

COVID-19 Operations Written Report

Local Educational Agency (LEA) Name	Contact Name and Title	Email and Phone	Date of Adoption
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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.

On Friday, March 13, 2020, at 3:00 p.m., the GOALS Academy teaching staff convened to discuss the probable closing of the school due to COVID-19. The structure for our transition to a distance learning model was discussed, as well as the need to work together over the weekend so we could begin our distance learning program on March 16 for what was believed to be two weeks, with Spring Break changed to an earlier schedule to support three consecutive weeks of school closure. On March 13, 2020, at 6:00 p.m., the GOALS Academy Governance Committee participated in a Special Meeting and confirmed that we should close the school due to COVID-19. During Friday evening, as well as the weekend, two weeks of instructional materials, a bag of instructional supplies, Chromebooks, and headphones were prepared for distribution on Monday, March 16. We began distributing hotspots on March 20. This transition to a distance learning model required a Herculean effort by all staff members, and we were guided by the following principles:

- We focused on what was best for our scholars' social-emotional health and academic growth. We believed it was important for them to maintain relationships with their teachers and peers, experience a consistent schedule, participate in academic experiences that involved reviewed and new standards, and enjoy enrichment activities.
- We believed that we needed to commence our distance learning model on the first day of the school closure as a form of "dress rehearsal" so we could work out any kinks with minimal disruptions to our scholars' education.
- We chose to provide synchronous instruction via Zoom, as well as asynchronous instruction through *iReady Reading* and *iReady Mathematics*, as well as additional online resources such as *Learning A-Z* and *Khan Academy*. Every two weeks, we also provided packets with reading materials, worksheets, and materials for project-based learning. Synchronous and asynchronous online learning experiences were organized using Google Classroom.
- We acknowledged the importance of communicating with the parents on a regular basis, which we accomplished through Bloomz, Blackboard Connect, GOALS Academy Facebook Page, GOALS Academy webpage, etc. Each teacher also offered "townhall" parent meetings via Zoom to provide additional information and respond to questions parents had.
- We knew a consistent schedule was important for our scholars. We developed the following expectations:
 - Each teacher agreed to provide a brief Morning Greeting, either live or taped, at 9:00 a.m. This was a way to immediately connect with our scholars, as well as to orient them to the day of learning.

- Each teacher assigned 30 minutes of *iReady Reading* and 30 minutes of *iReady Mathematics* to be completed on a daily basis.
- Each teacher scheduled two hours of synchronous instruction from 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. This involved the teacher delivering instruction and breaking out into small group instruction led by the teachers, instructional assistants, TOSAs, student teacher, etc. via Zoom.
- Each teacher, Education Specialist (Special Education), TOSA, and instructional assistant scheduled a 30-minute session daily for individual and/or small group tutoring with each scholar.

- We felt it was important for our scholars to be able to continue with enrichment activities that included the following:

- Chorus
- Instrumental music (keyboards, brass, woodwinds, and strings) – scholars took instruments home to support this instruction
- Visual arts
- Yoga

- We felt it was important for our scholars to experience the special events that would be part of their normal school experiences, which included the following:

- GATE Projects – materials were provided if needed
- Virtual Fieldtrips
- Virtual Talent Show
- Virtual Kindergarten Celebration
- Virtual 6th Grade Promotion

Our resilient scholars were active participants in all that was offered. The attendance was strong, with approximately 90%-95% present during the synchronous instruction on a regular basis. While we believe in the power of a brick and mortar school, our scholars were well-served through our distance learning model considering the challenging circumstances presented by COVID-19. There is evidence that there were learning gains for most of our scholars, although it is difficult to determine if the gains were commensurate to what would have occurred if the school closure had not occurred. There were also a few impactful challenges that were difficult to resolve, including the following:

- While we were able to provide all scholars with Chromebooks, headphones, and hotspots as needed, Internet connectivity continued to be unstable in some households. We determined that just because a family has connectivity, it was not always of a sufficient quality to consistently support distance learning. While we initially thought 10 hot spots were sufficient, we had to provide four additional hot spots to families after the original distribution. If we were to continue distance learning, more hot spots may be needed.
- We decided Zoom was the best option for synchronous connections with our scholars, but the free version we initially used did not provide sufficient management features. So, we shifted to the fee-based program. However, Zoom's ongoing updates were difficult to manage, especially when they were unannounced and disruptive to the teaching/learning for the day.
- Six scholars were highly inconsistent in their attendance, and the numerous attempts to improve their attendance through communication with their parents was ineffective.

- The distance learning model was difficult for our parents in the following areas --

- Some parents felt ill-equipped to provide instructional support to their scholars. Regardless of our efforts as an elementary school, parents had to assume greater responsibilities for their children's education, and this was challenging.
- Parents who worked remotely from home had to balance their work responsibilities while watching their children. We experienced this first-hand with our instructional staff who had to balance teaching GOALS Academy scholars while also teaching their own children.
- For our parents who were struggling financially due to reduced work hours or the loss of employment, the stress they were experiencing made it difficult for them to focus on anything beyond basic survival. Most likely, the scholars also struggled with the familial stress.
- Not knowing whether or not GOALS Academy will reopen to onsite instruction in the fall makes it difficult for families to plan ahead.

