



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Most Ventura County Schools to Begin New Year Entirely with Distance Learning**

With cases of COVID-19 surging in Ventura County and throughout California, most local school districts and charter schools have decided to begin the 2020-2021 school year entirely using distance learning without bringing students back to campuses. Ventura County schools had been hoping to begin the year with a mix of in-class and distance learning, but the worsening coronavirus crisis has increased the risks of reopening campuses, even on a limited basis. Nearly all of the school districts and charter schools in the county as well as the Ventura County Office of Education have jointly agreed this is the best course of action at this time. Ventura County Public Health Officer Dr. Robert Levin has endorsed the plan to begin the school year with distance learning in the interest of reducing the spread of the coronavirus.

**The Ventura County school districts and charter schools that have decided to begin the 2020-2021 school year entirely with distance learning are:**

### **SCHOOL DISTRICTS**

- Briggs School District
- Conejo Valley Unified School District
- Fillmore Unified School District
- Hueneme Elementary School District
- Las Virgenes Unified School District \*
- Mupu Elementary School District
- Oak Park Unified School District
- Ocean View School District
- Oxnard School District (K-8)
- Oxnard Union High School District
- Pleasant Valley School District
- Rio School District
- Santa Clara Elementary School District
- Santa Paula Unified School District
- Simi Valley Unified School District
- Somis Union School District
- Ventura County Office of Education

## CHARTER SCHOOLS

- Architecture, Construction & Engineering Charter High School
- Bridges Charter School
- Camarillo Academy of Progressive Education
- Golden Valley Charter School
- Ivy Tech Charter School
- Meadows Arts and Technology Elementary School
- River Oaks Academy
- University Preparation Charter School
- Valley Oak Charter School
- Vista Real Charter High School

The Ventura Unified, Moorpark Unified, Ojai Unified and Mesa Union school districts as well as Ventura Charter School are still evaluating how they will begin the new school year and have not yet announced their plans.

The school districts that have decided not to reopen campuses at the start of the year will begin providing distance learning on their regularly scheduled opening dates, which vary from district to district. The first day of school for most districts is in mid to late August. A calendar with the opening dates for all districts is available [at this link](#). It is not yet known when these districts will begin welcoming students back to their campuses. School leaders will be continually monitoring the spread of the virus and evolving public health guidance as they evaluate when they can safely start returning students to class.

It's possible some districts will begin reopening earlier than others based on local conditions and their unique student populations. For example, smaller districts may be able to reopen earlier because their smaller enrollments make adhering to social distancing protocols more feasible. It's also possible that programs for students with special needs could reopen earlier because the number of students enrolled in each class is already very limited.

"Keeping campuses closed is not a decision that any of us take lightly," said Stan Mantooth, Ventura County Superintendent of Schools. "We want nothing more than to bring all students back to class where their educational, social and developmental needs can be best met. However, we cannot in good conscience reopen all of our campuses at a time when the coronavirus is surging in our state and our region."

In making the decision now, the districts will have time to further optimize their plans to deliver high-quality distance learning. Since school campuses abruptly closed in March, local educators have been refining their distance learning offerings based on extensive feedback from students, parents and teachers. They've also been working to ensure that all students who need it have access to computers and connections to the internet. Local districts intend to continue providing school meals while campuses are closed.

Many school districts throughout California, including the two largest – Los Angeles Unified and San Diego Unified – have also announced that they will begin the new school year entirely with distance learning. When Ventura County schools do begin bringing students back to class, they will follow guidelines in the [Framework for Reopening Ventura County Schools](#) that was released last week by the Ventura County Office of Education in consultation with Ventura County Public Health.

Ventura County school districts and charter schools will be providing additional details about their plans for the new school year to their communities. A list of school district websites is [available here](#) and a list of local charter school websites is [available here](#).

For the latest updates on the impact of the coronavirus on Ventura County public schools, please visit the Ventura County Office of Education website at [www.vcoe.org](http://www.vcoe.org).

\* Las Virgenes Unified School District is based in Los Angeles County, but serves a portion of Ventura County.

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#### **About the Ventura County Office of Education**

The Ventura County Office of Education provides a broad array of fiscal, training and technology support services to local school districts, helping to maintain and improve lifelong educational opportunities for children, educators and community members. VCOE also operates schools that serve students with severe disabilities and behavioral issues, provides career education courses, and coordinates countywide academic competitions including Mock Trial and the Ventura County Science Fair. Learn more at: [www.vcoe.org](http://www.vcoe.org).