

PUSD Secondary Schools Hybrid/In-Person or Distance Learning Choice Survey Form

From: no-replies@piedmont.k12.ca.us

To: hstitan@yahoo.com

Date: Thursday, November 19, 2020, 01:41 PM PST

A Message from Piedmont Unified School District

PHS, MHS, and PMS Families,

We are currently in the process of developing the PHS/MHS/PMS teacher and student placement models in the hope that we are permitted to return to a hybrid/in-person learning model at some point by the Alameda County Public Health Department.

This [form](#) serves as your official request for either hybrid or distance learning option. The choice you are making is for the second semester. There may be some very limited opportunities for families to switch between hybrid and distance learning, at natural transition points in the school calendar if space allows. It is not advisable to make a choice that is dependent on the ability to switch between models as those requests to change are unlikely to occur.

You will need to fill out this [form](#) separately for each middle and/or high school child in your family.

Your response is due no later than **Monday, November 30th**. If we do not receive a response, your child will remain in distance learning.

Learning Model Descriptions

We are currently developing our learning model structures. Below are brief descriptions of both Hybrid/In-Person and Distance Learning models.

Hybrid/In-Person Learning Model

- 6-12 In-Person Teaching/Learning

Students would return to campus part-time in either a Cohort A or Cohort B model with teachers presenting live and in-person from their classrooms. You can review the Hybrid/In-Person Learning Model Bell Schedule [here](#):

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1yw9CWhlrN7euOnyl77LbIK8blc_LXzu2aNrO4u0dpg/edit?usp=sharing

- 6-12 Remote Teacher Section Participant

There may be a scenario where the teacher is teaching remotely (due to health considerations/needs) and in-person students participate through Google Meet much as they would from home, but under the direction of a staff member at school.

Distance Learning Models (models TBD based on student choice and continued planning with staff):

- 6-12 "Virtual Academy" Classes

Students in a 6th-12th grade "virtual academy" course would receive the bulk of instruction in a variety of courses using an Edgenuity product "Courseware". These courses are standards-based, UC/CSU A-G approved, and also NCAA compliant. The courses can be customized to align content topics to match the syllabus topics of traditional PHS/MHS/PMS courses.

Students would be supported daily by certificated educators to monitor progress, ensure active note-taking and reflection, unlock and grade assessments/projects, and support socio-emotional needs. With a variety of course needs, the facilitating teacher may not be an expert in the course materials, so as an additional support, course specific live tutors are available on the platform.

- 6-12 "Virtual Section"

With students taking a variety of classes and increased specialization required to teach those courses at the secondary level, the completely "virtual section" is not likely a frequently used option, but could be an option for common

courses. If the numbers of 100% remote students reached a level sufficient to hold a section, say above 20 students, then PHS/PMS could offer a virtual section for that course. A "virtual section" 6th-12th would be rostered and placed in the master schedule, following the same bell schedule as the schools.

Additional Information

Students on the hybrid schedule will not be able to attend in person if they are exhibiting any symptoms consistent with COVID-19. If symptoms manifest during the school day, parents will be contacted to pick children up immediately. Students with persistent symptoms lasting longer than five school days will be provided with work by their teacher. Students also will be monitored by a staff member to support their progress during the time of absence lasting more than five school days.

Based on the individual decisions of staff and families, there is the possibility of a change of teacher assignment and cohort assignment at the beginning of the second semester. Every effort will be made to limit the number of changes; however, it is unavoidable that there will be some changes. Continuity with teachers and your student's assigned courses/teachers are important; however, we cannot prioritize individual requests over the needs of many. We also will be unable to share the plans of individual teachers as assignments will continue to evolve as we learn about our faculty's decisions based on their personal and family situations.

Timeline

PUSD's goal is to have secondary students return to a hybrid/in-person learning model at the beginning of the 2nd semester (Jan. 20th). This is entirely dependent on what is permissible by the Alameda County Public Health Department. If Alameda County is still in the purple tier at that date, we will not be permitted to begin a hybrid/in-person learning model on January 20, 2021.

For families who do not respond, their child(ren) will remain in Distance Learning. **Your response is due no later than Monday, November 30th.**

If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to your site principal.

