December 11, 2020

Dear PXU Families:

We hope this communication finds you healthy and safe as we quickly approach the end of the semester and the close of this challenging year. As you may know, COVID-19 infection rates are surging. All zip codes in Phoenix Union are in the substantial risk category with positivity rates rising. Unfortunately, because of this spread, we will not be able to offer in-person learning on January 4, 2021. We will remain in distance learning as we have since August.

We know in-person learning is preferred, and our students benefit socially and academically in this environment. We are anxious and excited to re-open campuses to our communities when it is safe to do so. We have set February 16, 2021 as the new target date for in-person instruction. In mid-January, if the spread of COVID-19 has significantly improved and our benchmarks for re-opening are met, we will ask families to select an option for returning to campus. Parents may request in-person learning or decide that at that time that their student remain with virtual instruction. PXU is committed to monitoring and updating our local metrics weekly. If our community data is not yet ready for in-person learning on January 18, 2021, we will change the return date to March 15, 2021, which is the beginning of 4th quarter. For detailed information, please view a video message from Superintendent, Dr. Chad Gestson.

What can your student expect on Monday, January 4?

- Students will continue to access all classes remotely through Microsoft Teams.
- Students will continue to have at least three classes per day (approximately 90 minutes each) and are expected to be online, every day. Please see attached Quarter 3 Bell Schedule.
- Students will continue to have safe and productive learning spaces provided on campus, if needed.
- Students will continue to have one common lunch period while fully virtual.
- Students will remain in their 4th hour class for an additional 9 minutes for a ‘Check & Connect’ each day.
- Students will have both synchronous (live) and asynchronous (not live) assignments, lessons and practice.
- Students will be asked to keep cameras on and/or engaged via speaker or chat in classroom lessons when prompted by the teacher.
How will students needing school breakfast and lunch be supported?

- Grab & Go meal service will continue beginning January 4, 2021.
- Breakfast and lunch pick-up is from 7:00am to 10:00am.
- Grab & Go meal service is available at the following PXU campuses: Academies at South Mountain, Alhambra, Betty Fairfax, Camelback, Central, Cesar Chavez, Maryvale, Metro Tech, North, Trevor Browne, and Wilson
- Meals are available for all children 18 and younger (21 and younger with special needs).
- Last meal distribution day for 2nd quarter will be on Monday, December 14, and will include meals for the Winter Break.

What does this mean for school athletics and other after-school activities?

- The Arizona Athletic Association has currently postponed the start of the winter sports season (basketball, wrestling, soccer) until January 2021.
- For PXU, winter sports are projected to begin once the PXU benchmarks to safely begin conditioning and practicing are met in our communities. We will continue to provide updates as more information becomes available.
- Clubs and after-school activities will continue to meet virtually until our benchmarks are met.

PXU continues to diligently plan for the return to in-person learning. We miss our students and staff, recognize the great stress, anxiety, and even loss during this time, and are hopeful that we may welcome back students in person in February. As we plan and look forward to the spring, we are excited to provide meaningful connections and opportunities for our students, especially our seniors, in our last quarter of the school year. We have not forgotten our seniors and will make every effort to celebrate their great accomplishments. Additionally, we are already planning for summer learning opportunities for all students to access intensive tutoring, re-teaching and learning spaces, credit recovery and/or acceleration, and hands-on experiences.

We wish you all a peaceful and safe Winter Recess.

Sincerely,

Thea Andrade,
Chief Achievement Officer