



750 College Avenue

Kentfield, CA 94904

(415) 458-5130

Fax (415) 458-5138

Raquel Rose,  
Superintendent

[www.kentfieldschools.org](http://www.kentfieldschools.org)

**Board of Trustees**

Davina Goldwasser

Sarah Killingsworth

Heather McPhail Sridharan

David Riedel

Quoc Tran

**Bacich Elementary School**

699 Sir Francis Drake Blvd.

Kentfield, CA 94904

Mary Ann Spitzer, Principal

(415) 925-2220

Fax (415) 925-2226

**Kent Middle School**

800 College Avenue

Kentfield, CA 94904

Grant Althouse, Principal

(415) 458-5970

Fax (415) 458-5973

December 2, 2020

Dear Kentfield School District Community,

Based on the KTA and KSD negotiations session yesterday, the KSD made the decision to transition to a Full Hybrid Learning Program this Monday, December 7th. This transition will allow cohorts of up to 12 students to participate in Hybrid Learning and offer a schedule of alternating between one week of in-person learning at our schools and one week of distance learning from home. For families who have chosen a Distance Learning-Only Program, their child(ren) will continue to zoom into their classes from home. Stay tuned for communication from our Bacich and Kent Principals later this week with further details about schedule, cohorts, and other pertinent logistics for this transition.

It is important to note that the KTA has not agreed to this transition timeline due to a different interpretation of the [Memorandum of Understanding between the KSD and the KTA regarding the COVID-19 Pandemic and School Opening during the 2020-21 School Year \(MOU\)](#).

However, from a KSD perspective, we feel legally obligated and also believe it is in the best interest of our students' learning and social emotional well-being, to safely transition to a Full Hybrid Learning Program this Monday. This perspective is supported by guidance from Marin County Public Health and by [local school data](#).

Our teachers and staff are essential in achieving the transition to a Full Hybrid Learning Program, and we feel sincerely grateful for their continued commitment to our Kentfield students through this incredibly difficult time. We are also appreciative of our parents/guardians, teachers, classified support staff, and site administrators for their patience while we have been navigating the last several months of academic instruction together with grace, creativity, and a steady focus on what is best for our students.

Finally, we fully recognize that there is room for improvement with our current learning program and schedule at Bacich and Kent. Please rest assured that we remain committed to addressing these issues collaboratively with the Kentfield Teachers Association (KTA). In the spirit of transparency, below is KSD's detailed summary of yesterday's 6.5 hour negotiation session with KTA representatives.

In closing, we invite you to attend our monthly school board meeting this Tuesday, December 8th at 5 PM to learn more from staff about the transition to Full Hybrid Instruction and other timely District topics. Our school board meetings are also recorded and stored in a [video archive](#) if you cannot attend live in person.

If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact our Superintendent, Raquel Rose at [rose@kentfieldschools.org](mailto:rose@kentfieldschools.org) and our Board President, Heather McPhail Sridharan at [hmcphailsridharan@kentfieldschools.org](mailto:hmcphailsridharan@kentfieldschools.org). As always, feedback is welcome and valued.

With deep gratitude,

Raquel Rose, Superintendent  
Davina Goldwasser  
Sarah Killingsworth  
Heather McPhail Sridharan  
David Riedel  
Quoc Tran

## NEGOTIATIONS UPDATE - Dec. 1, 2020

### **Kentfield Teachers Association Attendees:**

Stephanie Blazek, Celeste Perez, Susan Warnick, Brad Widelock, and Chris Burnette (CTA representative)

### **Kentfield School District Attendees:**

Grant Althouse, Sarah Killingsworth, David Riedel, Raquel Rose, Mary Ann Spitzer, and Joshua Stevens (KSD Attorney)

On December 1, 2020 the KSD and KTA negotiations team met to further discuss items in the current Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) which included:

- Timeline to move from Phase 4 to Phase 5, which increases cohort size from eight (8) to twelve (12) and allows students to attend school based instruction in a full week on/off model
- Adjustments to the current Hybrid Instruction
- Full In-Person Instruction to allow for all students on campus each school day

The group also planned to discuss the proposed contract language KSD and KTA prepared regarding:

- Classroom perimeter
- Physical Education Instruction
- Leaves and Absences

The parties spent most of the day discussing the timeline for the district to move from Phase 4 to Phase 5 of the current hybrid program.

