



August 17, 2021

Dear GUSD Families, Friends, and Community,

Greetings to all from Globe Unified School District! As I write today we are in our 10th day of school. It has been a good, but challenging start to the school year. As you all are aware, I'm quite sure, COVID-19 has made a comeback in our country, in our state, in our community, and in our schools. The new school-year has brought about many challenges for our district. We have seen positive cases of COVID-19 in our schools. As I report to the board this week, here are some of the characteristics I have seen in our experiences with COVID-19:

- Most of our positive cases of COVID-19 are among our elementary students.
- One of teachers has tested positive for COVID-19. No support staff members have tested positive since school started, as I write this.
- While masks are recommended a majority of our students are not wearing them.
- Staff are more likely to wear masks than students.
- Parents have been generally cooperative and understanding when we ask them to quarantine their students.
- There have been several cases of multiple students from a family testing positive resulting in many quarantines.
- We continue to implement mitigation methods and provide cleaning supplies for preventing spread.
- GUSD had been testing students and staff after an incubation period to allow them to return to school. Currently we are observing a full ten-day quarantine before they return.
- Each building principal has put a plan into place to provide teachers and students out on quarantine with strategies to try to maintain educational activities during their absence.
- The GUSD board meets twice per month on the first and third Wednesday evenings of the month at 6:00 PM in the Mofford Activity Center. The board considers any changes to its procedures for dealing with COVID-19 at each meeting.

How to deal with the ongoing issue of COVID-19 in our community, state, country, and the world has been a topic for much debate. There are extremely strong feelings and beliefs on all sides of the issue. As we move forward at GUSD I have tried to put our district in the best possible position to serve our students, families, and community with my recommendations to the board.

I have recommended trying to keep as many students in our buildings as possible since we began in-person instruction on September 21, 2020. The district has also tried to honor parental choice to every extent possible, first with hybrid scheduling, then with full in-person for all who wished, and now with allowing parents to make the choice about masking. All of these decisions were made with student safety in mind tempered by the desire to do what our district does; teaching students in classrooms. GUSD has maintained its online presence and received approval from the Arizona State Board of Education to offer the Tiger Knowledge Online program this year and beyond providing one more choice for our students and families.

I write all of this to let you know that I will continue to make recommendations to the board to try to operate as normally as our conditions will allow. It is my desire to continue to serve our students in person. I will continue to listen to the advice of our local health department, consult with other like districts, and make my recommendations to the board based on the facts as I best know them. I would ask for your continued support. I will respect the decisions that families continue to make about sending their students in person or choosing TKO. We will use mitigation strategies to the best of our abilities to try to slow and stop COVID-19 spread. Please do what you can to help our cause.

Lastly, I want to offer the highest praise to our staff. They have labored faithfully and without complaint in trying to help our schools run as normally as possible. The truly are doing their best to serve our students. They are living up to our mantra, "Capturing Hearts, Empowering Minds!"

Sincerely,

Jerry Jennex, Superintendent

Globe Unified School District #1