

November 11, 2020

Dear Sunnyside Families —

I hope this communication finds you and your families healthy. **2020** has tested all of us in so many ways, so I want to start by saying *thank you* for staying the course and for trusting us with your child's education. We have made every effort to continue to offer your children the best educational experiences possible despite the challenges we have faced this year.

Over the last few weeks, we have seen an increase in positivity rates across Pima County. As expected, positive cases among staff and students have also been reported at several of our schools. As alarming as that may feel, it is important to share with you that these positive cases have not been a result of a staff or student contracting COVID-19 from our schools. In other words, there have been **zero transmissions** of COVID-19 from a student or staff member at any of our school sites.

Although we are confident in the effectiveness of our district's mitigation efforts and that our schools are safe, the recent increase in community spread has impacted our schools in other ways. Schools have had to find support staff to cover hybrid classes for teachers who are being isolated or in quarantine due to a positive test or close contact, forcing some classrooms to go remote. Positive cases on a campus have also created great concern with staff, students and parents, resulting in an increase in absentee rates for students and staff. Additionally, with the notifications we have been sending regarding positive cases, we have had many parents requesting a change from hybrid instruction to remote. This has been difficult to accommodate because of our remote classes being at full capacity. This has resulted in some students receiving instruction only asynchronously, which we know is not an ideal learning environment. All of these scenarios have caused heightened anxiety among our parents and staff.

Given that many in our community are experiencing *pandemic fatigue* and the anticipated increased level of community wide COVID-19 spread after Thanksgiving Break, our Governing Board has decided to have all of our students Pre K-12th grade complete the semester in remote learning. In other words, **all schools will be remote from November 30th - December 17th**. Although the Pima County Health Department is not recommending that schools close at this time, out of an abundance of caution we feel it is necessary to be proactive about minimizing the spread of COVID-19 in our schools by staying remote through the holidays.

Our plan is to return back to hybrid learning on **January 4th, 2021** based on guidance from the Pima County Health Department. For this reason, we need every parent to complete the selection form as was required for the second quarter. Please anticipate a separate communication from us next week where you will have the opportunity to make selections (**hybrid or remote**) for the second semester.

Thank you again for your understanding and commitment to your students' education and wellbeing!



Steve Holmes, Superintendent