

COVID-19 Operations Written Report

Local Educational Agency (LEA) Name	Contact Name and Title	Email and Phone	Date of Adoption
LA's Promise Charter Middle School #1	Rochelle Tawiah, Principal	rochellet@lapromisefund.org 213.745.4928	June 18, 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.

LA Promise Charter Middle School #1 is operated through *LA Promise Fund*, a nonprofit organization dedicated to preparing students for success in college, career, and life. The Fund creates vibrant community hubs and partnerships that foster motivated, engaged, and directed students, who are poised for academic, professional, and personal success.

In early March, [Governor Newsom declared a State of Emergency](#), and the state's preparation for spread of COVID-19. This resulted in our Leadership Team in developing a Distance Learning Policy, including a Technology needs assessment, shift in roles and responsibilities for staff, and methods of communication with parents/families.

On March 13, 2020, Governor Gavin Newsom issued [Executive Order N-26-20](#) regarding the physical closure of schools by local educational agencies (LEAs) in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Families were surveyed to assess **Technology and Internet needs** via Parent Square. As a result, 70% of students were issued a laptop. Our school partnered with School2Home whose mission is to close the achievement gap and digital divide for middle schools. As a result, the remaining 30% of students received a laptop the week of March 16th. The LA Promise Fund Agency secured donations for the issuance of Wi-Fi Hotspots, and we also provided families with [resources to apply for free/reduced cost internet services](#), in an effort to ensure all students could access curricular and instructional materials during Distance Learning and to decrease the digital divide among the vulnerable community we serve.

Our teachers, Para-professionals and Instructional Aides participated in **Professional Development** facilitated by the Head of Schools and the Content Area coaches in Mathematics, English Language Arts (Loyola Marymount University CA Reading & Writing Project), and

Science that took place twice per month during school closure. Areas of focus also included strategies for implement engaging Google Meetings, Flipgrid, Rosetta Store, and Zoom meetings.

Distance learning was both asynchronous and synchronous instruction. Students were provided with access to virtual lessons and assignments through Google classroom and work packets, which allowed them to engage during their own time and at their own pace. Our model prioritized providing students with consistent feedback, connection to the school, and support. The well-being of our students during this time is equally important to their academic progress.

This model is informed by research, best practice, and our own local context. It reflects these uncertain times, including the challenging circumstances faced by our students, staff members, and families. Our school leaders, teachers, and support staff managed both personal and professional responsibilities while ensuring that the social-emotional and academic needs of our students were being met. Our students face the reality of trying to learn with uneven internet access, despite our best efforts to remedy this. Additionally, there were a myriad of increased home demands that included care for siblings and family members, lack of an ideal learning environment. This was compounded by feelings of fear, isolation, and food insecurities.

The [Google Classroom Suite and class websites](#) through Weebly were the primary platforms where our teachers facilitated the **distance learning** model. We incorporated a wide range of high-quality online resources to supplement student learning, and encourage every teacher to explore these in order to find the most effective way to support, and meaningfully engage and interact with students.

As a result of **Distance Learning the** following **modifications** were made:

- Physical Education course was discontinued because of school closure
- After-school programs, clubs and organizations were discontinued
- Field Trips were discontinued as a result of stay-at-home orders issued by the governor.

Students with Disabilities (SWD) were provided with equal access to core content through co-teaching/co-planning between the general and special education teachers during Distance Learning. All related services were provided through outside providers via teleconferencing, and IEP meetings were held. Communication between the special education team and families was vital in order to ensure that the needs of SWD were met. Our school operated under CDE guidelines for special education, and worked in close collaboration with our LACOE SELPA. Prior written notices (PWN) were sent following school closures to serve as a written explanation of proposed changes in IEP on account of distance learning. Based on CDE guidelines, the IEP in place at the time of physical school closure remained in effect, and our school to the greatest extent possible, continued to provide the services referenced in IEPs in alternative ways.

The **impact of Distance Learning on students** has been isolating, challenging, stressful and some students struggled with time management. As a result, our school shifted to more synchronous instruction and a structured daily format. There has also been an increase in student interaction during Zoom meetings. For **families**, distance learning has created challenges, increased levels of stress and anxiety, including job and food insecurity. Parents have been satisfied with our school's seamless transition to Distance Learning, the resources provided, and ongoing communication and updates to parents. These findings resulted in our Principals hosting parent meetings to address these areas and provide families with increased targeted support services; and check-ins conducted by support staff and teachers on a regular basis. During Distance Learning our school experienced a significant increase in parent participation in parent virtual meetings.

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

Approximately 90% of students enrolled at LA's Promise Charter Middle School #1 are **Unduplicated Pupils** (low-income, English learner, Foster youth). The following is a description of the services we provided to meet the needs of our Unduplicated Pupils (UP).

All **English Learners** received both designated and integrated English Language Development (ELD) during Distance Learning, through interactive Zoom lessons. ELs utilized Rosetta Store for individualized language practice for 120-180 minutes per week, and Achieve 3000 daily as supplemental English Language Development support. The ELD Teacher participated in weekly Multi-lingual/Bilingual ELD Director's Network at LACOE and the CDE webinars on guidance for EL and strategies were shared with our entire teaching staff on scaffolding, differentiating, strategies for English Learners. Bilingual Aides provided academic support for ELs during synchronous instruction in their core courses in addition to small group and one-on-one support via Zoom meetings. The ELD teacher collaborated with content area teachers to ensure lessons were differentiated to support English Learners. Bilingual staff communicated with parents to provide updates on their child's academic progress, and identify school and community resources to support them. All materials sent to families/parents were translated to Spanish.

