

March 31, 2021

Highland CUSD No. 5 Parents and Staff,

Today is the last day of the first quarter of 2021. I am sure we all hope the last three quarters (9 months) of 2021 is much more normal than in 2020. This was a very short week with Easter coming this weekend so I plan to keep this update brief as well. There are a couple of things I would like to bring to your attention.

Some of the recent updates have included information about possible remote learning options for next school year. I want to provide a little more insight as to why remote learning options are significant. This school year in Kindergarten through fifth grade, one teacher was assigned at each grade level to address the remote learners. At the beginning of the year the remote classes in each grade level had a higher number of students than in the in-person classes. This played to our advantage to keep in-person class sizes down. As the year progressed and the number of remote students decreased and the number of in-person students increased. We saw the class sizes flop where the in-person numbers became larger than the remote sections.

In the middle and high school, the schedules were shortened for the in-person students so that each teacher would have an opportunity to address the remote students in the afternoon. This takes time and effort on their part. We are focused on maintaining a normal schedule next year throughout the school day and year. This means we need to plug staff who are currently addressing remote learners back into the in-person schedule. For this reason, we anticipate all remote learning for next year will be addressed through online programs. We are currently researching possibilities and know that we will need to provide some means to connect remote students to their school. We are working with the Regional Office of Education and other area school districts to incorporate a regional plan to address remote learning.

Remote learning in the Fall will only be provided to students who are at high health risk due to exposure to COVID or live with a person at high health risk. Each student will be required to provide documentation that the risk exists. We are not certain at this time how many students will be pursuing this option for the 2021-2022 school year. We have created a survey that will be made available in the next week or so. We ask that any parents of children who will be attending Highland CUSD No. 5 next year to communicate whether they will pursue documentation that their child be in remote learning to indicate that on the survey. We understand that circumstances may change many times before August, but it will be our best attempt at planning for a program that meets the educational and social emotional needs of every student and/or family in the Highland School District. It will not be binding in any way.

COVID numbers this week: Highland Primary reported 1 new positive student case and 1 new staff positive resulting in 5 quarantines. Alhambra Primary reported zero new positive cases and zero new quarantines. Highland Elementary reported zero new positive cases and 3 students quarantined due to showing symptoms. Grantfork Elementary reported zero new positive cases and 1 staff quarantined due to outside exposure. Highland Middle School reported zero new positive cases with 2 students

quarantined due to outside exposure. Highland High School reported zero new positive cases and zero new quarantines.

That concludes this week's update. Have a wonderful 5-day weekend and Happy Easter!

Sincerely,

Michael S. Sutton, Superintendent