



GOVERNING BOARD AGENDA ITEM AMPHITHEATER UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 10

DATE OF MEETING: July 14, 2020

TITLE: Review and Approval of Blue Ribbon Task Force Recommendations for School Year 2020-2021 and Proposal for Reopening of Schools (Amended)

BACKGROUND: When COVID-19 caused a statewide school closure in mid-March, Amphitheater Administration and staff quickly shifted into what was then intended to be a temporary instructional model of remote learning. Teachers connected with their students as they returned from spring break to provide support and instruction at home. Custodians, bus drivers, food service employees, and other school staff made the shift to alternative duties such as retrainings, neighborhood meal programs, and deep cleanings to sanitize schools for students to return safely when the Governor reopened schools. However, the number of COVID-19 cases continued to increase throughout Arizona, and the school closures extended repeatedly until the Arizona Governor finally closed schools through the end of the 2019-2020 school year.

The school closures were hard on Amphitheater students and staff alike. Schools ended for the year with staff and students having to say goodbye over Zoom or through car windows. Nevertheless, the Amphitheater community pulled together to survive the sudden turn of events with our usual strength and style, offering continuous optimism and support for one another throughout the entirety of the last spring quarter.

Just two years ago, Amphitheater celebrated its 125th birthday. This reminds us that Amphitheater has been able to continue educating students for over a century and a quarter through the many tests of time -- including another worldwide pandemic that hit Arizona in 1918 and closed Arizona schools -- largely due to the strong, smart and innovative families and staff who comprise the Amphitheater family.

With this in mind, the Superintendent formed a Blue Ribbon Task Force of Amphitheater parents, students, employees and community members to provide recommendations for reopening and renewing Amphitheater schools for School Year ("SY") 2020-2021. This agenda item will provide the Governing Board with an opportunity to review the recommendations of the Blue Ribbon Task Force and to consider and vote on a proposed plan for Amphitheater to continue to provide instruction throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

Important State Announcements about Reopening Arizona Schools

On May 28, 2020, the Arizona Governor announced that Arizona schools will open for SY 2020-2021. The following week, State Superintendent Kathy Hoffman issued Arizona Department of Education's "Roadmap for Reopening Schools – June 2020" to provide guidance for schools to prepare for a successful re-entry into SY 2020-2021. The Roadmap acknowledges that the recommended guidelines it sets forth will not work for every school district, and it encouraged districts to consult with their own stakeholders to determine the best way to reopen schools safely. In addition, it reminds school districts to "always adhere to the most recent recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention."

Following these announcements, school districts across the state began making plans to offer remote instruction during the pandemic. The Governor even talked about the possibility of calling a special session of the Arizona State Legislature to address concerns about schools' abilities to comply with state laws that require



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physical attendance in school buildings, specific instructional minutes at schools, and funding limitations during COVID-19. To date, that special session has not occurred.

On June 24, 2020, the Arizona Governor issued an Executive Order 2020-41, which permits schools to offer remote instruction to students during SY 2020-2021 under limited circumstances. The most notable limitation on the remote instruction model is a requirement that schools who permit students to learn through remote instruction must permit students the option to come to campus and be supervised during school hours on days that the student is scheduled to learn remotely. The Executive Order also reiterates the importance that schools continue to follow the directives of the Arizona Department of Health Services for determining when in-person learning can occur, ordering: *“If due to a COVID-19 outbreak and pursuant to A.R.S. § 36-787, the Arizona Department of Health Services directs a school to close temporarily in order to appropriately sanitize the facility, this section may be temporarily waived.”*

Thereafter, on Monday, June 29, 2020, the Arizona Governor issued Executive Order 2029-44, which closes school buildings until August 17, 2020. This Order delays in person school until August 17, 2020. During his press conference about this Executive Order, Governor Ducey called the August 17th reopening date “aspirational”, thereby insinuating that schools should be prepared for further delays of an in-person start date.

Blue Ribbon Task Force to Reopen and Renew Amphitheater Public Schools

Following the Governor’s announcement of the statewide school closure for the rest of the 2019-2020 school year, Amphitheater established a Blue Ribbon Task Force to prioritize and expedite information gathering and develop recommendations for reopening schools in August 2020. The task force was charged with developing a specific action plan to enable Amphitheater to continue to provide the same high-quality instruction during SY 2020-2021 that its families are used to, despite the extraordinary and ever-changing circumstances created by the COVID-19 pandemic.

