

COVID-19 Operations Written Report

Local Educational Agency (LEA) Name	Contact Name and Title	Email and Phone	Date of Adoption
Howard Gardner Community Charter School	Beverly Jimenez, Principal	bjimenez@hgcschool.org 619.934.0300	June 25, 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.

Howard Gardner Community School provides students with a unique, and supportive learning environment based on the tenets of multiple intelligence theory, facilitate the development of 21st- century skills, and create an atmosphere where ALL students reach their highest potential.

On Friday, March 13th all students were sent home with a [letter to parents](#) informing them of the school's closure; plan to implement a Technology Needs Assessment, and availability of meal services during closure and next steps.

Our teachers prepared 1-week (March 16-20) of standards aligned coursework packets which were distributed to student on the last day of site-based instruction to last until Spring Break (March 23 – April 3).

Staff collaborated with the Leadership Team to develop a ***Distance Learning Plan*** that would meet the needs of its students. The Administrative Leadership Team developed a Technology needs assessment, revised staff roles and responsibilities and collaborated to identify student/family needs.

Staff conducted a ***technology needs survey*** via online platforms (Zoom, Google Classroom, Seesaw, Class Dojo and Classtag); and via phone calls, email and school messenger to ensure that 100% of families were contacted. The purpose was to identify which students would need a school-loaned technology device to access curricular and instructional materials; internet access at home; availability of free breakfast/lunch meals. For families that lacked internet service at home, we provided them with [resources](#) for free/reduced costs internet service.

Approximately, 98% of our students/families identified the need for a school-loaned technology device. The distribution of **technology devices**, instructional materials, and Wi-Fi Hotspots started April 6 (the week after Spring Break) through curbside pick-up, that was facilitated by school staff. The IT Department set up a “help desk” phone number to provide tech support for students/parents. “How to” step-by-step videos for accessing Google Classroom, Seesaw, Zoom were created for students and parents to access.

Immediately upon school closure, our teachers participated in **professional development** that focused on planning and developing distance learning lessons on Google and Seesaw platform; and developing engaging lessons on Zoom. Our staff also participated in professional development on how to integrate curricular and web-based tools into distance learning seamlessly. Additional professional development included: providing one-on-one intervention via distance learning, keeping track of student progress/monitoring, and how to differentiate instruction through small group instruction via distance learning. Professional Development continued weekly during school closure to support teachers with the transition to distance learning.

Howard Gardner’s pedagogical approach to **Distance Learning** was to deliver standards-aligned instruction via asynchronous and synchronous learning mode. Zoom meetings were used for live (synchronous) instructional sessions with students. Google Classroom and Seesaw was used for submitting and completing assignments.

The following **modifications to courses** were made as a result of distance learning: Physical Education was modified and offered via Zoom lessons in early May; Electives were discontinued; Interdisciplinary Projects were implemented to make learning relevant and engaging; and Mindfulness/yoga was implemented. Girl Empowerment Group and Boys Mentoring continued via Zoom meetings.

The **major impact of school closure** on our **students** has been the inability to focus since there are a lot of distractions at home; and the inability to socialize with their peers has been isolating for students. Most of our students lack an environment conducive to learning at home is another obstacle that has been shared with our staff during check-ins. Although our students have been provided with Chromebooks, the device does not meet the expectations of Zoom; and the internet bandwidth that our students have at home is not ideal for Zoom. **Parents** have informed us that the impact of distance learning (school closure) has been challenging, stressful as a result of job and food insecurity, and would like additional feedback on student work. Parents were highly appreciative of the ongoing communication by our staff with families and the resources that were provided to families. Students stated they preferred Zoom meetings with teachers. To address this impact our teachers shifted the delivery of instruction to include more differentiation during Zoom meetings, and providing more feedback on student work. In addition, our Psychologist and Counselor conducted Social-emotional Learning sessions with students over Zoom. The Counselor provided whole class SEL Lessons to middle school students to address anxiety issues. They held office hours to address the social-emotional needs of our students. We also added Mindfulness/Yoga for our students to address stress and anxiety issues.

For **Students with Disabilities**: Services for Students with Disabilities (SWD) continued via Distance Learning, teleconference, phone call and email. Our Education Specialists collaborated with the General Education teachers to provide SWD with accommodations and/or modifications based on their IEP. Speech, APE, OT, Counseling, BII, BID, & DHH, services continued to the extent possible by contracted agencies. The Education Specialists provided push-in and pull-out during General Education Zoom sessions and consulted and collaborated with general education teachers to provide support.

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

Approximately 92% of our students are Unduplicated Pupils (Low Income, English Learners, Foster Youth). The following is a description of the additional services provided to Unduplicated Pupils (UP).

For **English Learners**: All ELs received designated and integrated English Language Development (ELD) through live Zoom session. ELs also received additional academic support from the Interventionist and Instructional Aides through small group and one-on-one Zoom sessions to support English Language acquisition. All materials and communication were provided in Spanish for non-English speaking parents/families and disseminated via Class Dojo, and the school's website. Our bilingual staff communicated regularly with non-English speaking families to ensure their needs were being met.

