



LONE PINE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Patrick Traynor, Ph.D.
Superintendent

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March 19, 2020

RE: School Closure

Dear Lone Pine Unified School District School Community,

As you already know, the entire world is responding to the recent coronavirus, COVID-19 outbreak. Schools have been closing all over the world. Much direction and guidance has been provided by our California Governor, Gavin Newsom, State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurman, and Inyo County Superintendent, Barry Simpson. The other district superintendents in our County have all been in close communication, collaborating with each other and the County Office to also determine best courses of action for our Inyo County districts, staff, and students. Clear direction includes continuing educational services and meals for all students and following the guidance of our local public health officers regarding school closures.

Only yesterday (March 18, 2020), Inyo County Public Health Officer James Richardson, M.D., provided the strong recommendation to temporarily close all schools in Inyo County for two-week blocks. This first closure recommendation is from March 18 to April 1 (two weeks), returning to school on April 2. Dr. Richardson will re-asses the need for additional closures at the end of each two-week block. We will of course keep our school community updated on the latest information pertaining to closures.

At the time of Richardson's guidance, March 18, 2020, there were zero confirmed cases in both Inyo and Mono Counties. The few tests that have been evaluated have tested negative for COVID-19, that is, the people tested did not have it. However, several more tests are currently being evaluated so the results are not in yet. Lone Pine schools, of course, closed after Monday, March 16, before this recommendation so we could better ensure the health of our students, staff, and community at large.

We anticipated the possibility of a closure the week prior. So our teachers developed 10 days of lessons and assignments for their students in the event a closure happened. They made sure Internet access would not be a requirement to complete them. This was to ensure every student had access to the instruction and learning provided. Our teachers have been instructed to prepare another 10 days of similar lessons and assignments, not requiring Internet, in the event another school closure is needed. We are glad students are completing the lessons and assignments already provided. We are pleased that several students are engaged in the learning as evidenced by the many messages our school secretaries have been forwarding to teachers.

In anticipation of most or all of California schools closing for a short time Governor Newsom decreased the number of required in-school attendance days in California from 180 to 175. Anticipating a short-term closure ourselves, our staff graciously agreed to move our spring break from April 13-17 to occur March 23-27. So, our schools and districts will be completely closed for services this next week, March 23-27 instead of April 13-17. Students will resume working on their

assignments and teachers will again be responding to phone messages and emails on March 30 to April 1, while our school doors remain closed. If we remain closed after April 1, we will of course notify everyone.

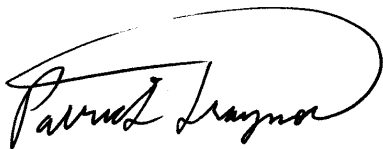
We are in close communication with our County Office of Education in searching for long term solutions in providing Internet access to students in our district that do not have it already. If these closures continue, Internet access for all will open a wider variety of high-quality options for our students. Several companies have stepped up and have been offering free learning solutions for schools. If our closure continues, our County Office of Education will be instrumental in helping us implement one or more of these.

While a closure is in effect and we are not on spring break or on any other scheduled holiday, our cafeteria at Lo-Inyo elementary will remain open from 11:30 until 1PM each school day serving free meals on a take-out bases according to our guidelines for public schools. Any child between three and 18 years of age may come in and receive their meals. We are providing both breakfast and lunch at the same time to make efficient service possible. Our transportation staff is delivering meals to locations outside the Lone Pine area. Our delivery schedule is on our Lone Pine Unified School District website (<https://lpusd-ca.schoolloop.com/>).

In the meantime, please know that a main reason we are closing our schools is to keep our Lone Pine, Olancho, and Keeler communities safe from the spread of COVID-19. With all other districts in Inyo County having this same goal, we will be keeping our County safe, and for that matter, all of California, our nation, and the world. Please help us do our part by encouraging frequent and thorough hand sanitizing, lathering thoroughly with soap and washing with warm water for at least 20 seconds, maintaining six feet distances from others, and break from your family's isolation only when needed, e.g., to buy groceries.

Finally, our School Board and all District and school staff want to thank everyone for all of your cooperation, patience, and appreciation of the magnitude of our situation. Please check our website and messages for periodic updates.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Patrick Traynor". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end of the last name.

Patrick Traynor, Ph.D.
Superintendent