Sincerely,

Randall Booker, Superintendent

Please do not reply to this message IF it has been sent from the following email address: no-replies@piedmont.k12.ca.us

This is an unmonitored address, and replies to this email are not read.

However, if this message has been sent from an individual or group PUSD email address, your reply will be delivered to that email account.

If you do not wish to receive these emails, please log in to your portal account at <https://piedmontca.infinitecampus.org/campus/portal/piedmont.jsp?> and update your contact preferences by removing "General".

CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE: This electronic mail transmission falls within the scope of the Electronic Communication Privacy Act, 18 USCA 2510 and may contain privileged and/or confidential information only for use by the intended recipient. DO NOT forward without express permission of original sender. Any use, distribution, copying or disclosure by any person, other than the intended recipient is strictly prohibited and may be subject to civil action and /or criminal penalties. If you have received this transmission in error, please notify the sender by reply e-mail or by telephone and delete this transmission.

Learning Environment Choice

I would like my student to participate in. *

- ☐ Distance Learning (a mix of a Virtual Academy program using self-paced curriculum with an advisory period everyday (Edgenuity), with the potential to participate as a remote participant in some classes (virtual section or with teachers that teach a remote teacher section), or with potentially a section that is completely composed of other DL students. Each DL student's schedule will be unique depending upon their grade, current class section and staffing.
- ☒ Hybrid/In-person

Back

Next

I was going to choose Hybrid for my daughter. However I noticed that distance learning had been converted to a Virtual Academy with Edgenuity.com based out of Scottsdale, AZ.

- 1) What problem was the Superintendent trying to solve for?
- 2) How does this change solve that problem?
- 3) Did the Superintendent have reason to believe this educational paradigm was equivalent to what we have now?
- 4) Was Edgenuity compared and contrasted with other remote educational vendors?
- 5) Who recommended Edgenuity to the Superintendent?
- 6) Were school board members aware of this change? Did they approve of it?
- 7) Was the Brown Act followed?

Students would be supported daily by certificated educators to monitor progress, ensure active note-taking and reflection, unlock and grade assessments/projects, and support socio-emotional needs. With a variety of course needs, the facilitating teacher may not be an expert in the course materials, so as an additional support, course specific live tutors are available on the platform.

The Search function appears to be working. I attended these meetings on Distance Learning vs In-Person instruction in 2020. No school board meetings on this topic are searchable prior to 2020.

Secure



760 Magnolia Avenue • Piedmont, CA 94611 • 510.594.2600

Piedmont City USD Meetings

Distance Learning

Search

10/14/2020 7:00 PM REGULAR SCHOOL BOARD MEETING

10/6/2020 6:00 PM SPECIAL SCHOOL BOARD MEETING

9/23/2020 7:00 PM REGULAR BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING

9/9/2020 6:00 PM REGULAR BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING

8/26/2020 7:00 PM REGULAR BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING

8/5/2020 5:00 PM SPECIAL SCHOOL BOARD MEETING

7/29/2020 5:00 PM SPECIAL SCHOOL

Welcome to the Piedmont Unified School District Agenda On-Line Website
Click on the Meeting Date on the



Right Side of the Page

Mission Statement

We are committed to cultivate a learning community where students are engaged in their learning, strive for excellence, and are supported to achieve to their potential

Board of Education Members

Amal Smith, President

Cory Smegal, Vice President

Andrea Swenson

Sarah Pearson

Megan Pillsbury

Agenda Meeting Information

Regular Board of Education meetings listed below are held on the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month, unless otherwise noted, and are held in the Council Chambers of the City Hall, 120 Vista Avenue, Piedmont, beginning at 7:00 p.m.

2020-21 Meeting Dates

- FOR THE DURATION OF THE COVID-19 PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS, Regular School Board meetings will be held on Zoom and broadcast on KCOM. Information on viewing and participating in meetings can be found in the table below.

