

BLOSSOM VALLEY TOWN HALL MEETING (May 15, 2020)

Q1: How has Distance Learning impacted your family? What has worked, hasn't worked?

- Made me realize I need to be a mom, not a teacher...have had to rely on others to help, hard on my kinder, who is naturally an introvert, and has regressed in that area, losing social skills that were developing...I don't let my kids be on devices for a lot of time already, and this isn't working for them...material is too easy at this point
- Both husband and I are essential workers, I had to take family leave, but it runs out next month...My son likes the assignments, likes the Zoom meetings and is completing his work, but there is no one to be with him when I have to go back to work
- Working for time being, but child with OCD and sensory issues, mean it won't work forever, so much screen time aggravates her challenges
- Loss of social interaction is felt deeply
- For indep. learners, DL works OK
- Students on IEPs aren't getting the same level of service as face to face
- If DL continues, parents would like to see more of teachers teaching
- Working for some, but not well, and not for long term
- Want some return to normalcy
- Difficult to monitor students, redirect, support at a distance, kids don't always respond the same way to parents
- Playlist only taking about an hour for a lot of kids, leaves a lot of extra time to fill
- Don't want kids at home, and don't want DL, long term
- Not much interaction between kids leads to distraction, lack of focus
- Parents unsure about where kids are at in terms of academic progress, and thus not sure how to help them
- Can do DL for now, recognize that it is what we can do for now, but not something long term
- Feel like video showing happy kids, is propaganda, not a reflection of reality
- Feel like district is doing the bare minimum
- Not working for the kids, they are not learning, maybe maintaining
- As DL continues, fewer and fewer kids are showing up, including small group opportunities

- Kids enthusiasm is waning, just maintaining what they already learned, but not really learning new things
- Teachers are trying really hard, but education is mostly coming from apps
- Lack of competition with peers is impacting student motivation
- Teachers have the skills to motivate kids in ways that parents don't..."magic powers"
- Missing hands on activities, teamwork that can't be replicated in DL
- Going to school is taking on a negative connotation

Q2: How important is child care for you?

- Santee is also offering child care
- If DL continues, I have to work,
- Will not send my child to school with a mask
- Do we have to follow CDC or State guidelines, who is calling the shots?
- Don't know what will be needed until we know what district plan is
- A lot of stay at home parents, so child care is not a big concern
- Many employers are being flexible, but unsure if this will last
- Some parents not working now, but hope they soon will be
- Some will need full day schedule if employers don't adopt a flexible schedule long term
- Families have built their schedules around the 8-2:00 day, work, school, sports and other activities..5 year plan
- Teachers will need training how to meet student needs under "social distancing"
- Who is considered essential workers?
- What do we mean by child care? Is it educational in nature, or babysitting?
- Don't think childcare environment as described is ideal...especially don't like masks

Q3: What is your dream school?

- Why fix it if it wasn't broken...go back to the way it was
- Increased sanitation, could work, though it's not ideal
- Some kind of rotation with part of the kids on site physically, and others sitting in remotely
- 5 days a week, 8-2:00, safe but not devoid of human contact
- Live stream classes to kids who are sick
- No penalty for parents who choose not to send their kids to school

- If there is a block schedule, parents want more control over who their students would be with
- If core only, 2 days a week, half days
- If core plus, 2 full days a week
- Would do a social distance setting, but don't want it to remain once danger is past
- Want in person learning with teachers
- If alternating days, could other days be live streamed
- Preference for homeschool placement, for parents who don't want to do school in a social distance setting
- Some sort of contract for parents to sign that absolves schools of risk
- If cuts need to be made, cuts should be done at the district level so it doesn't impact services to students
- Hire more custodians for cleanliness
- Want to make sure any changes made are driven by the current crisis, not another agenda
- No masks...really, no masks...kids are constantly touching their faces and everything else around them, masks won't help them
- Wouldn't be opposed to different schools with different structures, so parents have choice
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My name is XXXXXXXX, and my kids attend Blossom Valley Elementary. I was on the zoom call last night and I just wanted to take a moment to reach out to you because I've been thinking about that call since it ended. I am absolutely appalled by the level of selfishness and lack of flexibility shown by some of the parents last night and I want to be sure that you understand that they do NOT represent me, or several of the other families that I am in contact with. These are unprecedented times, and while I am not thrilled with the distance learning curriculum thus far, I also recognize that it is a retention tool at this point, so in that vein it is working as it should. Both of my children's teachers are doing a phenomenal job of staying in touch with them through daily zoom meetings. These aren't always a favorite event in our house, but it does provide a hard "start" to their day, and is much appreciated.

