

Dear Mayor Kevin L. Faulconer,

I am writing to urge you to reopen libraries and parks as a resource for distance learning. As the COVID-19 pandemic continues, the impact on school-aged children is especially significant. Due to public health guidelines, nearly all public school districts serving students within the City of San Diego have opted to start the school year via online instruction.

Families are facing a wide variety of challenges adapting to this new method of learning, and parents' new roles as both teacher and full-time caregiver. Additional resources, such as internet access and books, are needed to help ensure academic success for their children. Equally important, families also need places for their children to learn. Many families are participating in "learning pods" and tutor groups, and need safe and accessible places to do so.

As a result, I ask that the City of San Diego open all public libraries to provide school-aged children with the library resources and safe space needed for learning and completing schoolwork independently, and participating in academic programs, such as "learning pods".

In addition, I am requesting that the City of San Diego open public parks for the safe operation of outdoor academic programs and "learning pods." Public parks are already allowing outdoor fitness classes and worship services to operate. Expanding this accommodation for academic programs for school-aged children not only makes sense, but is vital to ensure every child has an equal opportunity to learn and succeed during this unprecedented pandemic.

Sincerely,

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