

November 20, 2020

Greetings Colleagues,

We recognize that many are suffering from loss, fear, anxiety and depression. These are real feelings and emotions. They are not wrong and are a natural expression of what we are going through. If you or someone you know needs, assistance, please reach out to a friend or healthcare provider. I have found that regular exercise (walking and yoga) and working from my office has been helpful for me to stay positive and productive.

It is very clear we are not returning to campuses until sometime in the Spring for classes other than a few small groups of high need situations. We all need to do our part to lessen or stop the spread of COVID 19. Please practice both at work and in other settings the safety procedures of wearing a mask, physical distancing and handwashing. These small things make a big difference.

Never before in my career have I felt both isolated and connected. I miss the in-person engagement in our classrooms with students and staff, with our community and families at events, and our School Board in our meetings. However, by using the technologies we have, I am able to quickly meet with staff, parents, and colleagues in the county without the travel time. I am able to attend national conferences with my counterparts from across the country who are facing the same challenges all from my desk.

How grateful I am for these tools. How grateful I am for you. This month alone, I have seen thousands of meals delivered, monitored tens of thousands of Google Meets with our teachers and students, and witnessed 1500 additional Chromebooks arrive in our warehouse that were donated by the California Bridging the Digital Divide fund. Our construction projects continue to move forward, grant monies are being awarded, and training opportunities continue. All this is made possible by you, the employees of this District. "I would rather count my blessings, than recount my problems" R. M. Nelson

"We have not come this far to only come this far." I heard this phrase last Spring in a message at my church's conference. I think it applies to us now. We have come a long way since March 17th, 2020 when we closed our campuses, but not our schools. I encourage you to be cheerful, positive and hopeful. Give thanks and appreciate the good things all around us. We still have a long way to go until we return to what was our normal. Challenges and opportunities are before us. I look forward to facing them with you.

Happy Thanksgiving and Stay Safe,

**Ward H. Andrus, Ed. D.**  
Superintendent