There will be no Regular Board of Education meetings in July

August 12, 2020
 August 26, 2020
 September 9, 2020
 September 23, 2020
 October 14, 2020
 October 28, 2020
 November 10, 2020* - Tuesday Meeting
 December 9, 2020 - **CHANGED TO DECEMBER 15th**
 January 13, 2021
 January 27, 2021
 February 10, 2021
 February 24, 2021
 March 10, 2021
 March 24, 2021
 April 6, 2021** - First Tuesday of Month
 April 28, 2021
 May 12, 2021
 May 26, 2021
 June 9, 2021
 June 23, 2021

* Tuesday Meeting Due to Veteran's Day on 11/11

** First Tuesday of the Month Due to Spring Break Week

BOARD
MEETING

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7/16/2020
5:00 PM

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Board Agenda Material

(in compliance with Senate Bill 343)

Video streaming can be accessed at www.piedmont.k12.ca.us Go to "Board of Education" link and scroll down to "Video Streaming". Click on meeting of your choice. Agenda packets are available for viewing Friday evenings prior to a Board meeting.

Copies of the agenda are posted at all school sites and the District Office for public viewing.

Public Comment

Individual speakers are asked to limit their comments for any item on the agenda to not more than three minutes in order to allow everyone who wishes to speak the opportunity to do so. Groups are asked to limit comments to a total of ten minutes.

ADA Assistance

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the Superintendent's Office at (510) 594-2614. Notification by Monday noon preceding the meeting will enable the District to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to this meeting.

6/24/2020
7:00 PM

REGULAR
MEETING

4/1/2020
7:00 PM

SPECIAL
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MEETING

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I listened to the meetings on Distance Learning in their entirety and never heard discussion about Virtual Academies or Edgenuity.

A quick search using those keywords confirms they were not disclosed as Agenda items.

I did not check each set of minutes of the school board meetings.

Was Edgenuity discussed in the Reopening Task Force meetings that had no publicly disclosed deliverables?

School board members did not approve this in a public school board meeting.

agendaonline

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Piedmont Unified School District

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Piedmont City
USD Meetings

Academy

Search

No meetings found.



Piedmont Unified School District

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Piedmont City USD Meetings

Edgenuity

Search

No meetings found.

PUSD to hold community forum after parent backlash over upper school plan

Exedra Staff | November 20, 2020



Julie Reichle

Piedmont Middle School

Concerns around a proposed plan for reopening Piedmont Middle School, Piedmont High School, and Millennium High School forced the school district on Friday to close a parent survey sent out Thursday afternoon and convene a special community forum the week after the Thanksgiving break.

Parents of middle and high school students had responded with puzzlement and outrage to an emailed survey they received Thursday that further muddled the waters regarding plans for reopening middle and high school in January. At issue was the apparent outsourcing of distance learning to a third party vendor (Edgenuity) and a reduction of instruction time even in a hybrid model. The timing and deadline of the survey — requiring responses by Nov. 30 — also caused consternation.

“The choices offered by the survey weren’t in keeping with the high academic standards that we expect from the district, and represent a loss in quality and quantity of instruction with respect to our current distance learning model,” said Natalia Ferretti, a parent of twins in the middle school. Comments on a popular Facebook page for Piedmont parents and emails sent to the school board and PUSD administration echoed this sentiment.

On Friday afternoon, the district backtracked. “I realize that parents need more information to make the decision that is best for your families. Instead of moving forward with the survey form, I have closed it,” Superintendent Randy Booker said in an email to families. “In consultation with the PUSD School Board, I and my admin team are developing a community forum to be held the week of November 30. After we have this forum, we will provide more detailed information about your options and will reopen the survey.”

Plans to bring back small cohorts of acute learners (students who need in-person support or other services they can’t get in distance learning) at the middle and high schools have also been affected by the county’s move back to the most restrictive purple tier. In a message to middle school families Friday, Principal Ryan Fletcher said, “Piedmont Middle School will not be bringing any groups of students back to campus before December 8th at the earliest.”

Whether or not public schools in Alameda County will be allowed to reopen in January will depend on whether or not the county can contain COVID cases and move out of the purple tier.