I hope that school can resume in August and remain unchanged, however I feel that with the threat of Covid-19, coupled with a regular flu season, this is an unlikely scenario. I don't know what the outcome will look like, but maybe an idea to be considered when thinking about the upcoming

school year is prioritizing in person classes for grades k-3 or 4, as I feel that these are the grades that really need to be taught in a physical environment. This can also work to alleviate childcare issues for parents who work and have kids in these grades. 5th grade and up can come in on a rotating schedule - maybe 2 days a week, and do the rest of their work in a virtual environment. I do think kids should be wearing masks, and those parents who have children with medical issues that prevent them from wearing a mask will need to get a doctor's note. I don't understand the vehemence against wearing masks, they are measure of protection.

Anyway, these are just a few of my thoughts. I know your job is very challenging given the current environment and I appreciate your diligence and willingness to engage with parents. Thank you for hosting a meeting last night, it was nice to finally have face time with someone from the district.
Sincerely

Hey Tamara

I heard that you attended a meeting with PTO of blossom Valley. I sincerely hope that they were more respectful than they were the night before as a parents meeting. I was very disappointed at our first meeting that no one was allowed to speak up unless we shared the majority opinion. Several parents were very rude and would purposefully talk over anyone with a differing view. I patiently wait d an hour to be called in to speak and finally typed my topic into the chat window, and was rudely told that if I didn't like it the way it was then go to charter school. I know we are in a minority, but there are parents who understand changes might be mandated, and I fee it's best to err on the side of safety. I really wanted to be at the zoom with you, but I had 3 meetings of my own to juggle.

I am so impressed that our superintendent and you are taking the time to ask parents their opinion. I think it's amazing that you guys want to make that a part of the process. Most school districts are going to make those decisions and let everyone know, without any input from parents, faculty, or staff. I'm sure that it's extremely overwhelming, and going to make a lot of people upset, because this situation is out of everyone's control slightly.

With all of that said I also believe very different from the majority of Blossom Valley parents. I tried to explain the benefits of smaller class sizes during this pandemic being a positive for many reasons. to me a dream school is and always will be one with more individualized instruction from the teacher, therefore smaller class sizes sound wonderful to me. I understand that distance-learning is going to be very different in the fall, so the fear is that people have about it are not completely founded. They are basing their view on it on a crisis situation, rather than a well planned system. I know that you are completely swamped with way too much work. I don't want to take all of your time. I really just wanted to say thank

you so much for taking the time to listen to all of the parents. Hopefully they were not an unbridled mob last night.

Thanks for listening to all of them, and to me. Thank you for everything you are doing to keep our kids safe and educated!

Tamara,

I trust you and your family are well! I am thankful you are sheltering in place. Like myself, I know that is hard to do with us "social beings"!

Thank you for meeting up with the BV crew! You were successful in calming the ready to spin out of control group of concerned community members. I think everyone just feels better if they are heard. Personally, distance learning has gone pretty well. Some of the children dialed right in. Like any classroom situation, others are hard to motivate. Because we use a tech format in our classrooms that was really not a problem at all.

I wanted to share something at the end of the meeting, yet my video went out for some reason.

Joseph was listening in on our meeting and had an idea he wanted to suggest, but did not feel it was his place. So here it goes..... His idea is literally taking some of the learning outside of the box. (The classroom) Regardless of when children attend, M,W/T,TH or half day, he felt classrooms of children could have "twin teachers". The two teachers would rotate to two different classrooms and the children would stay in place. During another rotation time students could rotate through activities in the lunch area, MPR, or playground for play, or workshops on art, music, science, or even World of Work. (Available to all, no sign ups)Think of it as academic classrooms and enrichment environments. Oh there is more... Students could do academics on MW/TTH and come every other Friday for one or two enrichment opportunities in the classrooms without walls. Well, that would take some planning I explained, but I promised I would share it.

I am so happy to hear that your daughter will be in Santa Cruz! Second child in that area right? What a wonderful opportunity and a proud moment to be accepted! I feel badly she missed out on Prom, Graduation, and the wonderful Granite Sr. activities! I know she will make it up by doing wonderful things ahead. Please give her a shout out of congrats from me!

Also, give Aubreyella a hug from me.

Thanks again for your service to our community.

Our main objective today is for our parents to be heard. And we know that is why you are here. We appreciate you and the district for the time to express our thoughts. We would appreciate it if you could read this document, and along the way, give any answers you may have to the questions being asked.

We have surveyed our community and even had a parents zoom meeting with 80 participants. Our parents are passionate, dedicated, and want to have their voice heard. We want to share with you our collective findings from all of our data.

We would like to thank you for taking the time to hear from our community. As our elected representative, we would like to ask for your help by reading our questions, thoughts, and concerns about distance learning and the future of our school at the next board meeting on May 26th. Is this the best way to have all of our voices heard? Would you be willing to do that for us? Could we make a google form and submit our thoughts as a school? Or does it have to be individual?

