



Whittier Union HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

To Achieve and Maintain Excellence...

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: July 29, 2020 **CONTACT:** Juliette Funes, William Diepenbrock **PHONE:** 909-445-1001

Whittier Union to Begin 2020-21 Fall Semester with 100% Distance Learning

WHITTIER – Whittier Union High School District will begin the 2020-21 school year with a 100% distance learning schedule, converting the fall semester into a quarter system in which students will take three online classes in each of two nine-week periods starting **Wednesday, Aug. 12**.

The Board of Trustees unanimously approved the 3x9 instructional model and launching the school year in Stage 1 of the District's four-stage reopening plan during a July 28 virtual board meeting.

The decision came in response to orders issued by California Department of Public Health on [July 17](#), which mandate the closure of all in-person operations and activities at schools in counties on the state's monitoring list, including Los Angeles County. As a result, schools must conduct distance learning only until the county is off the monitoring list for at least 14 days and after consultation with the local public health department.

"Whittier Union is ready for any scenario possible, taking the lessons we have learned since our schools closed in March to build a strong online learning platform that will be the backbone of our success," Superintendent Martin Plourde said. "Once we are able to reopen, in-person instruction will only strengthen what we are doing online to provide robust instruction to our students. We are ready for this challenge."

Whittier Union's flexible four-stage teaching and learning plan is adaptable to the continuously changing environment caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. While Stage 1 is 100% virtual learning, the next three stages allow for some form of hybrid/in-person instruction. Teachers participated in summer professional development to prepare for each phase.

Under all stages, students will take three classes during each of the two nine-week quarters, enabling them to complete six classes, or 30 credits, in fall semester. Mondays will be dedicated to live interaction with students to set the plan for the week, along with teacher planning, collaboration, staff meetings and student outreach. The other four days will have dedicated instructional time for the three classes in which students are enrolled.

The system is designed to provide students and teachers with rigorous, but manageable workloads and schedules that can seamlessly transition between online and in-person instruction as necessary.

When Los Angeles County is removed from the state's monitoring list, the District will decide how and when to reopen.

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“We are ready for online learning, but we are still looking toward the next stages of our plan and will be ready to pivot to in-person instruction when the time comes and as public health orders allow,” Plourde said. “In any scenario, we are committed to following best practices and protecting the health and safety of our teachers, staff and students.”

Families will continue to have the option to pursue distance learning only.

For more information on each stage, click [here](#).

PHOTO CAPTION

072920_WUHSD_STAGE1: Following public health orders, Whittier Union will launch the fall semester of 2020-21 school year in Stage 1 of its four-stage plan, which will have students engage in a 100% distance learning schedule. The first day of school is Wednesday, Aug. 12.

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OUR MISSION:

The Whittier Union High School District provides all students with an engaging, quality standards-based instructional program delivered by a well-trained staff resulting in improved student achievement. Whittier Union High School District works to achieve and maintain excellence in providing a comprehensive education for all students.

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