From 230 applicants, several subcommittees were formed with a goal of ensuring that the diverse perspectives of all actively involved stakeholders were included in the planning process. The following groups were included to ensure that a range of community, staff and student needs were considered in the planning process:

- Staff representing classroom teachers for general education and special education students, as well as other support teachers, including staff representing the Amphitheater Education Association;
- Nonteaching staff who work with students at school sites to provide services as a school psychologist, counselor, social worker, and other related service providers, as well as in the role of office assistant, librarian, paraprofessional, and custodian;
- Student representatives (high school);
- Parent representatives, including parent leaders from school Parent Teacher Organizations, site councils, and the Amphi Foundation;
- Staff from the Pima County Health Department, hospital workers, emergency medical providers and first responders;



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- Department staff from communications and community relations, facilities, transportation, food services, financial services, human resources, informational technology, instructional services, special education support services, and professional learning and family engagement; and
- School principals from elementary, middle and high schools.

The task force was formed to address 10 key action areas:

1. Health Issues and Services
2. Elementary Education Instructional Design
3. Secondary Education Instructional Design
4. Social-Emotional Learning
5. Special Needs Protocols and Instructional Design
6. After School Activities and Extracurricular
7. Facilities and Food Services
8. Transportation
9. Workplace/Human Resources
10. Financial Considerations and Technology Needs

The Superintendent assigned District Administration to oversee the work of each of these action areas. The subcommittees met throughout June and included additional members who could bring direct knowledge and skills for identifying specific issues and generating a plan to address each of the identified critical actions.

Guiding Principles for Reopening Plans

Each subcommittee was charged with providing recommendations to ensure safe learning and working environments for students and staff in SY 2020-2021. Subcommittees were tasked to provide specific recommendations relative to the overall design plan for a safe return to school. The guiding principles for these recommendations were:

1. Providing a safe and healthy learning and working environment for Amphitheater's students, staff and the public,
2. Ensuring that all students continue to receive high quality instruction deliverable through optimized learning formats designed to give families a choice of whether to return their students to school or remain entirely online,
3. Providing necessary supports for student success, including:
 - a. Equitable access to technology and connectivity;
 - b. Social-emotional wellness and health supports; and
 - c. Identified supports to meet needs of special populations, and
4. Providing proactive, clear communication to all families and staff throughout SY 2020-2021.

Evaluation of Spring 2020

ADE's Roadmap recommends school districts begin their reopening process by evaluating the 2019-2020 school closure -- the thought being that school districts must be able to identify their successes and missteps from the statewide school closures to inform decisions for their reopening in fall 2020. Undoubtedly, the school closures may have created gaps in student learning that need to be addressed when schools reopen in August, as the amount and type of instruction that could be provided during the fourth quarter largely depended on the situational availability of individual students while at home. Recognizing that our reopening plan must create an



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infrastructure aligned to student, family, and staff needs, Administration and staff noted the following key lessons learned during the spring 2020 closures:

1. A District-wide common software and instructional format is necessary to promote equity and inclusion of all students.
2. Increased access to live teaching experiences is preferred to reduce the family burden to support student learning.
3. Increased social emotional learning (SEL) opportunities are necessary for students to continue learning through a virtual environment.
4. Limitations to technology and connectivity create an inequity in online learning for students and widen achievement gaps.
5. Frequent and consistent messaging from the District and its schools are needed, with safeguards to ensure communication reaches all families and staff.
6. Administrators and staff need professional development to strengthen virtual teaching strategies and collaborate on virtual instruction and telework.
7. Consistent grading practices are important to promote equity and motivate student engagement.
8. Learning platforms must be able to support consistent access by Amphitheater students and staff.
9. Staff access to childcare is needed to meet the demands of virtual instruction and telework.
10. Schools were not able to conduct student assessments at the end of the school year due to the impromptu closures and, therefore, teachers will not have good measures for determining student progress from the prior year.

