



RIALTO

UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
BRIDGING FUTURES THROUGH INNOVATION

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July 7, 2020

Dear Colleagues:

The health and safety of all staff members, students, and families continue to be a priority for the Rialto Unified School District.

As we prepare to open schools for the new school year, decisions will be significantly guided by local data related to COVID-19, stipulations for schools in Senate Bill 98, and guidelines issued by local and state health officials. Let me share two main highlights related to delivery of instruction in SB 98:

- SB 98 (*Education Code § 43504*) states that LEAs "shall offer in-person instruction to the greatest extent possible."
- SB 98 (*Education Code § 43503*) states that distance learning may be allowed under either of the following two circumstances:
 1. "On a local educational agency or schoolwide level as a result of **an order or guidance from a state public health officer or a local public health officer.**"
 2. For students who are: (1) "medically fragile"; or (2) "would be put at risk"; or (3) self-quarantining.

SB 98 goes into effect September 1, 2020. Districts that fail to comply will be subject to reductions in funding. Please understand that while I intend to remain compliant with SB 98, I must also consider your health and wellbeing. Currently, there are various interpretations of the two items above and other sections of the bill. As of today, July 7, 2020, the District plans to open our 2020-2021 school year with a hybrid instructional model that includes the following:

- Modified Traditional In-school Instruction
- Bridge Academy or Distance Learning

However, the recent resurgence of COVID-19 cases in California, and specifically in San Bernardino County, is alarming, and makes the opening of schools more complicated than previously anticipated. Our staff is currently reviewing local COVID-19 data and working with counsel and County health officials to clearly understand the requirements and implications of SB 98, to better inform our plans to open school. Also, the plan to open schools is subject to bargaining parameters with our local employee organizations. I anticipate making a final decision on the instructional model to be used for the new school year by early next week.

Please be assured that I, and the RUSD Board of Education, value your health and safety. I encourage you to please visit the Rialto USD webpage at www.rialto.k12.ca.us for ongoing updates on the opening of schools and other relevant information.

Please stay safe, healthy, and strong.

Respectfully,

Dr. Cuauhtémoc Avila