

COVID-19 Operations Written Report

Local Educational Agency (LEA) Name	Contact Name and Title	Email and Phone	Date of Adoption
Elk Grove Charter School	Marc LaVine - Principal	mlavine@egusd.net (916) 714-1653	June 30, 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.

In response to directives to close schools and address the COVID-19 emergency, Elk Grove Charter School (EGCS), in consultation with and the cooperation of its authorizer Elk Grove Unified School District (EGUSD), aligned with EGUSD to start spring break a month earlier than previously scheduled (March 9-13, 2020). This allowed the school to remove students and staff from campus with as little instructional impact as possible, and to use the time to work with EGUSD administration to assess and adjust to the emergency and the likelihood of students and staff being unable to return to the classroom for an indeterminate length of time. EGUSD’s early decision to close schools proved to be prescient, as shelter-in-place recommendations were soon put into place across the nation.

EGCS with input from its already operating independent study program and consultation with the district immediately developed and implemented a school-wide distance learning educational program. Distance learning assistance was provided to EGCS teachers through EGUSD, along with training on online pedagogy and digital platforms, and the variety of available resource materials. Support services for EGCS’s special populations, such as English Learners, foster, homeless, low-income, and migrant students, were adjusted for the new platform and EGCS teachers and students were supported by services developed by EGUSD. Special Education services, to the greatest extent possible, were provided in alignment with students’ individualized education plans using District-approved distance learning platforms. Mental health services for all students were facilitated by the school’s counselor and independent study and workshop teachers were provided with guidance on how to respond to mental health concerns given the new teaching and learning environment.

Teachers conducted online lessons via various online platforms and checked in with students and families throughout the week. Teachers were given the autonomy to conduct weekly video calls through Zoom, Google Meets, or to provide students with pre-recorded lessons and/or presentations and instructions through Google Slides and Powerpoint with voice over. All workshop teachers at EGCS conducted their classes through the Google Classroom interface and ISP teachers either used Google Classroom or weekly video or voice calls to interact with their students. Teachers contacted individual students and families who were not connected or completing assignments through the new platform and reported struggling students to the counseling and administration departments.

EGCS students had access to Electronic devices and hotspots which were distributed to students and staff to augment existing digital connections. A concerted effort was made to reach and assist the school’s most vulnerable students as an assurance of equity of access. EGCS students had access to the District’s Food and Nutritional Services (FNS) department distribution of breakfast and lunches. The distribution of these meals were conducted by EGUSD staff and in accordance with county and CDC health and safety guidelines.

The EGCS community was included in surveys conducted by EGUSD. According to the district, “clear and frequent communications through various mediums with our parents and staff was paramount to the school’s successful start of distance learning. District survey results noted 9 of 10 families reported receiving sufficient information to be ready for distance learning on day one. 99% of students reported having internet access for distance learning. Approximately 95% of students and parents reported sufficient communication with teachers”. Specific to EGCS, as of day 1 of distance learning, all but 4 students had logged-in or had contact with the school as distance learning was launched (several of the students who were not logged in had ceased communication with the school prior to school closures and distance learning). The school will continue to be included in EGUSD data gathering efforts and provide feedback on the effectiveness of the school’s actions. Information will be used to improve EGCS’s educational program and to support students, families, and staff as we prepare for the 2020-21 school year.

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

EL students at EGCS have access to designated EL services through the school’s Google Classroom distance learning programming. In addition, EL students continue to receive support through the school’s EL coordinator, individual teachers, and curriculum that was previously developed for integrated EL support through the school’s independent study program. Teachers at EGCS who teach designated EL students have access to EGUSD’s EL support and training through the English Learner Services (ELS) department. District EL instructional coaches continued to provide teacher check-ins, office hours, co-teaching, demos, and professional learning based on feedback and EL needs.

Support for foster youth and homeless students continued through educational case managers at the district level. This included needs assessments and ongoing outreach; resource referrals and access (e.g., meals, transportation assistance, mental health support, housing, school supplies, etc.); educational success plan development and monitoring; virtual student, family, and collaborative team meetings; the independent living program; and individual online tutoring. Homeless students were supported with school transitions, assistance with enrollment, transfer of school records, notification to District liaisons, graduation exemption plan development, and obtaining FAFSA verification letters. Foster youth and homeless student staff at the district level also received trauma-informed and McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act/Foster Youth Educational Rights training and consultation to best support these students in need.

