

August 5, 2020

Dear Live Oak Families and Friends,

The 20/21 school year will be a great! It is the first time we are opening under distance learning and we are celebrating our 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of existence. Again, gratitude to our founding families as none of this could be made possible if not for their vision to bring a Waldorf Inspired public school to Petaluma.

The Live Oak teachers will be returning to work on August 10 for our annual weeklong in-service. We will be busy making preparations for the 20/21 school year which starts on Monday, August 17.

**Topics of Interest:**

**Chromebooks:** Due to a limited number of Chromebooks that Live Oak currently owns, we respectfully ask families to please use your personal devices and only request one if truly in need. Our number of devices is limited to about one for every 3 students. Another class set is on order that we expect to have them in September. If you need a device, please sign up at [Chromebook Sign-up](#). The pick-up date for Chromebooks is Wednesday August 12.

**Distance Learning:** Many of you are wondering about distance learning being offered all year. Yes, we are planning to offer distance learning for students all year. Right now, it is not an option that you can select since we are starting with distance learning school wide. There is a link on our website that has the 20/21 Distance Learning Schedule Overview. You can check it out [here](#). Specific class schedules will be coming by the end of next week.

**Phase in Approach:** We are committing to distance learning for the first 6 weeks, up to Friday October 2, 2020. We will remain with Distance Learning as long as Sonoma County stays on the State watchlist. Once we have 14 days off the watch list, then we are anticipating a transition into our next phase of learning, a hybrid model. We plan to give families at least two weeks' notice before we phase into a hybrid model approach.

**Attendance:** Much like we are used to under in-person school, teachers will be taking attendance at the beginning of each school day. Attendance will be based on student participation. If the student is present and attends the school day then they will be marked as present. If your student has zero communication with their teacher on any given day including, Zoom, emails, phone chat, additional support time, anything related to schoolwork, please call the office to report them absent, just like you would during in-person instruction. This is very important because school is compulsory, and the expectation is that learning will happen.

### **Special Education:**

RSP: All Special Education students who have qualifying services will continue to receive support from their classroom teacher and our RSP Specialist, Ms. Karen. She will be in touch regarding scheduling and specifics.

Speech: Our wonderful speech therapist, Melanie Beardsley will unfortunately not be returning to Live Oak. We wish her nothing but the best in her future work with students. Please help me welcome in our new Speech Therapist, **Morgan Martin**. Once the year starts, Morgan will be in touch with the families whom she will be supporting.

Psychologist: Yes, another change here! Melissa Benson was an amazing school psychologist who made some personal decisions during this time that unfortunately did not allow her to continue working in her current capacity. All the schools she supported will feel her loss. Our new school psychologist will be **Christine Rubio**. Welcome Christine!

Nurse: Another change to Live Oak is in the position of school nurse. Jaime Kelly was a phenomenal nurse for us last year. Although we were just one of many schools she supported, we always felt so taken care of by her expertise in the field of student health. Our new nurse is **Dana Rodriguez** and she will have a difficult task of supporting at least 3-4 schools in Petaluma. My heart goes out to the difficult job school nurses have especially since my maternal grandmother was a school nurse!

**Working Groups:** A number of parents have stepped forward to participate in the Live Oak Charter working groups. The five groups are: Communications, Distance Learning, Social Engagement, Campus and Community Safety, and Child Care. The purpose of these groups is to focus on helping solve challenges during the time of COVID that we are facing as a community. Many thanks and appreciations go to everyone who has a hand in the working groups endeavor!

**New School Secretary:** We have concluded our new secretary search. We had excellent candidates and appreciate everyone who expressed interest in this position. Please help me welcome **Dori King** as our new secretary! Dori has a 16-year tenure with Live Oak Charter in varying capacities such as parent, volunteer, Aide, and Academic Coaching Team (ACT) member. Although we are truly saddened by Katie Louderback's departure, we are excited that Dori has accepted our offer and we can't wait for her to start. Welcome Dori!

In the upcoming weeks, we will be coordinating materials pick up and publishing the specific grade level class schedules. For planning purposes, be sure to check out our distance learning schedule overview on our webpage. The link can be found [here](#).

Thank you,

Justin Tomola  
Director