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DESERT HEIGHTS CHARTER SCHOOLS

From the Desk of Mr. Jiles



Dear Desert Heights Family,

As many of you may already know, on June 29, 2020 Governor Ducey, in coordination with our Superintendent of Public Instruction Kathy Hoffman, announced that the first day of school for in-person learning will be delayed until August 17, 2020. Presently, our plan is to start school on August 17, 2020, offering both an in-person option and a virtual option for instruction. I would like to thank all of you who took a moment to complete our survey regarding your child(ren)'s intention for the start of the school year. This information provides much needed insight that we will use to determine the most effective and accommodating way to meet our student and community needs. I am so thankful for the patience and support you all have expressed during this very difficult and uncertain time. My fear is that we have not yet realized the worst, and that we may still be subjected to more changes regarding that start of the school year between now and August 17, given the present conditions throughout the state. I ask for your continued patience and support as we navigate this situation collectively.

Despite the uncertainty, however, there has been so much good that has become even more apparent about Desert Heights. Thanks to the thoughtful efforts of our summer staff, teachers and administration, our cautious optimism about the fall has coalesced into a path forward. Their work has given me the confidence that we can do this safely, and we will continue to plan and prepare in the weeks and months ahead. We have the opportunity to begin a new journey together, equipped with strong guidance and ideas from our incredibly thoughtful staff, innovative students, and highly capable educators who remain committed to providing the best educational experience for our student's emotional, athletic, social and academic growth and development. Safety continues to be at the forefront of our planning and you can rest assured that this will always be the primary focus.

Update on Transportation

On June 18, 2020, Governor Ducey stated that "all Arizonans should wear face masks when you can't social distance...to help protect vulnerable communities and reduce infection rates". He then deferred to empowering local officials and stated that mayors should set mask policies. On June 20th, 2020, Glendale Mayor Jerry Weiers issued a proclamation requiring masks be worn in public. "This proclamation will mandate the use of face coverings for those in Glendale ages 6 and older in all public situations where social distancing may not be followed," Weiers said. Our Transportation Team met with Administration to discuss how this proclamation impacted our students who would use our transportation services. After much deliberation, and given the challenges of maintaining social distancing requirements on our busses, we determined that the best and safest course of action was to require that all students riding the busses must wear masks unless a student meets one of the identified exceptions. Bus availability will be done on a first come first serve basis. More information on this process will be coming within the next few weeks. Please click here to take the **transportation survey** today!

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