



News Release

Superintendent Cindy Marten Assures Parents this School Year Matters

April 1, 2020

SAN DIEGO -- Appearing with the State Board of Education Chair Linda Darling-Hammond, San Diego Unified Superintendent Cindy Marten assured families students will get credit for the work they've done, and the work to come. The pair took questions from journalists, parents and teachers during a live [CalMatters](#) interview program designed to explain the state's education response to the COVID-19 crisis.

"Schools are closed, but learning is not," Marten said. "We want everyone to know this school year counts and this school year matters."

Before the interview, Darling-Hammond appeared at an event with Governor Gavin Newsom, where he again stated his belief that schools will not return to their physical campuses this year.

Both Marten and Darling-Hammond stressed that although there is no substitute for classroom instruction, distance learning offers a viable alternative in these uncertain times. Calling students and teachers "natural born learners," Darling-Hammond said teaching and learning will continue in new and potentially lasting ways.

"These kinds of big events transform societies," Darling-Hammond said. "At the other end of this, I hope we will be better human beings, better citizens, parents and educators..."

Under San Diego Unified's distance learning plan, teachers and students return to academic instruction in several phases. Currently, the school district is providing online enrichment activities via the district website and a partnership with public broadcasting. That will change following the end of spring break.

On Monday, April 6, teachers will begin receiving training for the move to online instruction, will work remotely with students who are able to participate, and will identify those students who are unable to take part. Work done during this time will not be graded for credit, but will contribute towards students' academic progress in the courses they are taking.

A formal return to grading and instruction -- but not a return to the physical school environment -- will begin April 27 for the 90 percent of all district students who attend schools on a traditional academic calendar. As with students on a traditional calendar, the 10 percent of students in year-round schools will experience a soft launch of the new learning environment following

spring break, which for these students ends on April 27. There will be a full return to graded instruction in year-round schools on May 11.

Media Contact: Communications Director Maureen Magee: (619) 381-7930

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