community to provide meals to students and to support at-home learning for students with devices, supplies and digital libraries. As of May 22, the Fund had raised over \$12 million for students.

4. Connecting Students - Los Angeles Unified has implemented learning at home by ensuring that all students have a device and internet access at home. The District purchased over 185,000 new devices and over 35,000 internet hotspots for students in need. Since March 16, the District has also partnered with local internet providers who have offered free internet access for households who did not previously have access.

5. Learning at Home - Students were provided with at-home learning plans prior to March 16. Since that time, school staff have expanded the use of existing digital learning tools to support student learning at home. As of May 22, over 98% of secondary students and over 81% of elementary students have connected to District online learning platforms, and these percentages continue to increase. To ensure high-quality online learning, almost all teachers have received additional "Continuity of Learning" training on the basics of online instruction, and around 40% of teachers are receiving advanced "Future-Ready" training.

The District has projected expenditures related to the COVID-19 emergency through August 14 to be approximately \$540 million. Investments in technology, educator training and expanded summer school opportunities for all students constitute the majority of these expenditures. These expenditures are inclusive of all funds including General Fund, Cafe, Bond, Federal Stimulus and State Relief.



District staff have engaged the community to respond to family needs and receive feedback on the District response to the COVID-19 emergency. Local Districts have convened over 50 online town hall meetings with communities of schools to provide updates on the District's transition to student learning at home and address questions of importance to students and families. A survey of families about the District's response to COVID-19 had over 12,000 respondents, and 75% had positive ratings about the District's transition to student learning at home. The Parent Advisory Committee and the District English Learner Advisory Committee have continued engagement around the District's Local Control and Accountability Plan and have provided input on the District's response through several online meetings.

LEARNING AT HOME

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



Families of students play a critical role in learning at home. To support families in the transition to student learning at home, Los Angeles Unified developed new online content for families and shared existing resources that families could use to guide student learning. In addition to establishing a one-stop phone hotline for family support, the District also developed a series of workshops to support families in the areas of academic topics, mental health and available resources in the community.

The District established a [first-of-its-kind partnership](#) with public television stations across Los Angeles to provide at-home learning content aligned with grade-level standards. Beginning March 16, PBS SoCal provided Pre-K through Grade 3 programming, District-owned KLCS provided Grade 4-8 programming and KCET provided Grade 9-12 programming. Since this programming began, viewership in the 2- to 17-year-old demographic group increased 60%, with a weekly average of 91,920 viewers in that age range through May 22.

The District distributed early learning kits to its 24,000 early education students so families would have necessary instructional materials at home. These included developmentally appropriate supplies like white boards, markers, scissors, crayons, and basic worksheets to support fine motor skills and early literacy. The Early Childhood Education Department (ECED) website included sample schedules, lessons and materials in English and Spanish, in addition to links to a ECED Youtube channel that has lessons for families to screen for students. Devices were provided to all teachers and paraprofessionals to support the transition to distance learning. Teachers and aides in the District's 86 early education centers are



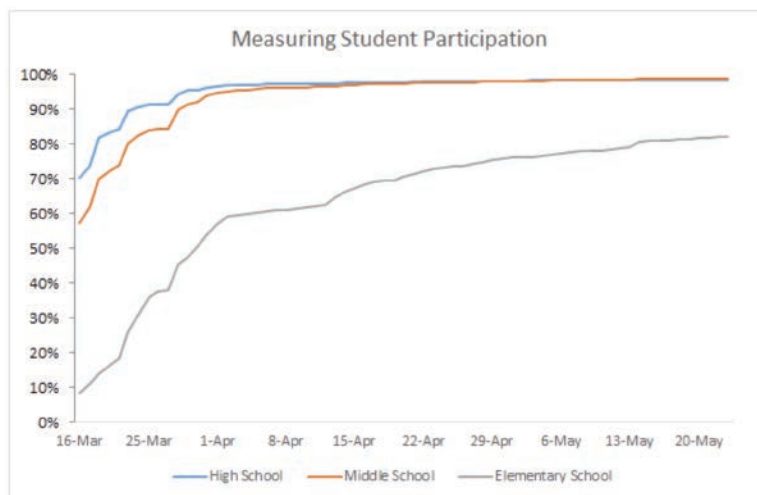
expected to contact their students at least twice a week. Since March 16, over 1,200 early educators have attended professional development on trauma, resiliency, relationships, readiness and social emotional development.

