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County Superintendent of Schools

MEDIA ALERT FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: March 4, 2020
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Impact of San Mateo County's State of Emergency Declaration on Schools

Redwood City—The San Mateo County Office of Education will continue to collaborate closely with its partners in San Mateo County government to support the county's 23 school districts, private schools, early learning community, and Community College District as they work to mitigate the evolving impact of COVID-19 in the Bay Area. Today's announcement of the County's two declarations of local emergencies will help the County step up those efforts.

Yesterday, County Manager Mike Callagy proclaimed a local emergency in San Mateo County, and County Health Officer Scott Morrow declared a local health emergency. The Board of Supervisors will ratify both documents at its March 10 regular meeting. The declarations, which are part of the County's COVID-19 response efforts, may help make the County eligible for certain state and federal financial and technical resources. Several other Bay Area counties have made similar proclamations.

While the declarations may help the County in its prevention and planning efforts, they do not represent a change in direction of how schools will operate at this time. Schools will continue to follow recommended hygiene and health prevention measures. For example, school campuses will remain vigilant in cleaning common areas such as bathrooms, water faucets, classrooms, playground equipment, and cafeterias to minimize the spread of germs. Staff and students who are sick will be encouraged to stay home. Schools will remind students and staff to wash their hands often, avoid touching their faces with unwashed hands, and cover their sneezes and coughs.

If San Mateo County Health releases additional or new guidance for schools, the County Office of Education will help schools and educators adopt new practices and communicate with families and staff.

"Even though the risk of a COVID-19 outbreak is currently low, we are grateful the County of San Mateo is taking this important step to increase its prevention and planning efforts. We turn to San Mateo County Health for guidance and assistance in helping us support schools, so we are pleased they may have more resources to do this important work," commented San Mateo County Superintendent of Schools Nancy Magee.

The County Office of Education provides schools with communication, prevention, planning, and other support; coordinates school district planning efforts; and maintains a website with resources for educators and families.

The San Mateo County Office of Education is committed to ensuring excellence and equity in education by inspiring students, investing in teachers, invigorating leaders, and involving communities.