

# Portola Valley School District

Roberta Zarea, Superintendent

July 26, 2020

Email from Superintendent Zarea

Dear PVSD Staff and Parents,

Thank you to all those in the community who attended our special board session on Friday morning. We value your input as we navigate through this pandemic. We remain committed to our Returning to Learning Plan, with the health and well-being of our students, staff and teachers at the forefront.

**At the board meeting I recommended that we begin the school year in distance learning.** (Audio recording of the meeting can be found [here](#), then click “Library”, “General”, “Audio recordings...”).

The last few weeks have seen rising cases locally and statewide, causing our county to enact further restrictions. San Mateo County is not on the Monitoring List right now, but will likely end up on the list soon. We are currently the only Bay Area county not on the list. In addition, SMC does not have the capacity to provide frequent COVID-19 surveillance testing for school staff, which is now a requirement (CDPH [Framework](#) for Schools).

To get a better understanding of where we find ourselves today please review materials from previous board meetings: [7.9.20](#) and [7.16.20](#)

Also it is important to note that the Board approved a slight modification to the academic year calendar in order to allow for two more days of teacher training, collaboration, and planning as we prepare for our robust distance learning program. **Students will begin the school year on Friday, August 21.** You will receive more information about the start of the school year from your school principals in the next few weeks.

Our Instructional Design Team and Pandemic Recovery Working Group, composed of parents and staff, will continue meeting throughout the remainder of the summer to work on our Distance Learning program and safety protocols to prepare our staff for a smooth start to the school year.

**Please join our staff and board on Thursday August 6 at 9 am for a virtual special board meeting where we will announce our comprehensive Returning to Learning Plan. Link and materials will be sent out prior to the meeting.**

We appreciate your patience as we navigate what seems to be a never ending set of changing information.

Best Regards,

Roberta