Elementary and secondary schools have transitioned to at-home learning by having staff sustain connections with students and establish regular schedules for student engagement. Under the agreement with United Teachers Los Angeles, teachers are required to provide an average of 240 minutes of instruction and student

support each day. School site administrators and support staff, such as counselors and coordinators, monitored student engagement, supported teachers with delivering effective online learning and reached out to students and families if students were not participating or needed additional support. Schedules for at-home learning were established based on local school decisions. High school students were prioritized for initial device and hotspot distribution to ensure those students were able to be on-track toward graduation. Consistent with State guidance, state and any required teacher-administered District assessments were suspended during this at-home learning period.

Every elementary school student received a consumable workbook shipped directly to their home in order to complement their online learning. These workbooks supported student learning at home while device distribution was in progress.

Student participation in online learning at home (see graph) has increased steadily throughout this at-home learning period, with almost all middle and high school students and the vast majority of elementary students now actively using online District tools. Many elementary teachers are utilizing online learning management systems outside of Schoology, the District learning management system, so the District is working with those systems to incorporate that usage data in the District's monitoring.



While Los Angeles Unified has had access to various online curricula in the past, this at-home learning period has pushed all teachers to utilize online content. Schoology has been the primary platform for student engagement and learning, though some schools and teachers have also been utilizing other platforms. The online system Edgenuity has been a primary platform for virtual courses for the secondary grades. The District has invested in additional Edgenuity licenses to provide access to virtual coursework for students. Districtwide, Edgenuity licenses have been extended for use through the summer for K-12 students.

Grading policies for students were revised to reflect the challenges facing students during this at-home learning period. To ensure students were not penalized for being unable to participate in online learning, the District adopted a modified A-D grading scale consistent with guidance from the California Department of Education. Students will not receive a lesser grade than their grade as of March 13 and no Fs (or 1's for elementary) will be issued for students during the grading periods within the at-home learning period.

The District will be offering three tiers of at-home summer school that, for the first time, will be available to all students. Tier I will provide self-paced enrichment opportunities open to all TK-12 students. Tier II will include a 4-week summer offering to provide English Language Arts, math and academic English support to eligible high-needs students and ensure they are prepared for the next grade level. These academic offerings are paired with locally-designed enrichment partnerships in subjects such as science, technology, engineering, arts and math. The District's Beyond the Bell Branch will continue to lead Tier III by providing summer sessions for Title I schools and for credit recovery at the high school level.

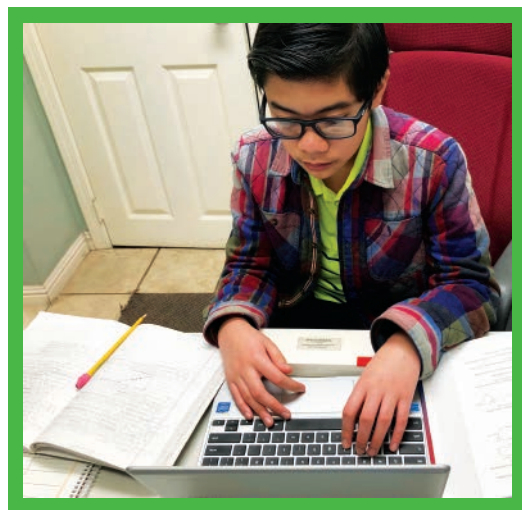
The District has increased professional development opportunities for school site educators to become more effective in leading online learning. Over 34,000 District teachers and administrators have completed a 10-hour “Continuity of Learning” training series designed to increase their ability to lead online instruction. Examples of offerings included the use of Schoology, curriculum-embedded digital tools, [culturally and linguistically responsive teaching strategies](#) and online learning activities in each content area. The District also created a “Future-Ready” training that has over 13,000 staff, or around 40% of teachers, engaging in an additional 30-hour course to improve their capacity to support students in learning at home.

