



805.967.2500
www.SBSCChamber.com
Mailing Address: 5662 Calle Real #204, Goleta, CA 93117
Visitor Center: 120 State Street, St F, Santa Barbara, CA 93101

January 26, 2021

President Kate Ford and Members of the Board of the Santa Barbara Unified School District
Santa Barbara Unified School District
720 Santa Barbara St.
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

RE: Safely Reopening Schools with Roadmap to Recovery COVID Safety 5-Step Method

Dear President Ford and Members of the Board of the Santa Barbara Unified School District;

The Santa Barbara South Coast Chamber of Commerce, from Goleta to Carpinteria, would like to issue our strong support for safely reopening our schools to in-person learning. The Chamber's relationship to the community and therefore to education, has never been more important than right now. We have always had close ties with the school districts and higher education since we know that education, business and community go hand in hand.

Our recent findings from our Roadmap to Recovery program of work calls for schools to be reopened on-campus. The CDC and County Public Health have identified proven methods for safety; we call this the COVID Safety 5-Step Method. This method includes wearing a mask, sanitizing all surfaces and proper handwashing, social distancing of at least six feet apart, ventilation or outdoor operations, and the use of plexiglass and barriers between individuals.

Our Roadmap to Recovery focus groups emphasized that in order for businesses to flourish and employees to succeed, schools must be in session on campus. Distance learning, hybrid or all in-home models, brought challenges for students, working parents, teachers, employers, and employees without children. The hardships among employees were, in some cases dramatic, and disproportionately affecting women in the workforce.

The science and data do support that on-campus learning can be safe and does not pose as a high a risk of harm, as keeping our children, of all ages, away from their learning environments, their peers, their activities and their sports. The CDC has released a report today that finally provides concrete scientific reassurance that schools are not seeing outbreaks and spread.



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We know you have struggled and wrestled with the timing of reopening schools. We want to offer our voice of support for reopening as soon as possible or around March 1, 2021. Waiting much longer than this timing causes people to lose hope that schools will reopen this year.

We appreciate the complexities around this issue and hope you realize our true desire to be partners in reviving our economy and establishing recovery in our communities.

Thank you,

KRISTEN MILLER | President/CEO
SANTA BARBARA SOUTH COAST CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
(805) 967-2500 ext. 108 | Kristen@SBSCChamber.com

Cc: Hilda Maldonado, Superintendent, hmaldonado@sbunified.org

CDC Report: https://www.washingtonpost.com/education/cdc-school-virus-spread/2021/01/26/bf949222-5fe6-11eb-9061-07abcc1f9229_story.html