

COVID-19 Operations Written Report

Local Educational Agency (LEA) Name	Contact Name and Title	Email and Phone	Date of Adoption
Watts Learning Center - Charter Middle School	Miguel Gamboa, Director	mgamboa@wlccms.org 323.565.4800	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.

Watts Learning Center - Charter Middle School provides world-class education to inner-city students from low-income families to help them realize their full academic potential and to create a culture of learning in which all stakeholders-students, parents or guardians, faculty, and staff have clearly defined roles and expectations.

On March 4, 2020, Governor Gavin Newsom declared a [State of Emergency](#) to help the state prepare for broader spread of COVID-19. This prompted the Administrative Team at Watts Learning Center Elementary and Middle Charter Schools to initiate the planning for school closure, development of a **Distance Learning Plan**; identify **Professional Development Needs** for our teachers; Implement a **Technology Needs Assessment**; and **identity/provide resources** to support students and families. This planning process was then discussed at the March 12th Governing Board meeting.

On March 10-11, **Interim Assessments** using Illuminate for all students in ELA and Mathematics were administered to provide baseline student achievement performance data. Friday, March 13th was the last day of site-based instruction.

Our Instructional Aides conducted a **technology needs assessment**, by contacting all families by phone to assess technology device needs, internet, food, shelter, and other resources that were essential to families.

- Initial Pickup took place: March 16-20th
- Pick-up was available March 23 – April 3.

- Additional delivery took place from April 12-May 8th.
- By May 8th approximately 50% of students had checked out a Chromebook.

Families were asked to complete the Technology Device Loan Agreement, upon receiving a Chromebook for Distance learning. 100% of students were provided with a school-issued Chromebook. Information on where to obtain [free internet service](#) was disseminated to families and uploaded to our school's website. Our school's administration has received positive parent feedback on the prompt implementation of Distance Learning and dissemination of Chromebooks. A series of "how-to" videos were created in English and Spanish on accessing Google Classroom, Zoom and web-based applications, for parents and students.

On March 12-13, Watts Learning Center – Charter Middle School provided its teachers and Instructional Assistants with extensive **professional development** training on setting up and utilizing Google Classrooms as part of Distance Learning; and implementing engaging Zoom meetings which continued during school closure. A team of teachers and staff were trained by our Tech Specialist to provide tech support for teachers, students and parents, as needed.

The development of the **Distance Learning Plan** included synchronous and asynchronous instruction, student/parent and staff expectations and a shift in the roles and responsibilities of our staff to support the needs of our students. Teachers collaborated in grade level and content area teams to develop relevant and accessible assignments for their students.

Each content area was assigned a specific day of the week:

- Monday: Science
- Tuesday: Math
- Wednesday: ELA
- Thursday: History/Social Studies
- Friday: Electives

Teachers utilized Zoom and Google Classroom to provide small group instruction. On Sunday night, students were provided a suggested schedule to ensure they would complete their tasks in a timely manner. By March 16th Distance Learning via Google Classroom was initiated.

Every morning the Principal and Assistant Principal led a staff-wide morning huddle aimed at developing connections among school staff and in order to maintain a continuity of learning. An additional huddle took place each afternoon led by teachers, with a focus to stay connected on student wellness, and discuss student/family needs. This practice was essential in creating a sense of comradery and high expectations among all staff, during challenging times.

By March 27th, 100% of our students accessed distance learning.

Throughout distance learning, our staff communicated with students/families on a regular basis via phone calls, Parent Square, and text messaging. Instructional Aides were assigned to specific classes and required to check-in daily and obtain insight and information on opportunities to support families. Vulnerable families were provided with food/meals financial support, and virtual one-on-one tutoring sessions to ensure children were not being heavily impacted.

The transition to Distance Learning required the following **modifications** to select course offerings:

- Music (Choir), Art were offered via asynchronous instruction (pre-recorded videos)
- Physical Education included via asynchronous instruction (pre-recorded videos)
- Reading Intervention: via asynchronous instruction (pre-recorded videos)
- No courses were discontinued

Watts Learning Center – Charter Middle School distance learning implemented both asynchronous and synchronous modes of instruction.

The **major impact of school closure** on our **students** was stressful, isolating, and disengaging. These sentiments were shared by students during check-ins with school staff, and educators. **Parents** informed us that the impact of distance learning (school closure) has been challenging, stressful, in addition to job and food insecurity. Parents informed us, they were very appreciative of the ongoing communication between school-and-home and the plethora of resources that were provided to them.

For **Students with Disabilities (SWD)**: A letter was issued to all families with Students with Disabilities via U.S. Mail and electronically providing the information on the transition to Distance Learning as a result of COVID19 School Closure and the methods by which the school would continue to deliver high quality educational opportunities to SWD though other options, such as distance learning and align its program to the extent practical to Students with Disabilities, including but not limited to, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (“Section 504”), Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (“ADA”), and the IDEA. The Educational Specialist provided push-in and pull-out during General Education Zoom sessions and consulted and collaborated with general education teachers to provide support. The Educational Specialists and Resource Teams held designated resource lab times using Google Hangout and Zoom. SWD were provided modifications/accommodations based on their IEP. Additional related service providers were provided in a virtual setting (Zoom) to the extent possible. For specifically identified students, the resource team planned home visits to support students with technology needs, clarifications for assignments, and time management practices to help students create sustainable working schedules. For students' end of year/exit IEP, the educational specialist and resource team planned and completed a series

of over-the-phone IEPs and followed the standard IEP protocols. To finalize the IEPs, the resource team met with parents off-site to review and sign the final draft of the IEP.