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

In addition to what we provided educationally to all of our scholars, we took care to support scholars in various subgroups. While we had no scholars who were considered to be foster youth in the 2019-2020 school year, 55 (22.7%) were English learners and 174 (72%) were socioeconomically disadvantaged. Although information on how we addressed the needs of our scholars receiving special education services was not requested, this has also been addressed below as an important subgroup with 29 (12%) of our scholars under active IEPs. The following supports were implemented to ensure their access to a quality education:

- English learners – During the whole-group Zoom Time, English learners were provided additional support in break-out sessions conducted by the classroom teacher, instructional assistant, TOSA, and/or Education Specialist. For the 30 minutes of daily Tutoring Time, the teachers also ensured that English learners requiring additional support were grouped together in accordance to their needs. This included building background knowledge, making cultural connections, developing academic vocabulary, reteaching concepts, etc. The parents of our English learners also played a critical role in maintaining their children's engagement in the distance learning model. For parents who required communication in Spanish, a number of classified and certificated staff members who are bilingual provided support. We have also provided written communication in Spanish.
- Socioeconomically disadvantaged – For our scholars from socioeconomically struggling families, we provided instructional supplies, Chromebooks, headphones, and hot spots. When additional supplies were needed, we provided them. If transportation was a challenge, we delivered supplies to the homes. Additionally, breakfast and lunch were served on a daily basis.
- Special Education -- In order to support our scholars with special needs, we worked closely with our therapists to expeditiously implement teletherapy. In cases where providers were direct members of GOALS Academy's staff, services began as quickly as March 16, 2020. For services that were provided by a Non-public Agency (NPA), we shared any applicable contact information, and services were started within a couple of weeks. Additionally, all service providers diligently tracked supports and services provided to help us determine potential needs for compensatory services when we are permitted to safely return to on-site schooling. All annual IEP meetings without a need for face-to-face evaluations were held via Zoom. IEP meetings that were dependent upon data received from face-to-face evaluations were postponed, and families were communicated with via a Prior Written Notice (PWN). Depending upon the needs of our scholars with special needs, some of them also received additional, personalized work packets that included activities at their independent level, as well as those that targeted their IEP goals.

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

To deliver high-quality distance learning opportunities, it was important for the instructional staff members to be united in their vision and supported in their implementation. For this reason, the director, assistant director, and teachers met on a regular basis as a Think Tank to refine our practices. In addition to meeting on Saturday, March 14, and Sunday, March 15, to prepare for the first two weeks of instruction after our school's closure, we met daily after school at 3:00 p.m. for the first 15 days of teaching using the distance learning model. Then, beginning on April 13, we met bi-weekly on Mondays and Thursdays. Because our instructional assistants were also such an integral part of our distance learning program, the teachers were responsible for communicating with them daily. Additionally, the director and assistant director met with them bi-weekly on Wednesdays and Fridays beginning on April 17 to address any areas of need and to provide professional development. While this ongoing dialogue with the instructional staff was labor intensive, it was what permitted us to make the transition to distance learning relatively smoothly. In addition to the collaboration of the instructional staff, other steps that were taken to support distance learning included:

- The provision of any supports the teachers and instructional assistants needed at home to provide distance learning (chart paper, white boards, markers, document cameras, laptops, two hot spots, etc.).
- The purchase of additional reading materials, such as class sets of novels.
- On-site technical support that permitted scholars and families to call in with questions, exchange faulty equipment, request and receive hot spots, etc.
- Office support to put together and hand-out the learning packets every two weeks to support the distance learning program.
- Enrichment activities provided on the GOALS Academy webpage for scholars wanting to extend their learning.
- Attendance incentives for the scholars in the form of certificates and prizes, which were provided every two weeks.
- Upgrade to a paid subscription to Zoom.
- Ongoing attendance of the director and assistant director in various webinars and trainings to enable them to curate best practices and resources to share with the teachers and instructional assistants.
- Parent engagement and support.

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

Beginning on the first day of the school's closure on March 16, 2020, we worked with our School Food Authority (Schools in Action) and our meal vendor (Better 4 You Meals) to provide breakfast and lunch Monday through Friday to anyone who was 18 years of age or under, with the exception of during Spring Break and Memorial Day. The meals did not require heating, so we were able to offer a large window of time for food pick-up from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., which was more convenient for our families than other models. Each day, we provided an average of 100 breakfasts and 100 lunches, typically picked up at the same time. While we understood that the meals could be served to children who were not enrolled in our school, the location of GOALS Academy in an industrial area did not bring much foot traffic other than the families of our school. But, we did support providing food to younger and older siblings of scholars enrolled in our school.

For the safety of our staff and the families, we initiated the following practices:

- The food was packaged when it arrived at the school from Better 4 You Meals.
- The distribution of the food was outside in front of the school.
- Our meal clerk was the designated staff member to serve the families.
- The meal clerk and parents wore masks.
- The meal clerk washed her hands frequently, and hand sanitizer was also available.

- The food was bagged on a table, and the parents picked up the food while the meal clerk observed from six feet away behind the table.

In addition to providing school meals at our site, we shared information with our families regarding other schools in the area that provided food. Because we are a charter school without the traditional boundaries, for some parents it was easier to pick-up food that was offered by schools that were closer to their homes. We also provided information about various food banks in the area.

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

Upon our closure on March 13, 2020, there was little guidance regarding how to safely implement the supervision of scholars during ordinary school hours on our campus. There were still so many unanswered questions about COVID-19. Because this was one of the four critical areas Governor Newsom asked schools to address, we began by exploring if this would be best supported by our ASES provider, GOALS (Growth Opportunities through Athletics, Learning, and Service). This was determined by the Executive Director and confirmed by our authorizing entity, the Anaheim Elementary School District, to be an unfeasible role to play without additional information about COVID-19 and specific guidance from health officials. Therefore, we focused on informing our families of various options. Information from the following organization was provided:

- Boys and Girls Club: <https://bgchv.com/>
- Children's Home Society of California: <https://www.chs-ca.org/>
- First Five Orange County: <http://occhildrenandfamilies.com/>
- YMCA: <https://www.ymca.net/emergegency-child-care-services>