July 21, 2020

Dear Phoenix Union Families:

As we continue our work to prepare for a successful launch of schools, we hope this message finds you safe and well. In recent days, Phoenix Union has been in the news for the bold steps we are taking to ensure our students, staff, and families are able to return to school safely. PXU Superintendent Dr. Chad Gestson has been steadfast in his thoughts around the launch of schools and has consistently stated that PXU will not return to in-person instruction until it is safe, responsible, and reasonable to do so.

This is why PXU will begin school remotely on August 3rd and continue in a distance/virtual learning environment for the entire first quarter, which concludes on October 2nd. This decision was made in order to provide families, staff, and students with consistency. We have heard from a vast majority of stakeholders that we should not be making week by week decisions.

If the Governor announces that an in-person learning option must be made available after August 17th and before the end of the first quarter, Phoenix Union will safely open a physical location(s) to meet this requirement. This option would be available for a limited number of students based on state-level guidance and student/family need. Distance/virtual learning will still continue through the end of the quarter, even for students who do access campus because of student/family needs. This option would be available only if we have sufficient staff members who are able and healthy enough to work on site.

**Distance/Virtual Learning**

We are excited to offer our families a robust distance learning environment to meet their needs for the first quarter. Students will have 3 classes every day for the first 9 weeks. It will be important for your student to engage in the learning as attendance will be taken daily. Ultimately, students will earn credit toward graduation at the conclusion of Quarter 1. Students will earn up to 1.5 credits in Quarter 1 (Aug-Oct). Classes will begin each day promptly at 9:00 a.m. Each class period is 90 minutes. The school day will conclude at 2:25 p.m. Once we return to in-person learning, students will continue the 90-minute block schedule, earning up to 1.5 credits in Quarter 2, which is equivalent to the traditional 3 credits per semester that students earn during a typical school year.

As always, Phoenix Union will offer additional support for our students to be successful. Every student will receive outreach and wellness check-in phone calls from counselors, teachers, and other support staff as needed. Time is set aside every afternoon for virtual tutoring support. Additionally, club opportunities will be available every afternoon from 2:25 - 3:00 p.m. for students who wish to connect virtually. We encourage all students to join a club and stay connected to their school.

**Technology**

Phoenix Union is aware of the technological divide in our country, and we are working diligently to close this gap for our families. In response to the call for distance learning, PXU has invested the necessary funds to offer every student a device, thus becoming a 1:1 district. We invite all registered students to come to their home school to check out their laptop and an internet hotspot, if needed.
Families are encouraged to follow directions provided by each school for distribution of technology to ensure a faster and more efficient distribution. We will provide a combination of walk-through and drive-through distribution of devices. When on site, all staff and students must wear a facemask and adhere to physical distancing guidelines. If you haven’t received more details, please contact your campus.

Incoming Freshmen
PXU is excited to welcome the Class of 2024, and we cannot wait until in-person instruction begins. As explained, all students, including freshmen will begin the year in a virtual setting through the end of the first quarter. It is important for all incoming Freshmen to register for classes as soon as possible in order to have access to a laptop and hot spot.

All incoming freshmen receive the same benefits as currently enrolled students. Please visit www.PXU.org/ReturnToSchool for more information and to enroll online today. If you need help, please watch our How To Enroll video at www.PXU.org/Enroll or visit our return to school website and call the front office of your school. If you do not know your home school, please visit www.PXU.org/Info for attendance boundaries.

Athletics
We know that many students look forward to participating in sports. We continue to work with the Arizona Interscholastic Association (AIA) to determine when we can safely re-start our athletic opportunities. You will receive more information on how you can remain connected until we can resume in person.

Parent Communication
Now more than ever, it is important that we have multiple ways of communicating with parents as quickly as possible. While we will continue to make phone calls and send letters to share important information, one of the fastest ways to communicate with all parents is through ParentVUE, our parent communication application. ParentVUE is used to receive updates, check grades, connect with teachers, etc. It is important that parents log in to their ParentVUE account and maintain their credentials. Please download the free application on your mobile device (carrier data fees may apply). ParentVUE is also available online at https://ParentVUE.PhoenixUnion.org/PXP2_Login.aspx. To register your email address and activate your account, please visit www.PXU.org/ReturnToSchool. Contact your school if you need any assistance.

We will continue to monitor COVID-19 and notify you immediately if there are any changes or additional opportunities to our 1st quarter plan. We miss and love our students, and we can’t wait to begin distance learning on August 3rd. Please continue to visit www.PXU.org/ReturnToSchool for updates and more information.

Respectfully,

Thea Andrade
Chief Achievement Officer