Siskiyou County Office of Education

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Contact: Kermith R. Walters, Siskiyou County Superintendent of Schools

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 1, 2020

I want to assure the public that the safety and wellbeing of our students, staff and families is our highest priority. We are in unprecedented times. When schools and districts recently made the decision to close their campuses to students, no one knew how long the closure would last. On Tuesday, March 31, the CA State Superintendent of Public Instruction published a news release stating, “Due to the current safety concerns and needs for ongoing social distancing it currently appears that our students will not be able to return to school campuses before the end of the school year. This is in no way to suggest that school is over for the year, but rather we should put all efforts into strengthening our delivery of education through distance learning.” On April 1, during a press conference, Governor Newsom reiterated the statement that schools would need to be closed to students until the end of the school year. Following this guidance, Siskiyou County school districts and charter schools will not reopen to students this school year, but distance learning and other educational efforts will be accelerated.

I am in constant communication with the California Department of Education, California Department of Public Health and Siskiyou County Public Health to help guide us in the decisions we are making for the students of Siskiyou County. The actions we are taking will contribute to slowing the spread of COVID-19 and ensuring the safety of our community. I have deep respect for the administrators and their work with their students, families and communities. District Administrators and I will continue to meet on a weekly basis to discuss our planning, logistics and delivery of educational opportunities for all students in Siskiyou County.

District Administrators and Charter School Administrators have been developing plans, in collaboration with teachers, for how we will meet the educational needs of our students. We are aware that some students in Siskiyou County do not have consistent and reliable access to devices and the internet. Given this reality, we will be using a variety of approaches to deliver educational opportunities to all students we serve.  We want to assure you that the educational community in Siskiyou County remains united and committed to the education of our children.  School districts will be communicating their plans with families very soon.  Individual districts will be making decisions about events such as graduations, based on further information, conditions and recommendations from state and county officials.

While I recognize this extension of school facility closures poses challenges and hardship to many families in Siskiyou County, the most effective way to slow and disrupt the transmission of this pandemic is by continuing to implement social distancing practices. We are grateful to community members throughout Siskiyou County for their tremendous prevention efforts during this difficult time.

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