When we return in August, we are open to following the safety guidelines given to us by the CDC. We have our students' safety as our first priority. However, we would, when given the green light to return to normal with slight modifications like handwashing and extra cleaning, expect to return to normal. That any changes that are being made are temporary and not the permanent solution. For any changes that are being made we would like a projected end date, or in "phase" set up. What we are willing to do with a return to normalcy in sight, is very different from our willingness to change for good.

For the immediate return:

Masks: a majority of our families would not feel comfortable having their student wear a mask, or their teacher. If masks of any type are required, we request that they have a clear mouth cover. We have hearing impaired students at our school that we would like to feel a sense of belonging while wearing a mask. As well, as it allows for us to see smiles and friendly faces. Many of our parents said they would not allow their child to go to school wearing a mask. So we appreciate the flexibility for those reasons. It is also hard to hear people while wearing a mask in general.

Distance learning has been appreciated in the short term. We are grateful to have one-on-one technology and a district that gives our students the capabilities to dive into distance learning while on quarantine. We appreciate all the work the teachers, Mr. Hoeben, and the district has done to help maintain our children's skills.

Distance learning is not what we want long term. We like the flexibility idea of choosing distance learning when we go back. This will help parents feel security in their choice: if masks are being worn, block scheduling is introduced, and other safety measures are being taken. We want to have a say in when we are comfortable coming back, especially if the guidelines do not make us feel comfortable. We however, do not like the idea of flexibility beyond the reopen phase.

Distance learning has not been great for many of our students. Their experience toward school and learning is now a battle and a sad experience. The majority of our parents do not feel their child is thriving at the basics of maintaining skills. That it is not the best learning environment for their children. Some families have enjoyed distance learning. But, it is very hard for working parents. It is also hard for non-working parents that struggle with getting their students engaged. For some parents, distance learning has helped

occupy time and allowed parents to work from home with premade activities. But they still wouldn't want distance learning as an ideal situation.

Can the district commit to an August-December model, with a reevaluation done towards the end to see if they continue with the model for the Spring or tweak it to meet revised restrictions set by the CDC & the needs of the student? Almost all of our parents responded that they would not allow their kids to go to an offsite location for school.

How will students be tested and evaluated for special education? Early intervention is crucial. How are special education red flags being noticed while distance learning?

What is the district's plan for food consumption once school resumes? Many kids at our school do not like the school lunch and will not eat it.

When the guidelines are given from the CDC, will students with IEP be exempt from those guidelines? For example: Students with sensory issues and masks; Students with dietary issues - will they be allowed to bring their own food; Students who have a hard time not being physical (hugs, ect,) - will they be breaking the rules? Will flexibility be given? Or will the students be forced to distance learn? What about students that have one-on-one support? How will that work?

At Chase for the emergency essential workers childcare, parents are only allowed to drop off and not walk their children to class. Many parents, both with special needs children and gen ed, have been concerned about their child's needs. Some need to be escorted to class. And the drop off procedure is not in their child's best interest.

The recent article in Paper that CVUSD shared on their Facebook page yesterday, had many of us alarmed. The article says:

“David and his team heard similar stories from many parents. It became clear that they needed to change the fixed school system that parents have to adjust around. They are considering ways to design the system around the parents'

needs instead, where there can be a 6 am to 6 pm window for students to come in. David explained that they can retain components of what they are doing now (i.e. online, distance learning) when schools reopen, so that students and parents can continue to have a flexible schedule.

"It's just a different mindset that we're taking because we're now working directly with our parents to see what they need, and it took a pandemic to have that question answered. When we come back, we're going to keep that flexibility. We're not going to require our students to physically come to school to advance in their education. We're going to allow them to continue to progress on their adapted curriculum and career goals. We will be flexible and focus on human connection and adaptation to meet the needs of everybody, not just for one demographic," said David.

The story of David's district shows us that with well thought-out design and implementation, students can have more personalization and flexibility in their learning than we thought was possible. This has implications for what

David thinks that there's more flexibility in learning, the last thing schools should do is reverse back to the way things were. schools can look like when they reopen: "Education wasn't working for most kids before the pandemic, and if we go back to it, it's going to continue to be obsolete."

In this article it is implying that if given the opportunity, school would permanently change to a new flexible model. Is school changing to a flexible model in August? Is it a model for changing permanently? Would everyone be required to distance learn? If so, how would getting classroom time work? Can you provide research-based data that shows that this model is the best for our students? How would this affect the special-ed department? Many of our parents that have students with an IEP and are in general education are not happy with distance learning. They are fearful in how their child would receive services or interventions, in a model that called for less in-class instruction.

