May 15, 2020

Dear CGESD Students and Families,

As we head into what will be our summer break, we want to share some very important information about the summer and about the prospect of reopening our schools to learners in the fall.

**AZ Stay at Home Order**

The Governor’s Stay at Home Order is set to expire today, Friday, May 15. It has been replaced by new guidance that continues to prioritize health and physical distancing. We have not yet received guidance about reopening schools in the fall, but we continue to plan for a variety of scenarios to keep our staff and students safe and healthy.

All school and district offices in CGESD will remain closed until further notice. If you are needing to conduct business with us, we continue to check messages at 520-836-2111 or via email at outreach@cgesd.org. We will post updates about future school and district office openings on our website.

**Returning Possibilities**

It is possible that school will occur in at least several different ways next school year, given that epidemiologists believe there may be continuing waves of COVID-19 infections. We are planning for the following possibilities:

- The school year may need to start with staggered schedules to accommodate physical distancing requirements
- The school year may include rolling closures as a result of additional waves of COVID-19
- The school year may need to start virtually or there may be a delay in our school start date
- The school year may start as it typically has
- The school year may start using any one of the above scenarios, with several staff members and/or students unable to join us physically, so lessons and learning occur remotely for those groups.

As stated in my last communication to staff, families, and our community, we realize that families may be hesitant to send their young ones to a building with hundreds of their peers each day where they could become ill or carry the virus back home to more vulnerable family members. Similarly, our district must consider our teachers and staff in returning to work. With nearly 900 employees, CGESD is one of the largest employers in our community, and many of our staff members may be concerned about creating a vector for spreading the virus, or about their own health or the well-being of their loved ones.

**School Will Be Different**

It is very likely that school will look and feel different than it has in the past. It is probable that special events will not occur as they typically have. There may be some restrictions to having family members as visitors to our schools, students may have restrictions placed on items that
may be brought to school, and that all members of our learning community (students and staff) may be required to wear face coverings while on campus.

As work teams complete summer planning for each of the reopening possibilities, we are developing systems and protocols to help ensure the health and safety of every person attending school on one of our 13 campuses. Please speak to your children about the possibilities of change, and help them adjust to new expectations early so it doesn’t come as a surprise. Please check our website, your email, and our social media sites regularly to ensure our students are up-to-date and ready for change when we start back up.

In every possible scenario we explore, we want you to know that our focus on students’ social, emotional and academic learning will look very different than what it looked like this spring. This spring our focus was on emergency remote learning. Next fall, we will have devices and connectivity for all students thanks to a decision recently made by our Governing Board. Our most immediate focus will be on diagnosing academic needs and accelerating learning so each of our students can access grade level content. Instruction and learning (at-home, staggered in-person schedules, blended approaches, etc.) might look different, but our intent will be to catch students up quickly so we can ensure adequate academic progress.

Thank you!

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We recognize we have a great deal of work to do this summer in order to plan for a successful reopening of school. We appreciate all the extra work that has gone into our school year by each and every one of our employees. We also appreciate the extra work done by our families to help our students maintain a routine and focus on learning at home. We continue to be impressed by the innovative spirit we have seen, the dedicated compassion everyone has demonstrated, and the desire of all to continue to learn, lead, and engage during this crisis. We have outstanding students, families, and staff! Thank you for your part in this. We really are better together!

Stay healthy, strong, and positive,

Superintendent Gonzales and the CGESD Team