

COVID-19 Operations Written Report

Local Educational Agency (LEA) Name	Contact Name and Title	Email and Phone	Date of Adoption
Mill Valley Elementary School District	Wendy Holmes, Director of Curriculum & Instruction	wholmes@mvschools.org	June 17, 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.

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and under the guidance of the Marin County Public Health Department and the Marin County Office of Education, Mill Valley School District closed its schools and transitioned to remote instruction on March 16th. This involved the discontinuation of students receiving in-person instruction at schools. Instead, all instruction was delivered through a remote learning model in which students participated in activities at home, receiving instruction primarily through digital means. Because of the circumstances that remote learning presented families and the differing levels of support students received at home, the district determined it needed to adjust the grade reporting practices on the third trimester report card.

The district received feedback through teacher/principal surveys sent to families, communication from parents, along with other input provided by teachers and staff. We also gathered feedback at the April 20th LCAP Parent Advisory Committee meeting, May 14th Board of Trustees, PTA meetings to hear parent perspectives. FAQs page on the district website also collected feedback and suggestions. These avenues of information helped us understand the impacts school closures had on students and families.

Because students were unable to participate in face-to-face instruction in classrooms during this time, progression of learning grade-level content across all subject areas was affected. Remote learning could not replicate the traditional classroom learning experience, nor its outcomes across all content areas.

Parents/guardians working outside the home were tasked with juggling the demands of work and providing support for their children’s instruction at home. Parents/guardians working in the home faced the challenge of helping their children with learning while also completing their own work responsibilities. Some families experienced stress due to lost income resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Remote learning also had an impact on students’ social wellbeing, emotional wellness, and physical health. Even though school staff worked diligently to maintain student connections to school, the social isolation at home and lack of in-person interactions was hard for students and families. Also, remote learning increased the amount of screen time that students faced, which elevated stress for some students and decreased their activity level of our students.

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

The district offered a supportive approach to best meet the needs of its English learners, low-income students, and foster youth during the school closures. Our English Language Development Specialists provided targeted reading, writing, and vocabulary lessons through one-on-one and small-group instruction. ELD Specialists served as liaisons between classroom teachers and students, offering guidance for individualizing assignments and assisting students with completing work. ELD Specialists and classroom teachers offered students individualized support during check-in meetings. They regularly communicated with their students’ families to determine other needs they may have, and they coordinated with staff to help families access the needed resources.

Low-income students and foster youth received targeted supports and services, as needed. To access digital instructional platforms, the district ensured all students in need of a device were provided one. The district made sure all families in need of Internet access were provided a hot spot. At some grade levels and for students in need, paper packets were provided in order to limit the amount of work completed on a device. Students who participated in the Reading And Math Program prior to the school closures continued to receive this intervention during remote learning. RAMP staff offered lessons virtually to students multiple times per week, assisting with classroom assignments and providing targeted intervention.

Teachers, counselors, administrators, and other staff checked in regularly with students and families to assess their social-emotional needs and provide counseling as support. Counselors worked with students individually and in small groups to help them manage their stress, anxiety, and other feelings they were experiencing. Staff members reached out to families to inform them of supports provided by the district, City of Mill Valley, and Marin County. Also, students participating in the National School Lunch Program received funds for lunch every school day during the school closures.

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

Mill Valley School District took deliberate steps to ensure high-quality distance learning was delivered throughout the school closures. Planning for remote learning began on the March 13th Staff Development Day, when teachers began developing instructional programs that connected to the district's Continuity of Learning plan. As remote learning continued, teachers participated in professional development related to online curricular resources (e.g. IXL, Learning A-Z and TCI History Alive), trainings on a variety of digital platforms essential for remote learning (e.g. Google Classroom, Zoom, Seesaw), and they engaged in discussions about the best practices for a remote learning environment. Teachers regularly engaged in collaborative planning and shared instructional strategies to best meet the needs of their students in this unique educational environment.