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

Approximately 95% of students at Watts Learning Center - Charter Middle School are Unduplicated Pupils (Low Income, English Learner, Foster Youth). The following is a description of the services that were provided for our Unduplicated Pupils (UP).

For **English Learners**: All ELs received integrated English Language Development (ELD) by their teacher, and designated ELD by the ELD Teacher via Zoom and Google Classroom. Teachers and Instructional Aides provided academic support/intervention via small group and one-on-one instruction. The Parent Coordinator and ELD Teacher provided all Unduplicated Pupils with necessary instructional materials to ensure student participation during distance learning. Bilingual staff communicated with families of English Learners to provide them with updates on their child's academic progress; provide strategies to support their child at home during distance learning and to answer any questions.

The Assistant Principal serves as the **Foster Youth** and Homeless Liaison and conducted check-ins on a regular basis and ensured they were provided with a Chromebook, access to internet service, meals, groceries and social-emotional support. In addition, the foster youth liaison at LACOE was contacted to ensure community resources were provided to our foster youth.

For **Low-income**: The parent Coordinator and support staff conducted weekly welfare check-ins with families and provided them with community resources. Resources provided include but are not limited to Wi-Fi Hotspot, Food Bank locations, free daily Grab and Go meals, funds for groceries/food, assistance with the Pandemic EBT application, including a parent hotline accessible 24/7.

Members of our staff conducted home visits for at-risk, vulnerable students who are absent, did not participate in distance learning, and/or home environment is not conducive to learning. Assigned key staff were tasked with conducting daily check-ins with vulnerable student groups on their academic and emotional well-being.

All Unduplicated Pupils received academic support/intervention from the Reading and Math Intervention Specialist via Google Classroom, whose focus was on vulnerable student groups and students who struggled academically. Teachers and Instructional Aides also provided small group instruction and support during office hours. Our students also had access to after-school Intervention. **Social/emotional support** was provided by the school support staff and counselor. A Google Parent Classroom was created to provide

community resources and so they can access their child's Google Classroom. ELAC and Parent workshops continued to take place during Distance Learning.

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

Watts Learning Center - Charter Middle School implemented the following curriculum through *synchronous and asynchronous* modes of instruction using [Google Classroom](#) as the learning platform. Zoom meetings were used for teaching and academic tutoring. Teachers created assignments on Google Classroom and set guidelines for submitting assignments. Students received daily schedules from teachers with deadlines. Google Classroom marks completed assignments with a timestamp indicating when the assignment was completed.

As a school that has implemented a 1:1 student to device ratio, most of the web-based/online supplemental programs were already in use as part of our educational program. Our core curriculum was also available digitally. The following includes the delivery of high quality Distance Learning opportunities that was provided to our students:

- **Core curricular and Supplemental Programs:** Open Up (Math), Health, English 3D, [Achieve 3000](#),
- **Attendance:** was taken daily by teacher using the attendance tracker
- **Go Guardian** was used to monitor student online activity and to assist multiple students at the same time.
- Weekly agendas – created by teachers and uploaded to Google Classroom that provide students with access to all necessary links to assignments for the week.

The percentage of students that participated regularly in Distance learning by grade level are as follows:

- 6th grade: 89%
- 7th grade: 86%
- 8th grade: 93%

Students were tasked with a daily mental wellness challenge that was intended to promote relaxation and mindfulness with activities that included positive thinking and relaxing music.

Academic support/intervention Teachers provided academic support during office hours on a daily basis via Google Classroom and Zoom meetings. Instructional Aides provided specialized academic support for students who struggled academically.

Social/emotional support was provided by the school support staff and counselor. A Google Parent Classroom was created to provide community resources and so they can access their child's Google Classroom. 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](#).

Training on accessing Google Classroom and web-based resources were provided to parents and students in English and Spanish. Our Director hosted Coffee with the Principal meetings in a virtual setting to provide updates on Distance Learning and served as a venue for parents to provide input and feedback on our program. As stated earlier, our Support Staff conducted weekly check-ins with families, especially for those students who did not actively participate and/or had missing assignments. Updates on Distance Learning and resources were sent to parents/families via [Parent Square](#). The Parent Coordinator was instrumental in bridging gaps during distance learning, and led informational sessions with families to explain the learning platforms and how to access daily student assignments. The daily phone calls made to families serve as an additional opportunity to provide support for families and increase student participation in Distance Learning.

Our school hosted two virtual Council Circles based on Restorative Justice – Center for Council) where parents shared with staff in a group setting the challenges they have faced and accomplishments during the pandemic. The Council Circles generated high parent participation and engagement. 99% of parents surveyed were satisfied with our school's seamless transition to distance learning and the methods and frequency by which our staff has communicated with families.

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. Distance Learning based as needs and challenges were identified by stakeholders that include but are not limited to recorded sessions, extended deadlines to complete assignments, and distributions of materials detailing community resources.

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

Watts Learning Center - Charter Middle School did not provide meals. However, the Dymally High School Campus which is co-located at the same site with Watts Learning Center – Charter Middle School, provided daily "Grab and Go" breakfast and lunch meals, via curbside pick-up, in a non-congregate setting, through a CDE waiver of the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP). Our school also provided families with a list of [Los Angeles County Charter Schools and LAUSD Schools](#) that distributed free "Grab and Go," meals, and

this information was on our school's [COVID-19 Resources webpage](#). Information on location, frequency, days and hours of operation were also provided on these links.

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

Watts Learning Center - Charter Middle 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](#) 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.