

August 11, 2020

Dear HSD2 Parents and Guardians,

We continue to work with El Paso County Public Health (EPCPH) to monitor the local impact of COVID-19 and how the data will impact the reopening of schools in El Paso County for the 2020-2021 school year. EPCPH experts have informed us that local infection rates have plateaued, and hospitalization rates have stabilized. El Paso County has also implemented a new testing site on the southeast side of town which will support data-driven decisions. This testing site will be able to test anyone two years old and older. Testing information is available on the [EPCPH website](#).

"Given our current testing and hospital capacities, as well as our improving infection numbers, El Paso County Public Health supports in person learning as provided in the guidance," said Dr. Kelly, Deputy Director of El Paso County Public Health.

With this updated information, we believe we can continue our [Reopening School Plan](#) that includes an August 17 start date (in-person and eLearning) for K-5 students and a remote start for students in grades 6-12.

As of today, our plans for the start of school are still as follows:

- First full day of school: Monday, August 17
  - Grades K-5: In-person learning with extensive health and safety protocols in place including but not limited to hand hygiene, social distancing, wearing masks, and the use of cohorts or eLearning from home.
  - Grades 6-12: All students in these grades will start with our remote learning model as recommended by EPCPH and will return to in-person learning on Tuesday, September 8, 2020.

Please keep in mind that changes could still arise based on updated data from EPCPH, the Colorado Department of Health and Environment, and the Governor's Office.

Finally, our ability to start and maintain in-person learning is 100% dependent upon our collective actions and decisions. As we prepare to open, we are asking for all members of the HSD2 and El Paso County community to do our part to help ensure that students can be in school safely. Please help your students avoid meeting with large groups of friends, maintain appropriate social distancing and have them wear a mask in accordance with the state mandate – together, as a community, we can help the situation. Let us rise to this challenge together.

Sincerely,

Dr. Wendy Birhanzel and Mr. John Rogerson

Superintendents