For **Foster Youth/Low Income**: The school's Director serves as the Foster Youth & Homeless liaison and has contacted the San Diego County Office of Education to identify and acquire additional resources for our students. Our Unduplicated Pupils received a technology device to access distance learning. In addition, a number of Wi-Fi hotspots were also provided. Ongoing check-ins for these vulnerable student groups were conducted regularly including home visits, while maintaining social distancing to ensure they were could access curricular and instructional materials. We also provided hard-copy grade level packets for families that had difficulty accessing internet services. Additionally, families were provided with information on food distribution sites throughout the County of San Diego, including food pantries and information on Pandemic EBT.

Academic support from Interventionists and Instructional Aides took place during regular class sessions in synchronous live Zoom sessions through breakout rooms to ensure the academic needs of struggling students were being met while also noting their participation in sessions. Academic support was also provided by teachers during office hours. Students were provided access to the

following web-based intervention apps: iXL, Reflex Math, and Prodigy. Teachers documented student progress on Illuminate gradebook.

The Psychologist and Counselor conducted ***Social-emotional Learning sessions*** with students over Zoom. The Counselor led whole class SEL lessons for middle school students to address anxiety issues. They also held office hours to address the social-emotional needs of our students. The Counselor led lessons on dealing with anxiety and social skills; and teachers also provided SEL lesson to classes. The Psychologist participated in Council (for grade 2).

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

Howard Gardner's pedagogical approach to ***Distance Learning*** was to deliver standards-aligned instruction via asynchronous and synchronous learning mode. Zoom meetings were used for live (synchronous) instructional sessions with students. Google Classroom and Seesaw were used for completions and submission of assignments.

Our students utilized the following ***Curricular & Supplemental Learning Apps*** with distance learning:

- RazKids: provides interactive leveled e-books that students can read, listen and record themselves
- Read Naturally: research-based reading intervention program, ideally suited for distance learning, to support students in becoming fluent readers and make solid gains in comprehension and vocabulary.
- CK-12: provides a plethora of resources for students, parents, and teachers that are concept-based, interactive, adaptive systems.
- CommonLit: is a research-based, standards-aligned effective literacy program with built in formative and interim assessments.
- iXL: personalized academic intervention program
- ABCYa: educational games for kids that align to the Common Core State Standards
- Education.com – teacher created learning activities to support student learning
- BrainPop: an engagement tool that allows students to be involved in the learning process through animation across all subjects.
- Quizizz; free tools to teach and learn adaptable to any device, effective with distance learning. Students will see questions in their own screen.
- Sheppardsoftware.com – educational games, activities, quizzes, articles for student-use
- YouTube Videos

Approximately 80% of our students ***participated in distance learning*** synchronous instruction and coursework completion.

Teachers were tasked with conducting daily check-ins (attendance), with students during live Zoom meetings, which occurred in the form of written and /or verbal prompts at the beginning of the session, and administering quizzes and weekly/bimonthly surveys to track student participation and engagement. Our teachers also hosted office hours to provide academic support through small group instruction via Zoom and during breakout sessions. Our 2nd grade students participated in meditation with their parents via Zoom.

The school's Director maintained ongoing **communication with families** via Zoom meetings "Director's Coffee Shop" (monthly virtual meetings), email updates on our school's website, Class Dojo, Classtag, Seesaw, Zoom and phone calls, providing an additional layer of support to families and students. Teachers and support staff held virtual office hours to communicate with parents/families to address concerns, issues and support their work with facilitating distance learning at home. Resources for distance learning were consistently posted on our school's website for families/students to access.

Howard Gardner Community School implemented a **Multi-tiered System of Supports (MTSS)** with a critical focus on providing targeted academic and social-emotional and learning to support the highly vulnerable student population it serves.

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The Psychologist and Counselor conducted **Social-emotional Learning sessions** with students over Zoom. The Counselor led whole class SEL lessons for middle school students to address anxiety issues. They also held office hours to address the social-emotional needs of our students. The Counselor led lessons on dealing with anxiety and social skills; and teachers also provided SEL lesson to classes. The Psychologist participated in Council (for grade 2). 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.

Students, staff and parents were **surveyed** to measure the effectiveness of our school's Distance Learning Program; and identify areas of strength and growth. Results will be shared with staff and parents and used to improve the effectiveness of our program.

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

Howard Gardner Community School did not provide meals at its school site. However, our school provided all families with a list of School Food Distribution sites within the San Diego County, with dates, times, and location that provided free prepared meals (breakfast & lunch), via curbside and/or walk-in basis, in a non-congregate setting to all students.

Howard Gardner Community School provided families with information on the [application process](#) for the [Pandemic EBT \(P-EBT\)](#) during regular updates and on our school's website including a [list of FAQ](#).

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

Howard Gardner Community School notified families of resources where they can 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.