



# Alternative Options to In-Person Learning - High School

Parent(s)/guardian(s) of high school students:

Manteca Unified School District is consistently working to readjust and realign programming based on current conditions and student needs. MUSD understands families have unique needs at this time.

There are options for those reluctant to return to Phase 2 Hybrid in-person learning. These options include:

- Enrolling in the Online Academy for the remainder of the school year. Please note those selecting this option will be placed prior to January 6, 2020.
- Transferring to our NEW Independent Study program with access to live support daily, dedicated office hours, and a robust list of class offerings.

Students pursuing one of the aforementioned options **must contact their counselor by December 11th, 2020** to be fully enrolled no later than December 18, 2020.

Please note both the Online Academy and Independent Study programs are WASC accredited and meet all A-G requirements. If you are currently connected to your counselor or filled out the appropriate forms, your counselor will confirm which option best suits your family needs prior to movement.


## Frequently Asked Questions

### Why did MUSD move to Phase 2?

- The Public Health officer permitted in-person instruction when San Joaquin County moved from the Purple Tier to the Red Tier, as a response MUSD implemented a modified schedule (Phase 2) while optimizing mitigation efforts. Students returned to in-person instruction two days a week, the phase in for students began on November 2, 2020. We believe that in person instruction to be the best educational practice. Even though San Joaquin County moved back to the Purple Tier schools are still authorized to be open and will remain in Phase 2 (modified schedule) until further notice. We understand it may be confusing as tier regression is announced by Dr. Park of SJCPHS based on metrics developed for California's Blueprint for a Safer Economy. Schools follow criteria within the [K-12 reopening school sector framework](#).

### Why do I have to enroll in another option by December 18, 2020?

- An exception was made allowing students to remain on distance learning (phase 1) until the end of term one, December 18, 2020. Educationally, term conclusion and new term beginning is the sound time for a student to move into a different educational program (Online Academy / Independent Study). The best time for a student to change educational programs between a traditional program (Online Academy) and a block schedule (MUSD Comprehensive High Schools) is at the term change, when they have completed their 40 high school credits. Students entering a traditional schedule will be entering the school at the second semester, halfway through the year. When a



student changes educational programs during other times of the year, they may lose credits and courses will not match up creating challenges for students, partial credits or having to enter a class mid-point through the term.

### **Why can't my student just stay on distance learning all year?**

- There is a possibility that MUSD may move to Phase 3 during the school year and the modified schedule (2 days a week) will end and students will return to their full week schedule. At that point, there will be no more distance learning and teachers will no longer be teaching primarily on Teams. The transition to Phase 3 is dependent on conditions in place in San Joaquin County. Therefore, a long-term commitment must be made to avoid students losing credits between programs and/or schools. It will take a great deal of preparation to move students from their high school to Online Academy or the Independent Study program. A transition of this magnitude will include moving or hiring teachers in addition to adjusting schedules.
- In order to provide the most optimal education program, MUSD will need time to prepare so that we move students in an orderly way with the least amount of disruption and education disconnections. It is more educationally sound to move students at the end of a term, so they can receive the most amount of credits. If we move students at other times, we have a bigger risk of students losing credits. Teachers have adapted curriculum and teaching practices admirably; the hybrid model is a very challenging way to teach and learn and is not optimal for students or educators. Distance Learning at the high schools is not an optimal learning environment for students as the curriculum is not designed for an online platform.
- Our teachers have many years of experience with in-person instruction, which is our primary model of education, the distance learning model we have developed is temporary in response to the pandemic.
- Online Academy and Independent study programs were designed for student remote learning. The course work is adapted for this environment.

### **How could this affect my student who is a graduating 2020?**

- Seniors (12th grade) who have not taken specific required courses for graduation or courses for college entrance requirements, need to meet with their counselor so that they understand what courses they must take at the Online Academy or Independent Study. It is imperative for parents to understand the ramifications in order to make the best education decision for their student.

### **Are there other factors for college which parents need to be aware of for the OA program?**

- Students and Parents need to be aware that their school of record changes to Weston Ranch ID: 053839 and applications (including FAFSA and Cal Grant GPA reporting) will need to be updated.



## **What other MUSD programs are available if I do not want my student to come back two days a week in person?**

- The Online Academy program is designed as a complete online platform delivered through Edmentum Courseware with local MUSD teachers or EdOptions curriculum. Teachers meet with students in a virtual setting each class period. Classes are standards aligned with customized learning that meet A-G requirements. For state reporting purposes, the Online Academy is part of Weston Ranch High School, however students receive their education online at their home.
- The NEW Independent Study program may meet the needs of students as an alternative for those not ready to return to in-person learning. Independent Study uses a different online platform known as Grad Point. This mastery level program uses a blended learning environment. The program will include daily meetings for students with their Independent Study teacher, during the meeting they will receive feedback on their completed work and receive work for the week. Teachers will have office hours daily to further support students with individual help. During the assigned office hours teachers are able to give direct instruction. Teachers will also provide curricular support and pacing to help students navigate Grad Point web-based curriculum in the sequential mode. Grading is based on standard mastery of post-tests that are proctored in person by Independent Study instructor.

## **What about AP classes and Electives?**

- It is very important to meet with your student's high school counselor. Classes available are limited in the catalog of courses for the Online Academy. Some classes that are needed for graduation may need to be altered. We would highly recommend that a student does not take an Advanced Placement class as the workload is aligned to a traditional schedule (not block scheduling) in the Online Academy.
- The Independent Study program will allow students the option to continue with their previously scheduled Advanced Placement courses, Career Technical Education classes and other electives in person two days a week within the high schools modified schedule, while taking core classes online through Grad Point. Parents and students will need to meet with their student's counselor to continue to be enrolled in those courses.

## **What if my student is in Special Education classes?**

- You should meet with your student's counselor and Program Specialist to determine if the Online Academy or Independent Study are appropriate. Acceptance to either program would be conditional based upon the IEP determination of FAPE.



## **Will my student be able to participate in athletic or extra-curricular events if we choose Online Academy or Independent Study?**

- Yes. Students eligible to participate in extra-curricular and school sports will be able to do so with their school of residence. Students must be eligible for sports/extra-curricular activities on January 10, 2021, and are re-evaluated for eligibility on March 29, 2021, when grades are submitted. Senior students will be able to participate in senior activities, including graduation at their high school of residency.

## **What will the diploma be like for the Online Academy / Independent Study?**

- The diploma from the Online Academy will be from Online Academy at Weston Ranch High School. If a student graduates from the Independent Study, the diploma will be from the high school of residency. It is very important that the high school diploma reflects the high school on the transcript.

## **What if a parent/student want the Online Academy / Independent Study after December 11th?**

- If a parent or student decides they want to enroll at the Online Academy / Independent Study, they will go through the Alt. Ed. Application process. Enrollment will be based on space available. If there is no space the student will be placed on a waiting list for the Online Academy / Independent Study.