

COVID-19 Operations Written Report

Local Educational Agency (LEA) Name	Contact Name and Title	Email and Phone	Date of Adoption
Eel River Charter School	Tina Wilson, Business Manager	twilson@eelriverschool.net 707 983 6946	June 3, 2020

Descriptions provided should include sufficient detail yet be sufficiently succinct to promote a broader understanding of the changes your LEA has put in place. LEAs are strongly encouraged to provide descriptions that do not exceed 300 words.

Provide an overview explaining the changes to program offerings that the LEA has made in response to school closures to address the COVID-19 emergency and the major impacts of the closures on students and families.

Because many families in Covelo lack broadband connectivity, the Eel River Charter School decided not to use online curricula for distance learning during the COVID 19 school closure. Instead, teachers have created packets of work in core subjects to be picked up by parents every 3 weeks for their children to complete at home. Teachers tried to continue the curriculum they had been using before the COVID 19 shutdown. One teacher sent home the reading textbooks and the math handouts used in class. Another teacher adopted the curriculum IReady, recommended by Mendocino County Office of Education. Teachers sent out assignments in reading, math and writing. Teachers were advised to give students the grades they had earned before the school closed, and offer assignments to raise grades for those with low marks at the 3rd quarter of instruction, reasoning that it is unfair to penalize students whose parents lack the time or the education to help their children complete their distance learning assignments.

It has been difficult for many families to keep up with these assignments because they lack the time, English language or Math skills, and the confidence to help their children academically at home. In spite of teachers' efforts reaching out to parents help their children with school work, parents have not taken advantage of teachers' readiness to explain the assignments. Parents do not feel comfortable asking for help with school work. Many lack time due to jobs, work and the demands of raising large families. Some have expressed the same confusion everyone feels about a brand-new program of school at home.

Provide a description of how the LEA is meeting the needs of its English learners, foster youth and low-income students.

Because almost all our students are unduplicated pupils, the changes to curricula are implemented school wide, and all students are treated the same. That said, 67% of our teachers are able to communicate with Spanish speaking families in Spanish, and written information is sent home in Spanish as well as English, since about 50% of our students are English Learners. 95% of our student population is low income, so that distance learning program decisions must be based on their needs, even though other options (online courses and teaching) might be more effective academically. Therefore, our school has been limited in its delivery of direct instruction, which is needed by our students whose parents feel intimidated by their children's school assignments.

Because the school is located near a Native American reservation, Covelo schools are hopeful that in the future, the local Tribal Council will be able to find Internet service provider funding for our families who cannot afford Internet access. As a rural, isolated area, we are limited by

issues of connectivity in addition to poverty. Many “hot spots” do not work in this area which basically supports only 3G speed. Online meetings on platforms like Zoom are spotty and unreliable because of poor connectivity. Yet our students need teaching instruction to maintain progress, and in this time of social distancing it has been unavailable to them.

Provide a description of the steps that have been taken by the LEA to continue delivering high-quality distance learning opportunities.

Providing offline distance learning has involved a learning curve for our teachers. At first in mid-March, directives from administrative officials were general, not detailed. This was seen as a temporary situation-3 or 4 weeks at most. Attendance and grading practices were not spelled out, and parents were unclear about whether completed student assignments had to be submitted to the teachers.

As the weeks progressed, teachers received about half of the students’ work. Using Facebook for messages, sending group texts weekly, and phoning parents weekly, teachers explained that student work had to be submitted. They sent letters in English and Spanish, including their contact information, to encourage parents, and to explain the work to students if needed. (Sadly, few parents took advantage of these offers.) Some teachers took videos of themselves giving instruction and uploaded them for those families who had internet access. Eventually some teachers phoned families for hourly appointments 4 times a week to make direct contact with students (who need the comfort/structure of the student-teacher relationship), to supply reading instruction on the phone, to increase student accountability, and to help parents learn the art of tutoring their children. This has been extremely effective to improve academic mastery. Teachers also work with parents, for example, responding to parent feedback that the amount of school work was overwhelming, by modifying student assignments accordingly.

As students, teachers and parents continue distance learning, teachers have improved by reaching out to families by phoning them and talking to them directly. It has always been difficult to get all families to complete homework—usually only a fraction of them have handed in homework during a normal school year in the past. Therefore, with the COVID 19 home-school program, only about half the work has been completed, despite teachers’ ongoing attempts. Half of the students have been working hard to continue their education under these difficult circumstances.

Provide a description of the steps that have been taken by the LEA to provide school meals while maintaining social distancing practices.

Students at the Eel River Charter School are able to pick up bagged breakfast and lunch through the sponsoring Round Valley Unified School District, which is observing policies to protect others from the spread of COVID 19. Servers practice social distancing, wearing of masks and quarantine if necessary. Meals have been delivered by vans or drive-through pickup is available to students’ parents. Most of the population is eligible for FRPM, so the distribution of these meals affects most students in Covelo, and is necessary to their nutrition.

Provide a description of the steps that have been taken by the LEA to arrange for supervision of students during ordinary school hours.

The Eel River Charter School is closed, but in the event of a need for adult supervision of children whose parents are providing essential services, the sponsoring district of Round Valley Unified School District would provide such supervision. The Round Valley Unified School District has been designated as an emergency shelter in the case of disasters. It is the food preparation site for all schools in the District and has more room for social distancing. The Round Valley Unified School District is the logical choice for supervision of students during the COVID 19 school closure.



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