



## RESCUE UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT

*"Educating for the Future Together"*

2390 Bass Lake Road • Rescue, CA 95672

(530) 677-4461 • FAX (530) 677-0719

[www.rescueusd.org](http://www.rescueusd.org)

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March 24, 2020

Dear RUSD Families,

We remain committed to providing updates daily in this rapidly evolving situation. We also want to reiterate to you that we know this is a very stressful time for our families. There are so many unknowns and uncertainties. We feel that angst right alongside you, although we have been so very impressed and proud of our students, families, teachers, and staff for jumping right in and doing what it takes to allow education to continue. Does it look the same? NO. Does it feel the same? NO. Do we know exactly what to do? NO. We believe we are going to make it through this time together and come out stronger on the other side, because everyone is banding together and collaborating.

I was listening to a podcast by Brene Brown and she said that when we go through as she calls them TFTs (Terrible First Times), there are a few things we can do to make it through.

<https://brenebrown.com/blog/2020/03/21/collective-vulnerability/>

Here is a little template to use when you encounter a TFT (terrible first time) such as what we are currently dealing with through the COVID-19 situation. It feels overwhelming, daunting, scary, and we are anxious about so many things.

**Here are some steps to navigate this experience. First we need to...**

- 1) **Name it.** Identify the discomfort of the TFT. It's my first time \_\_\_\_\_ and it's uncomfortable because I've never experienced this before. I don't know how to handle it because I've never been through this before. I have no experience to draw from here. *Naming the discomfort doesn't give the hard thing power- it gives YOU the power to make good decisions and seek positive change.*
- 2) **Normalize the discomfort...** realize and acknowledge that this is exactly how something new is supposed to feel. It's new.... we aren't supposed to feel comfortable with it yet.
- 3) **Get perspective-** imagine what you will say and think when you look back at this experience years from now after it isn't new anymore. What will you have learned? What will you laugh at? What will you be proud of? What other times in your life have you done something or felt something or experienced something for the first time, and what was that learning curve like? How did you make it through? How did you feel along the way? How do you feel about it now?
- 4) **Check the facts.** It will take longer than we think and take more effort than we probably want it to, to get through this TFT and to figure it out. Reality check your own expectations, and those of everyone involved. Communicate those expectations and ask about everyone else's.

Cheryl Olson, Superintendent

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**Try it. Try these steps with whatever it is you are struggling with through this situation, and in the meantime, we will use this opportunity to answer some of the common questions that have surfaced from staff and families in recent days in this Frequently Asked Questions sheet.**

**How long are our schools going to be closed?**

*We are closed at least through spring break. We will keep you posted. Our goal is to have our students in school as soon as it is safe to do so.*

**Any precautions families and staff should take while schools are closed?**

*While students and staff are out of school, El Dorado County Public Health officials stress the importance that everyone maintain appropriate social distancing measures (avoid gatherings of no more than 10 people, stay home as much as possible, avoid playdates, malls, dining in restaurants, etc.).*

**Will students and staff have to make up this time in the summer?**

*Given the gravity and scale of this emergency throughout California, the Governor has issued a waiver for all districts. We will not be making the time up.*

**If we have to remain closed for longer than until spring break, will distance learning options be available to students?**

*We have been working with our instructional and technology leadership to establish our online learning/distance learning plans. Our teachers are busy preparing these online lessons and learning opportunities. For those without either a device or internet, we will work with those families and do the best we can, starting the week of March 30, to provide a device to those without any. We will also provide paper/pencil materials for those who do not have access to internet.*

**Will my child's assignments be graded?**

*Your child's teachers will be assessing some of the work your child does and providing feedback to help reinforce learning and build proficiency. We understand that not every child has the same supports available during these unprecedented school closures. Some students may have limited access to the Internet while others may have parents who work in health care, law enforcement, or some other field that keeps them from being home with their children as often. For these reasons, we will not be academically penalizing any student who does not, or cannot, participate in these lessons. However, it is strongly encouraged that your child take full advantage of the lessons our teachers are preparing and contact their teacher immediately if they require any assistance. We are here to help.*

**Is it mandatory that my child complete the work provided?**

*As mentioned above, no student will be academically penalized if they do not, or cannot, participate in the lessons provided while schools are closed. We understand that some students' unique circumstances may make it more difficult to master content through a distance learning program. However, our teachers and principals remain committed to supporting students through these unprecedented school closures and the work provided is strongly encouraged. If your child is struggling, please contact your child's teacher or principal so that we can work to support them.*



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### **I don't have a device for online learning opportunities. What should I do?**

If you do not have a device that your child could use for learning during these school closures, the Rescue Union School District may be able to provide one for your child to use. If you feel that your child needs such a device, please contact your child's teacher or principal to discuss the need. The District has a limited number of devices and has therefore established a check out system giving priority to students who are socioeconomically disadvantaged, English learners, and Foster Youth. Additionally, our teachers are prepared to offer alternative activities that do not rely on technology for those students who cannot access lessons electronically.

### **I do not have access to the internet. What should I do?**

If you do not have Internet service, but live in an area where Internet connectivity is possible, Comcast may be able to provide free Internet for your family for 60 days. For more information, please call 1-800-934-6489. Alternatively, some community hubs may offer free Wi-Fi access. Some of these locations may be closed or have reduced hours in accordance with the governor's stay at home directives, but Wi-Fi service may still be accessible outside buildings such as the public library, Starbucks, or our own school offices. If you attempt to access the Internet in this way, please remember to adhere to social distancing requirements and any other local or state level directive.

### **How will Special Education students be served?**

As per the United State Department of Education Office for Special Education fact sheet from March 16, 2020, Students with disabilities will receive a free and appropriate education program as required by state and federal law. As with general education classes, special education services may look different, and may be provided through varied options. Some of these options could include distance instruction, online instruction, the telephone, instructional packets, projects, and written assignments. Our special education teachers will reach out individually to the students on their caseloads to create plans for individual students.

### **What about state testing?**

Given the gravity and scale of this emergency throughout the state, the end of year state testing has been canceled for this year.

### **How long will the breakfast and lunch meals be provided?**

Our plan is to provide the meals Monday through Friday, including during spring break, until school opens again. The only reason the meal service would stop is if the government directs it to close due to safety.

### **I'm not receiving emergency alerts or email updates from the District. What can I do?**

Please look regularly at our district web page and our district Facebook page for the most current information and updates.

Cheryl Olson, Superintendent

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**May I come to school or bring my children to play on the playground or ride bikes, etc?**

*No. Our campuses are now closed to the public unless you have made arrangements with district administration or the site principal to go on a campus. The exception is for picking up meals at Pleasant Grove Middle School and Green Valley School.*

**Again, we thank you for all for your patience and support as we navigate this TFT together. We appreciate you and value your contributions to our district. Let us know how we can better support you and your family.**

**Most sincerely,**

**Cheryl Olson, Superintendent [colson@my.rescueuse.org](mailto:colson@my.rescueuse.org)**

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