

MOTION BY SUPERVISORS KATHRYN BARGER  
AND MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS

AGN. NO. \_\_\_\_\_  
JULY 21, 2020

**LOS ANGELES COUNTY EQUITABLE EDUCATION ACCESS**

On March 4, 2020, Governor Gavin Newsom proclaimed a State of Emergency in California as a result of the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) global pandemic. On the same day, the Chair of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors ("Board") proclaimed the existence of a local emergency in Los Angeles County, and the County Health Officer declared a local health emergency as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. That day, the Board ratified both the local proclamation of an emergency and the declaration of a local health emergency, activating the County Emergency Operations Center (CEOC) under the management and direction of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO). Further, on March 16, 2020, the County Health Officer issued a public health order that mandated closure of a variety of businesses.

On March 31, 2020, the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Tony Thurmond, issued a statement to all fifty-eight County Boards of Education advising for the closure of schools for the remainder of the school year. Although minimal early childhood education and care programs have stayed open for essential workforce childcare needs, not all early childhood education centers are re-opened yet due to capacity restrictions.

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On July 13, 2020, Superintendent Austin Beutner announced that LAUSD schools would continue distance learning for the Fall of 2020. Many other school districts, community colleges, private and public colleges have announced similar intentions. On July 15, 2020, Thurmond announced he did not believe schools should open for the Fall of 2020. Further announcements from the Governor as they relate to school re-opening plans for many counties are expected imminently. With these announcements, we anticipate a large percentage of Los Angeles youth will not be in a physical school environment nor have access to an on-campus learning environment.

The ongoing school closures continue to add layers of stressors and impact the well-being of children/youth and their parents/caregivers, especially working parents. Children/youth, families, educators and all the support workers in our school communities need an array of resources to meet the social, emotional, and educational needs of students throughout Los Angeles County. These resources must be developed in partnership with County, City, local community partners and state organizations.

**WE, THEREFORE, MOVE** that the Board of Supervisors direct the CEO's Office of Legislative Affairs to draft a 5-signature letter to Governor Gavin Newsom and State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond, and to ask the State to provide additional support for students impacted by distance learning throughout the region, especially the most vulnerable including those with special needs, low-income, English learners, homeless and foster youth through:

1. Guidelines to ensure consistent and equitable educational requirements between both distance learning and on-campus learning;
2. Equitable access to computer equipment, tablets, and Wi-Fi hotspots or high-speed internet;

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3. Access to community resource centers for children and youth who need a safe place to learn that offers internet access, and aids or volunteers to help on site to support distance learning;
4. Ensuring appropriate plans are in place for students who are foster youth, English language learners, and students with an individualized education plan where distance learning can be compromised; and
5. Ensuring that resources are expended to keep childcare centers operating despite the challenges of group size restrictions under the public health orders.

**WE, FURTHER, MOVE** that the Board of Supervisors direct the Chief Information Officer (CIO) and Internal Services Department (ISD) to work with Los Angeles County Parks and Recreation, Los Angeles County Beaches and Harbors, Los Angeles County Library, Los Angeles County Regional Planning, Workforce Development, Aging, and Community Services (WDACS), the Economic Resiliency Task Force Infrastructure Subcommittee, and other appropriate departments to identify how to best establish expanded access to cellular service and Wi-Fi capability, through expedited review and approvals for the appropriate telecommunications infrastructure in County unincorporated property, in order to help minimize the digital divide in low-income communities and geographically remote regions in the County.

**WE, FURTHER, MOVE** that the CEO partner with the Office for the Advancement of Early Care and Education (OAECE), Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE), Department of Mental Health (DMH), and youth-focused community based organizations such as the Los Angeles County Alliance for Boys and Girls Clubs to:

1. Clearly communicate the available resources to working parents including how to best access and connect to programs that allow students to distance learn from safe non-homebased locations, and locations that could provide mental health services to support feelings of isolation and depression among children and youth;

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2. Address the social, emotional, and intellectual wellbeing of children and youth, and provide access to and receive equitable services virtually who typically receive services through their school sites; and
3. Explore alternatives to site-based learning to bring learning supports into the home, such as in-home childcare, tutoring, associate teaching, and expanded home visiting.

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