We would also like to know how all of the enrichment programs and field trips would happen.

How would this change be allowed to occur? Would parents or board members have to vote to implement this change? How would that affect our staff? How would this model affect our district financially?

Blossom Valley has a large majority of families that would not entertain the flexible model for their students. The vast majority of our families do not like distance learning. Our families expect to go back to school “as normal” as soon as they can. They expect as soon as government guidelines permit, to be able to go back to school in the traditional way. If school were to change to the proposed model Dr. Miyashiro makes reference to, we would look into other schools, and leave our district.

After reading the article, many parents are weary of turning in their online registration application. If distance learning will be a part of the solution when we return, can you tell us what facts and incentives there are to stay in the district? Going to a homeschool model in San Diego has many benefits to families: money for our families, tried and true programs, money for our students to do activities, sports, music, art, along with co-ops for socialization, property tax decrease.

Why would we stay if there are aspects AT ALL of distance learning? The majority of our parents would leave the district if this were the case.

The article says parents have been asked. Many of our parents say they have not been asked and have not been part of the conversation directly with the district. Our parents want that to change.

If we go to a new model, can Blossom Valley be exempt from that change, and stay the way it was? Try the new model at a few other schools as a pilot.

Especially those schools who have a strong interest. So the district can prove with test scores this model is better than the traditional.

We strongly believe that we already had the dream school. We love our

schedule, the classes, enrichment programs, teachers, way of life, community, and would not change anything. We would love more teachers for smaller class sizes.

We have heard about a committee of 100 that represents us and what our school should look like. If they are saying that we would thrive in a distance learning model or in a flexible schedule, they are wrong. We would like parent representation if available. Is that possible? If not, why are we always told that our voice matters?

If the new model is something that is believed in by Dr. Miyashiro, will he be bringing his own children to go to school in this model? How about the rest of the District Office?

Our parents choose to put their kids in public school, because we like the traditional school model. We want our kids to have the individualized support from the amazing teachers at Blossom Valley. We want our students social and learn valuable skills like starting a conversation and meeting new people. How will kids learn and practice these valuable skills if they are at school for reduced hours.

Is going to this model really getting our kids prepared for the workforce. When students eventually get jobs they are told what time to show up for work, not given flexible hours. What kind of mindset will the kids have if they are under the impression that this is how real life is?

IEPs are not being met to their full capacity. We are worried that learning disabilities are going unnoticed, undiagnosed, and are at risk for missing early intervention, the kids are not getting their needs met as they did or could have at school. Parents don't know the red flags. We rely on teacher and certified staff interactions to help us not only identify needs for special education, but also properly implementing them. Most parents are not SECAs or able to help their child progress to their full potential.

Our parents would like a town hall meeting with BV families, the Board, and Dr. Miyashiro. We would like our voices to be heard and on record. Would you be willing to set that up? Would you be willing to allow open discussion after the questions and concern above are discussed? Our final collective thoughts about our dream school. We love Blossom Valley. It is a very special community. We love the staff, teachers, families, volunteers and kids. We are committed to getting our school community back to how it was before. Our dream school is Blossom Valley. It is our great Principal. It is our loving and capable teachers. It is the staff that we rely on to help our children with their specific needs. It is the classified staff, our often unsung heroes. It is our enrichment programs, our music, plays, edudance, biztown and art. It is the friendly wave from our bus drivers, the chats in the pick up line. The ability to see our children and participate in their class. It is volunteering for field trips, class parties, set making, teaching an art lessons helping a teacher, and showing our staff appreciation. It is our pick up and drop off and chatting with friends before and after school. It is our community events, fall festival, dances, movie nights, art show, lunch on the lawn and book fairs. It is even our fundraisers like jog-a-thon. It is goofing off at the lunch tables, playing GAGA, wall ball, playing in a sandbox, swinging, monkey bars, spot, soccer, chasing friends, and holding hands. It is hatching chicks, pancake breakfasts, valentines, leprechaun traps, egg hunts, kid biz, gold rush towns and missions. It is seeing them perform and display their art. It is running laps. It is yearbook signings and field day. It is riding a bus for a field trip. It is a fifth grade promotion. It is interpersonal connections. But most of all it is our kids. It is their school spirit, their love of being a bobcat. It is the way they feel loved, safe and capable at school. It is seeing the progress and the

milestones. It is seeing them hug their teachers, giving Mr. Hoeben a high-five. It is their proud walks to deliver something to the office. It is seeing them smile. It is friendship. It is witnessing lifelong bonds being formed. It is laughter and smiles. It is all the complex and simple things. It is where we belong. It is where we feel #you belong. It is how we know we are all in this together. It is where we live, work, play, and choose to raise our family. It is the joy of education and the community we need. It is Blossom Valley.