The [Access, Equity and Acceleration unit \(AEA\)](#) has coordinated efforts to ensure that Standard English Learners continue receiving needed supports. AEA staff have developed culturally responsive mathematics and English language arts model lessons and professional development for teachers and paraprofessionals on the linguistic and academic needs of Standard English Learners.

Recognizing that the needs of students and staff go beyond at-home learning, the District expanded student access to social-emotional and health resources. An online professional learning community for educators was developed to share tools and resources to establish safe, healthy, welcoming and affirming virtual classrooms, including implementation of [Positive Behavior Supports and Interventions and Restorative Practices](#). A [mental health hotline](#) staffed by Student Health and Human Services professionals provides mental health support for students and families and consultation for educators.

SERVING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Los Angeles Unified’s Division of Special Education has made every effort to ensure the needs of students with disabilities are incorporated into the Districtwide at-home learning approach. Students with disabilities comprise approximately 15% of the District’s student population. All parents of students with disabilities were provided written notification describing the District’s mission to continue implementing their child’s Individualized Education Program (IEP) to the greatest extent possible. District and school staff have continued to provide services for students with disabilities to the extent possible through an online format and have supported core content teachers with adapting lessons according to student needs. Resources for families of students with disabilities have been posted on the District’s [Division of Special Education website](#) and are organized in the following areas: infant/preschool, instruction for students on both the core and alternate curriculum, and related services. The website has had over 43,000 views through the end of May. The District has also developed an automated process to distribute Certificate of Completions for the Class of 2020.



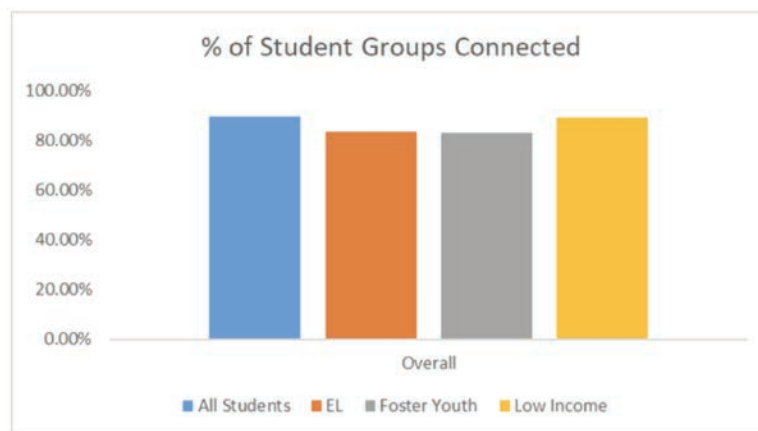
The District has created and implemented professional development for teachers on holding online IEP meetings, incorporating Universal Design for Learning in distance learning and utilizing accessibility features of the most commonly used digital learning platforms. Through May 22, over 10,200 online IEP meetings have been conducted. A video was created to train parents in how to participate in an online IEP meeting. Narrated in both English and Spanish, it is posted on the District’s [Division of Special Education](#) and [Parent Community Services](#) websites. District paraprofessionals have also received training in supporting students on the behavioral support strategies, alternate curriculum, assisting with online instruction and supporting students with dyslexia.