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<https://www.facebook.com/groups/piedmontfamilies/permalink/511021976524408>

School staff, Supt. to host community meeting on reopening plans for PHS, MHS & PMS

By Jay Russell

Superintendent Randy Booker sent out an email Monday evening announcing a town hall meeting will be held prior to Winter Break to address secondary school parents' questions and give more information about school reopening. The meeting will be held through Zoom with Superintendent Booker, and secondary school principals. The school district has not confirmed the date and time, but it will likely take place the week of December 14.

Demand for a public forum resulted largely from a survey sent out by Booker to parents of students in grades 6-12 asking for in-person or distance learning preference. With little previous public discussion, the survey asked parents that chose Distance Learning to sign off on a move to bring in an independent company, Edgenuity.

What troubled many parents was that the Edgenuity Virtual Academy was only mentioned after starting the survey. Parents that only read the email and didn't get deep into the survey would not know any detail about the Edgenuity online program.

At least one school board member acknowledged that it was an error to spring the implementation of Edgenuity onto parents in the survey. The district will not use Edgenuity for 100 percent distance learning. If families and counselors want, on a case-by-case basis individual students can use the platform. Due to parents' feedback, Booker closed the survey and now has called for a town hall-style public meeting prior to reissuing a new survey.

In the initial survey it was revealed that distance learners would "receive the bulk of instruction in a variety of courses using an Edgenuity product 'Courseware.'" For parents, one of the troubling portions of the survey included this description: "With a variety of course needs, the facilitation teacher may not be an expert in the course materials, so as an additional support,

course specific live tutors are available on the platform."

"I was disheartened to see a move that put the quality of secondary student education in harm's way without public debate by the school board," said parent Hari Titan. "A major change to an online virtual academy typically is months in the making with an advisory board and multiple school board meetings. That did not happen this time. Instead, this major paradigm shift was buried deep in a survey given to secondary school parents."

The Edgenuity program is not planned to be discussed by administrators or board members in the Town Hall meeting.

An e-mail on December 1 by Booker stated, "Distance learning students will receive instruction by a certified teacher."

The public meeting will address progress on "teachers and staff identifying various learning models, including piloting cameras to support a 'concurrent classroom' model for our program," according to Booker.

In-person classes could utilize filmed sessions live-streamed to students either in the other cohort, in quarantine or choosing distance learning. Other school districts have implemented or plan to use class filming, however, privacy issues must be addressed.

As Alameda County currently is in the purple tier of COVID restrictions, in-person learning cannot begin until clearance is given by the Alameda County Public Health Department. Current restrictions require counties to move in the red tier before reopening schools. As of December 1, 52 of 58 of California's counties are in the purple tier, including 99.2 percent of the state's population.

On November 19, a statement from Piedmont School District stated, "PUSD's goal is to have secondary students return to a hybrid/in-person learning model at the beginning of the 2nd semester (January 20)."

Since November 19, Alameda County's COVID daily caseload has steadily increased.

Rally to reopen schools set for Saturday

By Jay Russell

Berkeley parents have organized a rally starting at 10 a.m. this Saturday, December 5, calling for Berkeley public schools to reopen. The peaceful event starts at MLK Park between Allston and Center.

Parents from Oakland and Piedmont are expected to join the rally.

The first hour is dedicated for families to make posters. Speeches start at 11:00 a.m., UCSF's Dr. Jeanne Noble will speak on the relative risks of COVID transmission in schools. At noon the group will march around the MLK Jr. Civic Center Park towards Berkeley City Hall.

Parents are calling for more transparency in regards to the negotiations with teachers. The group wants to ensure schools are ready to open when the time comes. Piedmont and Berkeley were the first school districts in Alameda County to attempt phased reopenings, both of which were eventually thwarted when the county was placed in the purple tier of COVID restrictions.

Parents in Oakland are planning a protest the following week December 12.

To sign a petition and for more information, see: www.busdparents.com or contact rally organizer Lei Levi at lei.levi@gmail.com

Thinking Outside The Classroom

SPEECH, INC. Theory of Mind

By Katie Pengilly

Today's political and social climate requires us to understand biases and misconceptions, and to consider how our experiences relative to others' experiences contribute to our beliefs. We are thinking about what unites us as opposed to what divides us. We are examining beliefs based on misinformation. We are discussing diversity and inclusion.