The Principal serves as the homeless and **foster youth** liaison. and has been in communication with the Homeless Liaison at LACOE to identify available resources. The Homeless/Foster Youth Liaison, teachers and support staff conducted check-ins regularly to ensure this vulnerable student group had access to curricular and instructional materials, Chromebooks, Wi-Fi Hotspot/Internet service, meals/food, information on homeless shelters, and a list of local food banks.

Academic support/intervention was provided by teachers, Instructional Aides, and after-school tutoring program. **Social-emotional** supports were provided by the Counselor and School Psychologist via Zoom meetings.

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

Distance learning was a new format for our teachers. To ensure that students were receiving high quality instruction, and that teachers understood the most effective methods to impart learning remotely, teachers engaged in ongoing professional learning in content teams with instructional coaches throughout the period of school closure. There was emphasis on meeting the needs of English Learners and Students with Disabilities through scaffolded content.

Distance Learning at LA's Promise Charter Middle School provided all students with synchronous and asynchronous instruction, using Google Classroom, as the Learning Management System including the following:

- **Curricular and Supplemental Programs & Applications:** Achieve 3000, iXL Math, BrainPop, Rosetta Stone, Khan Academy, and APEX
- **Weekly Morning Message** Video (start of the week) and end of the week close-out video message that focuses on the core values, expectations as discussed during Advisory.
- Assignments: 1-2 per course per week
- **Grading Policy** – our school adopted a hold-harmless policy for grading
- **Attendance** was taken by all teachers daily as measured by student participation in synchronous/asynchronous instruction, coursework completion, etc.
- Promise Time/Advisory teachers launched the week with a “morning message” then during the week conducted check-ins with all students; and ended the week with a “close-out” video message.

All teachers designed a “learning launch” video twice per week that focused on clear standards-aligned objective using **Google Classroom** or Screencastify. Assignments were based on meaningful engagement, learning interaction, and with opportunities to challenge students and practice the teacher directed lesson objectives. This included choice boards, reading complex texts, and responding to high-level dependent questions, solving math tasks, conducting science simulations and engaging in virtual discussions.

Google Classroom had already been implemented early in the school year. Therefore, we provided a Zoom training for students and parents. Our support staff conducted home visits to distribute laptops, and chargers for students who lacked a device and/or needed a replacement. Our entire staff was provided with a Google Phone number and a stipend for teacher to offset internet service costs as a result from working from home (distance learning). As stated earlier all staff roles and responsibilities were reconfigured as a result of distance learning, to support the academic, social-emotional needs of our students, and identify and provide resources to support families who were facing job and food insecurity.

Academic support/intervention was provided by Teachers, SPED Teachers, Instructional Aides, and after-school tutoring program on a daily basis. All teachers provided daily office hours for targeted, small group and one-on-one instruction, in addition to provide students with personalized feedback answer questions, follow-up on missing assignments, differentiate lessons and outreach to families.

Social-emotional supports were provided by the Counselor and School Psychologist via Zoom meetings. The emotional well-being of our students is critical to academic success. Our teachers and support staff were tasked with developing strategies for supporting students emotionally to ensure they are connected, engaged, and motivated to learn through participation. Our school's website also provided an [Access & Crisis Helpline](#) that was open 24 hours per day, 7 days a week. In addition, our school provided families with the [California Parent and Youth Helpline](#) that provides support and resource referrals to parents and youth during the COVID-19 pandemic, 7 days per week from 8am -8pm. The contact information and link was provided to all families and was posted on our school's website.

Communication with parents/families took place on a regular basis through emails, Parent Square, school's website, Zoom meetings, phone calls and correspondence mailed home. All correspondence, and message to parents/families were translated to Spanish.

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

As of March 16th, LA's Promise Charter Middle School #1 has provided its families with "Grab n Go" meals in a non-congregate setting, through a CDE waiver of the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP). The pick-up site for the Grab n go lunch meals curbside pick-up was located at the school site (between 49th and 50th on Western), and open daily from 9am -1pm.

Our school also hosted a food pantry for the community to address the food insecurity our families were experiencing, which was open on Mondays and Wednesday from 11am to 1pm; and Fridays from 3-5pm. This information was communicated to families and listed on our [school's website](#). Our school has partnered with OneLA, a program that provides families with micro-grants ranging between \$200-\$500 for basic necessities.

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

LA's Promise Charter Middle School #1 notified families of resources where they could seek and arrange for supervision of students during ordinary school hours. The notification letter with links to resources for Child Care for Essential Workers during COVID-19 Response was also uploaded to the [school's website](#) under COVID-19 Resources as a result of the Governor's Executive Order N-45-20. To date, no families have requested supervision of their child during school hours. Our school was unable to provide for supervision of students during ordinary school hours because our entire staff was providing support services for students via distance learning.

California Department of Education
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