Low-income students’ needs continued to be met through supportive online educational programs that targeted access to the school’s program. The school provided Chromebooks to all EGCS students who requested and EGCS students also had access to EGUSD distributed Chromebooks if transportation to the school site was an issue. In addition, for students without access to high-speed internet, EGCS students had access to EGUSD’s hotspot distribution program.

The school’s teachers served as the primary point of contact with students to check-in, monitor, and provide for social-emotional and educational needs. EGCS’s Low-income high school student needs were also met through the school’s variable credit accrual and credit recovery programs. EGCS students earn credits based on the amount of work completed and students can earn variable credits rather than increments of 5 as in traditional schools. As well, EGCS offers a five-week summer school program that provides students with the opportunity to recover credits that may have been lost through the transition to distance learning or lack of access. EGCS summer school students have access to school issued Chromebooks, curriculum on-line portals, and the school’s independent study courses.

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

EGCS teachers were provided with access to distance learning training and services provided by EGUSD. Specifically, teachers received a PreK-12 Teacher Distance Learning Guidance document covering distance learning purpose, scope, expectations, digital platforms, communications etiquette, legal guidance, and content/lesson planning support. Content specialists and instructional coaches at the district

level provided 50 professional learning opportunities over three weeks on 15 digital platforms; developed a distance learning website containing resources such as online tutorials, FAQs, and technology support; offered office hours; and scheduled collaborations for teachers. Every week, a communication was emailed detailing what to expect the following week, professional development offerings, bright spots in the District, and ongoing resources and supports being offered.

EGCS with consultation and support of EGUSD complied with legal mandates to provide special education services to the greatest extent possible, using a variety of learning modalities to ensure each student has access to distance learning materials through District-approved distance learning platforms. EGCS's special education resource specialist received a comprehensive Special Education FAQ document that was developed by EGUSD. The FAQ included important information related to new processes for IEPs, confidentiality, consent, dual-identification, and assessment to accommodate District learning platforms. In addition, EGCS received ongoing training and support for special education teachers, related service providers, and administrators on new procedures and legal mandates and provisions.

While the state released districts from ADA reporting requirements, EGCS continued to collect attendance data during distance learning. EGCS followed EGUSD's lead and ISP and workshop teachers developed a daily attendance surveys through a Google Forms. The form was published in each google classroom or emailed to students who were asked to "check-in" daily via the form and to indicate not only if they were doing work, but also indicate what they planned to do and if they were having any difficulty. EGCS teachers reported struggling students to administration and counseling and EGCS independent study teachers reported daily attendance of their students in the school's information system in the same manner as prior to COVID-19 situation.

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

EGCS students had access to all meals provided by EGUSD. Because EGCS enrolls students from all corners of the district, EGCS students benefited from the district's multiple meal distribution locations. According to EGUSD, "during the school closures, EGUSD immediately mobilized to provide well-balanced, nutritionally-sound meals. As the need for meals increased, EGUSD's capacity to serve quickly ramped up to meet the needs of the community. In early March 2020, EGUSD's Food & Nutrition Services (FNS) worked with the California Department of Education (CDE) and received approval to operate the Summer Seamless meal program to provide free meals to children 18 years and younger. Children were provided both breakfast and lunch in a non-congregate service model by first providing a drive-thru meal service at 13 of the District's highest need schools. A week later, FNS added 7 meal sites to serve free and reduced eligible students enrolled at all schools in the District. Secondary schools were strategically chosen for this expansion to provide at least one meal service location in each community. These schools quickly became busy due to an increasing need and FNS added more schools for a total of 37 schools by the latter half of March 2020. According to many families, the meal service created a sense of normalcy and routine that they have missed during this crisis".

No EGCS staff members were included in meal distribution as EGUSD's FNS department provided this service. In addition, the meal service model developed by FNS was designed to be safe for families and employees, eliminating human touch points by using a cart service for meal pickups. Families drove up, meals were provided on a cart at their driver side window, drivers took the meals off the cart, the cart was sanitized, and readied for the next service. All FNS staff were provided with sufficient personal protective equipment (i.e., masks, gloves, disposable aprons, hand sanitizers) and maintained social distancing protocols.

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

As a non-classroom based charter school, EGCS families and students had arrangements in-place prior to COVID-19 to account for supervision of students outside of the ordinary school day. As a middle and high school, EGCS families reported they were not in need of as much daily

supervision as a family with younger children in the home. However, EGCS families were supported by EGUSD child care programs and services if needed. No needs were reported to administration or counseling, but if they had the school would have coordinated with EGUSD on meeting the needs of the family.

California Department of Education
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