All of this requires what educators call Theory of Mind – the ability to understand another person's thinking.

Theory of mind is the understanding that other people have their own thoughts and motivations and desires. Psychologists describe it as attributing mental states to others. Theory of mind is what allows us to understand that we do not all share the same point of view. Through Theory of Mind we can see how a person's perspective affects how that person acts and feels, and we can adjust our behavior based on our knowledge of others' perspectives.

As children, we develop and integrate the important elements of Theory of Mind. First, one must understand wants/desires of oneself vs. others. Different people

want different things, and to get what they want people act in different ways. This leads to the understanding of personal motivations and preferences.

An additional element is understanding that other people have thoughts, and that those thoughts may be different than yours. This understanding is the basis for the knowledge that different people can have different beliefs about the same thing. A common test of this is "the band-aid test".

A child views a teacher emptying a band-aid box of its contents and filling it instead with chalk. When asked what the child's mother, who is in the other room, will think is in the box, a child with Theory of Mind will answer "band-aids" because she understands false beliefs based on lack of different knowledge.

The child without Theory of Mind will answer "chalk".

Another common example which many adults have experienced is speaking on the phone with a young child who does not have a fully developed Theory of Mind and asks the child what she is doing. The child says, "playing with this." That is, if someone has not seen something, they will need extra information to

understand.

Developmentally, children begin to think more deeply about others' thoughts and feelings at age 4-5, around the time when many children are entering the educational system. Prior to 4-5 years old, we as parents can introduce Theory of Mind through role play and pretend play, understanding character's perspectives in storybooks, and creating imaginative narratives.

After the age of 5, during the early school years, Theory of Mind continues to develop as kids move through school learning how to predict, infer as well as understand abstract language that requires Theory of Mind such as empathy, lying, sarcasm and humor. Increasingly abstract layers of Theory of Mind, which can be difficult into adulthood, include tuning into thoughts and feelings when others try to hide them.

For example, people are often are feeling emotions which are different from the ones they display. Skills in the area of Theory of Mind should be highlighted and sharpened throughout the lifespan.

Katie Pengilly is a Speech and Language Pathologist, and the owner of Speech, Inc., a pediatric private practice specializing in speech, language reading and writing. She can be reached at pengilly.katie@gmail.com. More information can be found at www.speechinc.com.

Piedmont Choirs Winter Concerts begin this weekend

The Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir's digital 2020-2021 concert season has begun. All digital performances are streamed on YouTube Premiere and will remain on PEBCC's YouTube channel after broadcast for continued viewing.

Don't miss a performance by subscribing to PEBCC's YouTube channel to receive concert notifications and reminders: www.youtube.com/PiedmontChoirs.

Celebrate the start of a new year with the Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir family. From the youngest Training Department musicians to the mature and seasoned performances of Concert Choir and Ensemble, this performance connects all of the ensembles in an inspiring showcase of the progressive musical growth and artistry of our singers.

Saturday, December 5 – 4 p.m.
Kinder & Training Dept. Winter Recital

YouTube Premiere

Experience the budding artistry and infectious joy of our youngest singers in this family-friendly recital! The program features virtual choir performances from our six Kinder and Training Department ensembles.

Saturday, December 12 – 4 pm
Candlelight Concert

YouTube Premiere

As the winter solstice approaches, celebrate the season with a program of choral treasures from our four most advanced performing choirs. This varied international program features a special digital collaboration with renowned children's



The YouTube premiere of the Kinder & Training Dept. Winter Recital will be on Saturday, December 5 at 4 p.m.



The YouTube premiere of the Candlelight Concert will be on Saturday, December 12 at 4 p.m.

choir Vox Aurea from Finland alongside music from the Dominican Republic, England, Hungary, and Estonia.

Because of the generosity of our patrons, PEBCC is able to offer its 2020-2021 Discovering Our Voices virtual concert season free to the public via You-

Tube Premiere. Your donation in any amount toward our normal ticket prices significantly offsets our production costs for our season and keeps the choir thriving during this time.

Please consider donating the price of a concert ticket to the Choirs this holiday season. piedmontchoirs.org/support