While there were significant changes to program offerings during the school closure, the district continued to provide Special Education services, English Language Development classes, Reading And Math Program intervention sessions, and counseling supports virtually to students.

Teachers developed standards-based activities that encompassed a progression of learning across all content areas. New skills and concepts were typically introduced through pre-recorded video/audio files, written directions/guidelines and through the use of digital curricula. This gave students the ability to access the content at any time. Students worked through assignments individually or with home support, which was followed by whole/half class lessons, one-on-one or small-group instruction, and other teacher supports, like tutorials/office hours. Feedback was given to students through these follow-up sessions and other digital tools, such as Google Classroom and Seesaw. Many teachers included class meetings to help students maintain a connection to each other and the adults at school. Social-emotional learning strategies, such as mindfulness practices, and other SEL programs (e.g. Kimochis, Toolbox and Zones of Regulation) were integrated into instructional programs.

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

Roughly 5% of students in Mill Valley School District participate in the National School Lunch Program and receive free or reduced price meals. With the announcement of school closures, the district reached out to these families by phone and email to determine their interest in continuing to participate in the program while schools were closed. The district contacted these families two additional times to determine if they would like to participate. New families were able to apply for the National School Lunch Program, and if they qualified, could begin participating at any time.

The district partnered with Mill Valley Market to provide an account to these families for purchasing groceries for their school-age children's lunch on school days from March 16th to June 11th. During the first week of school closures, families received a bag of groceries to prepare lunches for the week. During the second week of school closures and each subsequent week until the end of the school year, families received \$8 per child enrolled in the district per day to be spent at Mill Valley Market for lunch.

Through an Adopt-A-Family fundraising effort with eight other school districts in Marin County, families with children in the National School Lunch Program received a one-time grocery store gift card of \$150. These families also received a \$365 card from the State Pandemic EBT program.

With a donation from PTA and in coordination with a local food truck, a Pop up food distribution was offered at Mill Valley Middle School on April 15th and 22nd. In partnership with the Tam Union High School District and through donations made by PTAs and others, a Pop-Up Pantry in Mill Valley began April 24 and provided hundreds of bags of groceries to families each week, either by pick-up or by delivery to homes.

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

The district established specific measures throughout the school closures to arrange for the supervision of students and maintain active participation of students during remote learning. The district provided instruction to students through a comprehensive remote learning plan that called for students' active engagement every day. Students were assigned and expected to complete work each day. They participated in virtual interactions with teachers and peers every week, such as class meetings, follow-up lessons, one-on-one and small-group check-ins, and office hours/tutorials. Students engaged in online learning through various digital programs that assisted teachers in monitoring student progress, and they interacted with peers and staff members every day through online platforms.

To access the digital curriculum and instructional program, the district ensured that all students in need of a device were provided one and all families in need of Internet access were provided a hot spot.

School site teams followed processes to check on and monitor students who seemed disengaged during remote learning. Teachers communicated regularly with site teams regarding students they were concerned about, and they developed plans to engage and support these learners. They also reached out to students who were not completing their work, not progressing as expected with online learning platforms, or not attending virtual sessions. Teachers, counselors, administrators, and other school staff contacted the families in order to work together as a team to re-engage students and provide needed supports and resources for the family.

These actions had a significant impact on student engagement levels during remote learning. For example, at Mill Valley Middle School, 65 (23%) sixth graders were initially disengaged from remote learning, which dropped to 11 students (4%) due targeted efforts by staff. 128 (33%) seventh graders were initially disengaged, which dropped to 10 students (3%) from specific supports to students. 101 (29%) eighth graders were disengaged from remote learning, which dropped to 15 students (4%) due to targeted help from staff. Throughout the period of remote learning, the MVMS team kept track of these students, documented strategies tried to increase their participation, and noted follow-up actions that would be needed in the fall, such as academic interventions and counseling support.

The district also arranged for the supervision of students by providing staffing for child care centers throughout Marin county, which served the children of essential workers in the county.