



## 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 23, 2020

Dear Parents of Students with Special Needs,

I've been advised to provide you with a prior written notice regarding special education services and supports during this time of a school closure. I've even been given sample letters from attorneys. You haven't received that yet because I didn't have the heart to send it to you. You have enough on your plate right now trying to deal with everything that is going on, without trying to decipher an official sounding prior written notice full of legal jargon.

I'm sure you've realized that your child's special education services and supports are going to be different for a while. As much as I and our school staff would have liked to see your children continue to attend school, the District was encouraged to close the schools to prevent or contain the spread of COVID-19, as recommended by the Center for Disease Control, California Department of Education and Department of Public Health.

I wish I could say exactly what your child's special education services and support will look like for the remainder of the time schools are closed. Unfortunately, I really don't know. I do know that currently the special education teachers and support providers are working with the other teachers and support providers to adapt materials so your child has something to work on if they are able to spend some time "doing school" at home. I also know that sometimes it isn't possible to do schoolwork at home. This was never clearer than when I spoke with the parent of a child with autism who is trying to deal with their child's aggressive behavior when things change for the child. Your situation may not be like this, but I'm sure you're experiencing some challenges yourself.

Our special education staff is currently trying to figure out options for supporting your child from a distance in the weeks, or possibly months ahead, so we can all stay as healthy as possible. We're doing this with very little guidance as the special education division of the California Department of Education has been reluctant to provide direction. It's my understanding they're still trying to figure this out too. I appreciate your patience as we try to navigate these unknown waters without a compass and sometimes through strong headwinds. (I'm a kayaker and really wish that it was warm enough to get out there on the lake. I know how to do that, unlike this current situation!).

I've met with, or will soon meet with (by conference call or zoom), the various staff members who provide special education services and supports for your children. We're considering various options for providing these services and supports once the district moves to providing distance learning. Please understand that due to these exceptional circumstances the manner in which particular services required by your child's IEP are provided may be affected.

Since this is a novel situation for all of us, we would certainly appreciate you letting us know what may work for your child at this time, if you know what that is. Additionally, if something is put in

Cheryl Olson, Superintendent

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place, with the best information available at the time, please let us know if it doesn't end up working. Now more than ever we need to be true partners in your child's education. I know you're currently pulling more than your fair share, so let us know how we can help. If you have suggestions, questions, or concerns, I urge you to first contact your child's special education case manager since they have first-hand knowledge of your child. However, please feel free to reach out to me as well at the contact information on the bottom of this letter.

We're navigating challenging times here, but together, I know we'll get through it. My thoughts go out to everyone affected by this crisis. I will continue to update you with any new information we have. Thank you for being our wonderful educational partners at home.

Sincerely,

Laura Hendrix  
Director of Special Education and Support Services  
[lhendrix@rescueusd.org](mailto:lhendrix@rescueusd.org)  
(530) 672-4804.