State Guidance on Reopening Schools

The Arizona Department of Education outlined four scenarios from the National Institute for Excellence in Teaching that suggest school leaders use to guide their plan for SY 2020-2021. In each scenario, ADE emphasizes the importance of following the local health guidelines and the requirements outlined by state and local officials as they make their decisions. Here are the considerations that ADE provides for each scenario:

1. **ADE Scenario One: All Students in Physical Buildings from the Start of the School Year.**
 - ✓ CDC School Decision Tree guidelines can be met
 - ✓ Minimal community cases of COVID-19
 - ✓ Board-approved contingency plan for future school closures exists
 - ✓ Comprehensive communication plan in place
 - ✓ Clear communication of screening expectations for staff and families
 - ✓ Plan for medically fragile staff and students
2. **ADE Scenario Two: Some Students in Physical Buildings and Some Students Distance Learning from the Start of the School Year.**
 - ✓ CDC School Decision Tree guidelines can be met
 - ✓ Minimal to moderate community cases of COVID-19
 - ✓ Board-approved contingency plan for future school closures exists
 - ✓ Comprehensive communication plan in place
 - ✓ Clear communication of screening expectations for staff and families.
 - ✓ Plan for medically fragile staff and students that does not segregate students with disabilities from their non-disabled peers and considers disability-related learning needs
 - ✓ Consideration is given to the digital divide for students on Tribal Nations and others who lack connectivity or devices



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3. ADE Scenario Three: All Students Distance Learning from the Start of the School Year, with the Option of Returning to Physical Buildings when Appropriate.
 - ✓ Unable to meet CDC School Decision Tree guidelines
 - ✓ Substantial community cases of COVID-19
 - ✓ Board-approved plan for emergency distance learning
 - ✓ Comprehensive communication plan in place
 - ✓ Clear communication of expectations for staff and families
 - ✓ Consideration is given to the digital divide for students on Tribal Nations and others who lack connectivity or devices
 - ✓ Criteria has been determined for returning to physical buildings
4. ADE Scenario Four: Intermittent Distance Learning throughout the School Year Based on Emergency Closures as Defined by Local and State Health Departments.
 - ✓ All considerations from Scenario Three are met
 - ✓ Plan for determining criteria and data necessary to return to physical school buildings

CDC Guidelines for Reopening

Amphitheater is working with the Pima County Health Department to determine criteria and guidelines for reopening schools. Because each ADE reopening scenario also requires school districts to examine the reopening process outlined in the CDC Decision-Tree Guidelines for Reopening Schools, some Blue Ribbon Task Force subcommittees were assigned to work through the CDC Decision-Tree Guidelines as part of the planning process. Below is the Blue Ribbon Task Force's initial summary of CDC Decision-Tree Guidelines as they apply to Amphitheater.

- ✓ WILL REOPENING BE CONSISTENT WITH STATE AND LOCAL GUIDANCE?

All final decisions about when and how to reopen schools, as well as decisions about any future closures, will continue to be informed by the most recent local health data in partnership with state and local governments and the Pima County Health Department.
- ✓ IS THE SCHOOL READY TO PROTECT STUDENTS AND STAFF WHO NEED EXTRA PRECAUTIONS?

Amphitheater will provide full time online learning for students unable to return and flexible telework assignments for employees at high risk (as defined by the CDC), as feasible. It will also establish processes for higher risk staff to be able to protect themselves or seek additional accommodations if appropriate.
- ✓ IS THE SCHOOL ABLE TO SCREEN STUDENTS AND STAFF FOR SYMPTOMS AND EXPOSURE?

Amphitheater will implement a daily health-screening requirement for all persons entering campus. Families and staff will be educated about the symptoms of COVID-19 and asked to pre-screen and self-report daily. In addition, staff will be assigned to check in with students as they enter campus to the extent possible. Temperature checks will also be done in the health office as necessary.
- ✓ ARE RECOMMENDED HEALTH AND SAFETY MEASURES IN PLACE?

The CDC has highlighted specific mitigating strategies to reduce risk of COVID-19 infection and transmission:



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➤ *Healthy Hygiene Practices*

Hand washing procedures will be implemented upon arrival and throughout the day. Hand sanitizer will also be available. School staff will instruct students and their families about healthy hand hygiene and expectations for hand washing while at school.

In compliance with the Pima County requirements, cloth face coverings will be worn by students and staff throughout the day when physical distancing guidelines cannot continuously be enforced. Masks will be provided to students unable to provide their own, to be used as developmentally appropriate.

➤ *Intensified Cleaning and Disinfection*

Daily sanitizing will be implemented in compliance with the CDC guidelines for sanitization of schools, including cleaning of desks between students throughout the day. Additional staff will be assigned to assist with continuous sanitizing of high touch areas (door handles, handrails, bottle fill stations, restrooms, etc.). A COVID-19 Response Team will be formed that can respond to a suspected case of COVID-19 to provide deep sanitizing of necessary areas, and contracted cleaning services can be available if the need arises.

