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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

School Closure Updates – COVID-19

California and Humboldt County are working hard to fight the spread of COVID-19. Humboldt County Office of Education (HCOE) has facilitated several meetings with local school district and health officials to determine how to best and fully support districts pausing on site school instruction.

HCOE Superintendent Chris Hartley shares his full support of temporary school closures and anticipates that most county districts are announcing school closures to their respective communities today. He states, “all districts in Humboldt County are immensely concerned and invested in maintaining the safety and well-being of all students and our community. Given the complexity and uncertainty of COVID-19 spread, it is sensible to foster as much social distancing in our schools as possible.”

Senator McGuire attended a conference call with HCOE and District leaders this morning, and shared his support of pausing school on site services for all districts throughout Humboldt County. “There is no doubt that the lives of North Coast residents are being dramatically altered. Millions across the state are sacrificing: families, workers, small businesses and local nonprofits,” Senator McGuire states. “Closing down on-site education at school campuses, ceasing community gatherings and stopping group meetings is the only way to slow the spread of the virus. The quicker we all act and practice social distancing, the more infections we’ll prevent. Superintendent Hartley is 100% doing the right thing, and we’ll be working with him in the weeks to come to ensure the needs of all students are being met.”

For the majority of school districts, the closures will begin Monday, March 16 and continue through March 27. Districts face many very different considerations when determining school closures based on their individual size, location, and circumstances. Schools will continue to evaluate and assess information as it becomes available and may announce longer closures depending on further guidance from State officials.

School personnel are encouraged to await information from their specific districts for information regarding reporting to individual work sites. Up to date information regarding these closures and individual district time-lines will be available on our website: www.hcoe.org/covid-19.

This decision was not made lightly as all districts recognize this may cause a hardship for some families. Each district will continue to communicate directly with families and staff with updates regarding meal distribution, optional enrichment activities or distance learning, and any childcare options that will be available.

We appreciate the community’s support in taking proactive steps to fight the spread of COVID-19. These steps to prevent illness make a significant difference in safeguarding the health of our communities, and we encourage continued attention in this effort.