### **KSD proposed:**

- On December 7, move to Phase 5 serving cohorts of twelve (12) or thirteen (13) in specific classrooms.
- KSD offered local COVID-19 data and public health guidance as rationale for this proposal. KSD also verbally shared preliminary information gathered from the recent Trimester two (2) survey, which showed fourteen (14) classes at Bacich and five (5) classes at Kent to have cohorts above eight (8) students.

### **KTA's counter proposal:**

- On December 7, teachers volunteer to pilot cohorts of up to twelve (12)
- Provide Distance Learning for two (2) weeks following the winter break from Jan. 4 - Jan. 15. Also during this time the district shall offer local COVID-19 testing for staff and district students.
- On Jan. 19, return to Hybrid Instruction in Phase 5, serving cohorts of up to twelve (12) and in a few classes where teachers agree thirteen (13) students
- If at any time Marin County moves into the purple tier, KSD will move to Distance Learning only

### **KSD's counter proposal:**

- On December 7, move to Phase 5 with all teachers serving cohorts of up to twelve (12) or thirteen (13) in specific classrooms.
- Provide Distance Learning for one (1) week following the winter break from Jan. 4 - Jan. 8. Also during the Distance Learning week the District will host local COVID-19 testing for staff and district students.
- If at any time Marin County moves into the purple tier, the KSD will return to the bargaining table with KTA to discuss increased safety measures to support school based instruction -- although, if the Public Health orders Distance Learning only for schools, the KSD will comply.
- Hybrid Instruction Adjustments:

Bacich - Examine an AM/PM Hybrid Instructional model, which may have material changes to the current unit member's daily schedule.

Kent - Increase in-person learning for students through increasing the teacher's daily cohort exposure of up to two (2) cohorts daily and/or up to seven (7) cohorts weekly.

**KTA's counter proposal:**

- KTA proposes remaining in Phase 4 until winter break.
- KTA proposes moving to Phase 5 (cohorts of 12 students, and in a few classrooms where there is a need and the teacher agrees, 13 students) on Tuesday, Jan. 19, 2021. This will follow 2 weeks of distance learning from Jan 4- Jan 15, 2021. If at any time, Marin County moves into the purple tier, distance learning will continue until we enter the red tier.
- Membership will need to ratify this proposal, should the parties (KTA and KSD) tentatively agree
- KTA requests the District provide the negotiating team with the data from the most recent family survey. Specifically, KTA needs to know which classrooms will have more than 16 students who request hybrid instruction, creating cohorts that are more than 8 students each.
- KTA requests a draft proposal and potential schedule of the District's proposed instructional model as described by Grant and Mary Ann, at our 12:45 meeting, Dec.1.
- KTA requests a written version of the proposal the District made at our 12:45 meeting, Dec.1.

**KSD's response:**

It is KSD's position to follow the MOU as it stands and move to Phase 5 effective December 7, 2020. Limiting to cohorts no bigger than eight (8) students severely limits the ability to deliver school based instruction to our students and compromises their learning. The KSD will make the necessary adjustments to ensure physical distancing compliance with the MOU, which may include using alternate learning spaces such as specialist classrooms, tents, gymnasiums, etc. unless the parties agree to adjust the perimeter language in the current MOU immediately. KSD's position is not a unilateral implementation as the MOU will be followed.

KTA expressed a different interpretation of the MOU and advised they may file an unfair labor complaint and grievance against the KSD. KSD maintains its position and will prepare to move to Phase 5 serving cohorts of up to twelve (12) students effective December 7, 2020.

In closing, KTA requested a follow-up negotiations session to address outstanding items. KSD proposed the use of a mediator to assist the parties in coming to agreements. KTA asked if the KSD was declaring impasse as that is when a mediator is employed. KSD explained that impasse is not being declared as the MOU will continue to be followed as we move from Phase 4 to Phase 5 with cohorts of twelve (12). In response, KTA declined the assistance of a mediator and the parties agreed to meet again on December 10, 2020.