FOCUSING ON HIGH-NEEDS STUDENTS

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



The District has concentrated its response to COVID-19 to support students with the highest need. Nearly 80% of Los Angeles Unified's students qualify for free or reduced-price lunch, more than 22% are English language learners, more than 19,500 experience homelessness and over 8,500 live in foster care. As a result of District initiatives to provide supports for these students, the overall percentages of these student groups that are connected to learning at home are similar to the Districtwide average for all students (see graph).



Los Angeles Unified targeted the needs of low-income students by providing educational resources needed for effective distance learning. School site staff have been responsible for identifying students in need of devices and internet access. The District purchased over 185,000 devices and over 35,000 internet hotspots which have been distributed to these students at their school sites.

To serve high-need families, the District has increased access to resources, integrated services across programs and removed barriers to basic services. The Student Health and Human Services hotline provides support for families to access basic resources such as food, clothing, shelter, enrollment in and/or financial resources to maintain health insurance coverage, direct support and/or linkage with community partners and support for school enrollment during closures. Flyers with community resources by region were distributed to families who are accessing meals through the District's Grab & Go Food Centers. The District continues to connect and refer families to community partners for assistance with food, housing and other basic needs. A dedicated [website](#) was also developed with resources for students, families and educators during this crisis, including a list of Wellness Centers and school-based clinics that remain open, as well as information to support public health efforts and promote well-being.

Support for English language learners was sustained at school sites by English learner coordinators, Title III coaches and general education teachers who provide instruction in both integrated and designated English language development. To bolster school-site supports, the Multilingual and Multicultural Education Department (MMED) developed additional instructional materials and



professional development. At-home learning resources booklets, in English and Spanish, were mailed to all English learners providing family-friendly activities to support English language development. Over 4,500 teachers participated in new online professional development focused on essential supports for English learners, Dual Language foundations in distance learning, summative English Language Proficiency Assessment task types and active listening for English learners and Dual Language learners. Digital English Language Development (ELD) lessons and instructional resources, such as online ELD curriculum, were also made available.

The [MMED website](#) was also redesigned to make it easier to access instructional resources in multiple languages. The District is also planning online summer school intervention and enrichment programs for English learners and newcomer students.

The District continues its work to support foster youth. Specialized Student Populations Counselors at school sites provide individualized and group supports for homeless students and foster youth. Pupil Services and Attendance Counselors continue to support foster students with submitting Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) as part of the Countywide FAFSA Challenge. A-G Diploma Program Counselors continue to develop transition plans for all graduating seniors.

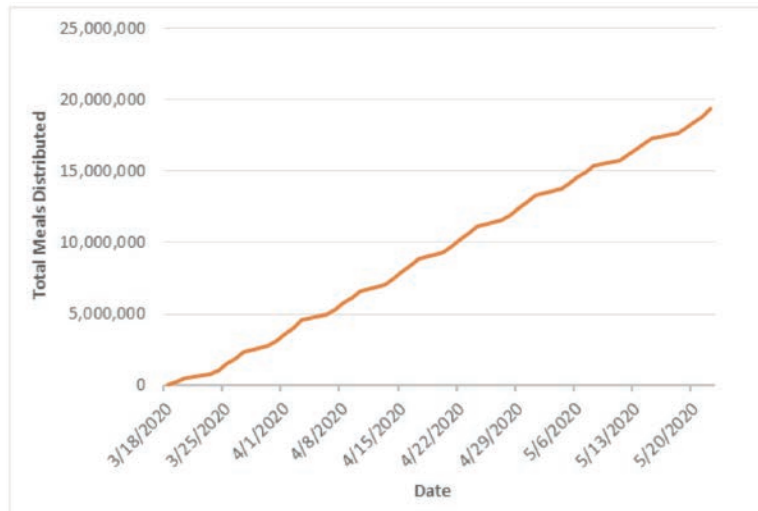
Additional resources have been directed to support foster youth. The District established a [website](#) and email address enrollduringclosures@lausd.net to ensure that students who live within the district's boundaries are enrolled and able to access the District's distance learning programs and other educationally related services. Dedicated staff have been assigned to expedite enrollment for students in the Short Term Residential Therapeutic Program (formerly known as group homes). The District is also collaborating with court liaisons, camp returnee placement counselors and administrators to facilitate re-entry or placement of foster youth in schools. The District has partnered with Lyft to provide gift cards to 500 families with students identified as low-income, in foster care or experiencing homelessness. The continued partnership with Baby2Baby provides families living in poverty, experiencing homelessness, and/or in the foster care system with basic baby supplies.

