



# Santa Ana Unified School District

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**Jerry Almendarez**  
Superintendent of Schools

March 24, 2021

The Santa Ana Unified School District (SAUSD) will continue in a distance learning environment with a plan to expand Learning Labs to bring to campuses a wider range of students with the greatest needs to connect remotely with their teachers.

The District believes that this is the best course of action given the unique circumstances facing the SAUSD community. Remaining in a distance learning model would provide students with the highest quality learning experiences of all the options currently available to the District considering the number of weeks left in the school year.

The District plans to expand to at least 212 Learning Labs after Spring Break, on Monday, April 12, 2021. These Learning Labs are aimed at supporting students who have connectivity issues at home, with priority given to children identified as housing insecure, foster youth, English Learners, and students with disabilities. The initial plan is to offer Learning Labs to service close to 3,000 students, but this will likely expand as restrictions from state and federal health care agencies continue to ease.

These Learning Labs already provide a safe and supervised environment for students to connect and engage virtually with their classroom teachers. They are being held in spaces that ensure appropriate physical distancing. Mask wearing and other safety protocols are required components of the Learning Labs. With these practices in place, we continue to believe our Learning Labs will be among the safest places for children in our community.

A hybrid learning model at this time would require elementary students to return to in-person instruction two days a week, and one day a week in the secondary grades. The rest of the time, students would learn asynchronously, or independently, from home without teacher interaction. The District believes that continuing in a distance learning model five days a week with daily teacher engagement, and an expansion of Learning Labs offers the most effective current learning model.

The District remains committed and continues to work daily towards returning all students to in-person instruction when it is safest to do so. This includes starting to phase in in-person instruction within our robust summer learning programs. More information will be provided as it becomes available. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jerry Almendarez".

Jerry Almendarez  
SAUSD Superintendent of Schools

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