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March 8, 2021

Parents, Guardians and Community Members,

Today, the New Mexico Department of Education announced that all students that wish to return to in-person learning five days a week may do so. All schools in the state are expected to provide five day a week in-person learning on or before April 5, 2021. We expect to receive written guidance on the details of this announcement this evening or tomorrow. Given the proximity to Spring Break of this announcement we are going to return to in-person learning five days a week on March 29, 2021. This will give us time to gather information on which students will be returning to in-person full time and which students will be choosing to move to or remain in a remote learning environment.

What we have been told is that the restrictions on social distancing are being relaxed so we do not have to adhere to the six-foot requirement in classrooms. We still need to keep students as spread out as possible and at six feet where possible. Masks for all students and staff continue to be a requirement. Once we have the written guidance, we will share what the changes are.

This announcement also contained good news regarding band and choir. Students may now play instruments and sing at school in outdoor settings with nine feet of social distancing. Singing and playing of wind instruments indoors is still not allowed. We expect details on special mask requirements and covers for wind instruments and other logistical issues to be in the written guidance.

Attendance at sporting events is still determined by a county's designation so we hope to be in Yellow at the next designation so we can host outdoor events. Indoor events still require a minimum designation of Green.

Mandatory quarantine guidance has now been changed to ten days for close contacts. This will remain in effect when we return to full in-person learning. The requirement to close a building for fourteen days after five positive cases in a building has been changed to ten days. This means we still have the possibility of having to close buildings should we start to experience an increase in cases.

March 13, 2020, we left full time in-person learning. On March 29, 2021 we will return. Please continue to watch your distance, wash your hands and wear a mask. Following those practices will help us keep buildings open once we return to full in-person learning.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gerry C. Washburn', is written over the word 'Respectfully,'. The signature is fluid and cursive, extending to the right with a long horizontal stroke.

Gerry C. Washburn
Superintendent