PROVIDING A SAFETY NET

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



Los Angeles Unified opened 63 Grab & Go Food Centers on March 18 and is leading the largest food-relief effort in the country. As of May 28, the District had provided over 25 million meals to children and adults in need (see graph). These centers are located in high-needs communities and the sites were selected based on accessibility and safety for staff and community members.



The Grab & Go Food Centers maintain proper social distancing practices and accommodate drive-up and walk-up patrons in separate lanes, generally using a curbside or horseshoe configuration as appropriate for the site. To minimize contact during meal distribution, staff members stand behind a table and place a meal bag/box on the table for the patron to pick up from the other side. Staff have been trained and maintain social distancing requirements and are provided personal protective equipment. Pedestrian and vehicular traffic are to exit the premises after receiving meals to avoid congregating in groups and maintain appropriate social distancing.

Since March 18, the centers have been open from 8 to 11 a.m. weekdays, providing breakfast and lunch. Beginning in mid-May, the District increased the number of meals provided each weekday from two to three for each child and adult who visits the centers. The District's Food Services team worked with vendor partners to provide varied food options that are wholesome and nutritious. Offerings include sandwiches, salads, pancakes, fresh fruits and vegetables, the famous Cafe LA Coffee Cake and milk. The District applied for all available U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) waivers to allow for non-congregate feeding, meal patterns flexibility, meal timing flexibility to provide multiple meals at the same time, and to allow parents to pick up meals for students and the use of different programs to provide students up to three meals per day.

Los Angeles Unified partnered with the Los Angeles Food Bank as well as the World Central Kitchen to provide additional meals to families. The District has also partnered with the Los Angeles Department of Public Social Services to inform the public that assistance with food dollars is available through the new Pandemic EBT program for those who need it. The District is also leveraging the USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service Program to provide additional food boxes to the community.

SUPERVISING STUDENTS DURING SCHOOL HOURS

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



The Early Childhood Education Department ensured that all schools serving preschool students followed the California State Preschool Program and General Childcare contract requirements (Title 5). These requirements included having each family contacted at a minimum of twice per week to keep updated on the child and family. A family that has not been reached after five consecutive efforts is referred to the principal so further outreach can be provided. To the greatest extent possible, outreach efforts were conducted in the family's preferred language via phone calls, emails and/or text messages. Outreach consisted of a mix of individual and group activities to maintain relationships and supports for families and children with each other and with program staff. School staff communicated with families about their progress and needs with distance learning and the family's overall well-being. Families were provided with resources and referrals to support services, social services and health services as needed.



As Los Angeles Unified prepared to close school facilities, the District intended to open 40 to 60 Family Resource Centers to provide educational support, meals and childcare for working families. However, based on the guidance from the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health and the inability to get assurances that these efforts would be safe, Los Angeles Unified opened Grab & Go Food Centers, which do not include childcare services. Any inquiries regarding available childcare supports from families, particularly families of essential workers, to the District through avenues such as the phone hotline were referred to the City of Los Angeles

Emergency Childcare Program and the California State website [MyChildCare.ca.gov](https://mychildcare.ca.gov). The District has partnered with the City of Los Angeles to provide free meals and snacks at their childcare locations for hospital workers.

CONTACT NAME AND TITLE

Derrick Chau, *Senior Executive Director, Strategy and Innovation*

E-mail: derrick.c.chau@lausd.net

Phone: (213) 241-4299

DATE OF BOARD ADOPTION

June 30, 2020