COVID-19 Operations Written Report

Local Educational Agency (LEA) Name | Contact Name and Title | Email and Phone | Date of Adoption
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HTLA                                 | Mathew McClenahan, Principal | mr.mcclenahan@ht-la.org; 818-609-2680 | Board Approved June 9, 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.

On March 13th, with nearly all other Los Angeles schools, HTLA closed its school and began transitioning to distance learning.

As HTLA designed its COVID-19 response, school administrators considered the many barriers to distance learning facing their highest need students and parents. HTLA’s LAUSD Charter School Division oversight visit was scheduled for Wednesday, March 11. When that ended on the afternoon of the 11th, we began our plans in earnest.

On the day of school closure, March 13, please note that all student already had their tablet computers with them. We had previously surveyed students and families to determine their internet access. We found that only a handful of families did not have reliable access to the internet. In a few cases, after the school closure there was a delay in getting the families internet access and the school paid for short-term access.

As a school we transitioned to using only MS Teams as our distance learning platform. As several teachers had been using Google Classroom or Moodle as their primary platform so they had to transfer some of their documents and change some of their procedures.

Our initial choice was to shrink the amount of synchronous live video group chats. We set up a schedule where all core academic courses met twice a week synchronously. All other work for classes was done asynchronously. Fridays are reserved for electives, individualized tutoring sessions with teachers or other opportunities for students to interact such as a guided yoga class.

In an effort to provide all students including students with special needs access to the general education curriculum and tools for success both at HTLA and beyond, we offer resource support virtually. Students received support virtually as indicated in their IEP through Zoom. The sessions focus on assisting students with in-class and homework assignments. We are offering speech and counseling, OT, and VI services virtually as well. We have also arranged and held virtual IEP meetings through ZOOM.

Our most difficult choice was in the area on non-core, or elective, courses. We started our program with core (graduation requirement) classes then slowly added electives so as not to overwhelm the students.

Provide a description of how the LEA is meeting the needs of its English learners, foster youth and low-income students.
Every child that attends HTLA MS has a school issued tablet computer they are able to use in class and take home. We have also provided our students with access to resources to help them get access to the internet so they can complete their distance learning virtually. In addition to synchronous Teams classes, our teachers via email for targeted support or tutoring.

Attendance was taken during synchronous video classes. Students who were not signed into class received a phone call from our school support team. Progress checks were completed every week by teachers and reviewed by our school counselor to determine the engagement level of each student and if the student was struggling with accessing the curriculum, the reason why. This allowed our support team to reach out to families to provide support as needed.

We have provided our English Language Learners with integrated ELA support in our online classes with audio versions of books where needed. We have continued to offer our designated ELD supports through our ELD class.

To further support English Learner, foster youth, and low-income students, we have ensured that families have access to information in multiple languages for distance learning and have also sought their input in how to best communicate with them and for feedback on our distance learning program. Staff meetings took place twice per week to connect on students' social-emotional needs and we have structures in place where if any staff member reports that a student is experiencing difficulty with anxiety or depression, we help the family access more care.

Additionally, we set up our daily schedule to resemble the daily routines that students have when they are physically in the classroom in order to mirror the school day they would normally have. We have provided families with resources where they can access free meals through the Grab and Go program as well as given them access to childcare resources.

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

HTLA modified its website to serve as a virtual learning hub with all resources that our students and families need to access distance learning. All classes were offered using the MS Teams suite students already had access to using their school email on their school devices. Live session courses were included in each student’s calendar. Additionally, schedules and assignments were posted weekly on our school website and Moodle.

Our teachers adapted their already high-quality end of Spring Semester plans to the distance learning environment. The content of our classes followed our historically rigorous program. This included essays, reading novels and assessments.

However, one of major accomplishments was how we modified our Presentations of Learning to the distance learning. We tasked our ELA teachers with creating and supporting individual presentations from every student relating the COVID-19 pandemic to their expectation of what the school year was going to be.

Our history department modified their typically live projects to the distance learning environment. In particular, the English and History departments completed their co-curricular Dinner Party project where students portrayed historical or literary characters in conversation.

Teachers and staff met for virtual professional development twice per week until the end of the traditional school year. As the structure of our learning environment was created, teachers researched their own tools to optimize their teaching, and then shared their resources in collaborative teams. Teachers introduced each other to new digital learning platforms, and updated the virtual learning hub with new resources as they were optimized for our use.

For families that needed tech support, we created a support hub for tech questions and utilized that regularly when needed so our technology team can work with families to address tech issues.

Provide a description of the steps that have been taken by the LEA to provide school meals while maintaining social distancing practices.
HTLA is on a co-located campus. Birmingham HS offered Grab-and-Go food services. This food was distributed literally in the same parking lot we use. Other LAUSD and charter schools around the Valley offered Grab and Go food services. HTLA advertised all of the LAUSD and charter grab and go centers multiple times to our families, so they are aware that food services are available for their families.

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

HTLA had no students on campus after March 13.

California Department of Education
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