April 8, 2020

Orchard families,

Last week we announced with heavy hearts that our school will not physically re-open until next school year. All school children in California and most children in the United States will finish the 2019-20 school year learning in their homes. Being away from school, and work for the adults caring for the children, is stressful. It is also stressful for the Orchard staff. Many of our teachers are working hard each day to stay connected with you and your children while attempting to take care of and teaching their own children. What I know is our staff is doing an outstanding job of adjusting to teaching remotely.

I am sure many of you are wondering what comes next. **We will continue to provide learning opportunities for your students.** Some of you were able to pick up the packets each of our grade levels created last week. If you have not done so, please pick up a packet at Orchard during lunch pick up.

**Lunch pick up will now be once a week, Mondays between 11:30 and 12:30.** On Mondays three days of meals will be provided. Thursday and Friday pick up are still in place at the County Office of Education on Ridder Park Drive. Our teachers will create new packets in a couple of week from now. Teachers are also connecting with you by using things such as Class Dojo, Zoom and Google classroom. Our teachers want to connect with you. Please feel free to email your teacher if you have not already done so.

Some of you might be wondering what will happen with grades. **Across our County, districts are adjusting grading practices due to our current situation.** We have agreed on best practices for grading at this time. At the middle school level, we will finish the year by assigning a grade of either “Pass” or “Incomplete”. Middle school teachers will be contacting families of those students who are currently not passing. It is important to encourage your children to complete the assignments being assigned by their teachers. At the elementary level, grades will not be assigned. All students will transition to their new grade level next year. When we open in the fall we will focus on assessing students and determining their needs. All children in our State will clearly not be as advanced academically as they would have if they had been in school each day with their teachers. This gap will exist regardless of what we do now. Some districts have created very rigid daily schedules and have been able to give each child a computer. However, what I know is the delivery of instruction varies district to district and even within districts. Each
district, each school is doing their best, but we all know next year we will have to do more to make up for the loss months of schooling. Our role moving forward will be to identify the gaps and address them.

We are going to make an adjustment to our current school year. Next week, April 13 was scheduled to be our Spring Break. **We are going to adjust the Spring Break to May 28 – June 3.** We are doing this because we are not in need of a break now and by moving it the last day of school will be May 27 rather than June 3. Ending the school year a week earlier will be best for everyone.

I want to thank all of you for being patient and for assisting your children with their learning. This week you will receive a daily schedule you can follow with your children. We encourage you to follow the schedule or one like it if you have already created one for your home. We also want to acknowledge that there will be days when your children may need a break and that is ok too. We do not want school work to add to the stress your children may already be experiencing. We have two months to go and then we can look forward to next school year and, hopefully, we will be physically together. In the meantime, we can be together virtually. Please make sure to check our website for regular updates, www.orchardsd.org. We miss you!

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