➤ *Social Distancing Practices*

Increase spacing between individuals using strategies to improve separation on school buses, cafeteria seating, posted signs to remind staff and students of physical distancing requirements, and arranging desks further apart and facing in the same direction. Additional tables will be placed in cafeterias and outside to assist with physical distancing at lunch. The number of volunteers and visitors in the building will be limited to those necessary to provide essential programming. Finally, steps will be taken to minimize exposure between students by minimizing shared spaces between grade levels, designating traffic patterns through the school, and ensuring student and staff groupings are as static as possible.

➤ *Train Employees on Health and Safety Protocols*

Amphitheater will continue to communicate health and safety protocols to staff through the reopening of schools. Trainings will be provided through the Amphitheater's Safe Schools staff training and assessment management system before school starts on all campuses. Signs will be posted throughout schools and departments to remind students, families, staff and community members about healthy hygiene and safety protocols during school.

✓ IS ONGOING MONITORING IN PLACE?

Amphitheater will regularly communicate and monitor developments with local health department authorities regarding cases, exposures, hospitalizations, and any other relevant metrics that may require a change in school operations. Amphitheater will encourage anyone who is sick to stay home and have protocols in place to limit exposure from anyone who is sick. In addition, it will monitor employee absences and have flexible leave policies and practices.

Surveys on Reopening Options

As part of the planning process, Administration surveyed families and staff for input on reopening expectations and the ADE scenarios. Notices about the family survey went to parents/guardians through email, the Parentlink system, the Amphi Connection Newsletter, social media, and the District website. The survey for families was also distributed in English and Spanish. Family survey responses were incredible with 5,470 people responding to the family survey.



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Similarly, employees were notified about the staff survey through their District email, the Parentlink system, the District website, and social media. The number of employee responses were even more notable, as the response ratio exceeded 50%, with 1,269 employees responding to provide input.

Detailed information about the family and staff survey responses are included in the PowerPoint entitled “Amphitheater Reopening Plan” that is presented as an attachment to this Board agenda item. In each survey, respondents were also given an opportunity to provide written statements as additional input. These responses will be given to Board members in their entirety.

Plan for Safe Return to School During COVID-19

The taskforce subcommittees focused their efforts on recommendations for a reopening plan. Given the vast diversity of membership comprising the Blue Ribbon Task Force, a variety of possibilities were discussed about the format that student instruction may take this fall. These discussions included consideration of the ADE scenarios and other suggestions to help guide Amphitheater for SY 2020-2021.

The Task Force recommendations are set forth in the “Blue Ribbon Task Force Report and Recommendations on the Reopening and Renewal of Amphitheater Public Schools 2020-2021” attached to this Board agenda item. In addition to these recommendations, Administration also met with the Amphitheater Education Association for input on its members expectations when schools reopen in August 2020.

From these efforts and the survey responses, two learning opportunities for fall 2020 have been identified as viable solutions for SY 2020-2021. Both options meet the necessary components for a safe return to school, as detailed by the Blue Ribbon Task Force and survey input, given the ever-evolving health guidance and resources available to Arizona schools.

These learning opportunities give families a choice to choose the best learning scenario for their student(s) during the pandemic. Administration recommends that families be given a choice of either:

1. In-school learning with health protocols and social distancing (which will assigns the student to a brick and mortar school to provide instruction remotely when necessary and in-person when viable),

or

2. Full-time online learning by request through the Amphitheater Academy Online.

Throughout the Blue Ribbon process, significant investigation and debate occurred toward offering a third “hybrid” option to permit students to learn through some in-school instruction and some remote instruction. Surveys were sent to measure parent and staff interest in a “hybrid” model, and strategies discussed about how one could occur. After much debate and consideration, Administration has eliminated the hybrid as a viable option because it does not provide the best educational outcomes for students. Despite all of the implementation alternatives reviewed, student progress on the hybrid option would simply be too limited given constraints on instructional time and the funding limitations associated with the model. It would also impose an unreasonable work expectation for our teachers without adding a significant benefit to students. Moreover, the hybrid model imposes significant child care burdens on our parents that are difficult to arrange for.

Therefore, Administration is presenting the Board with the following two scenarios for reopening for SY 2020-2021, with parents having the opportunity to select the one which works best for their families:



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Amphitheater Scenario 1 In-School Learning with Health and Social Distancing	Amphitheater Scenario 2 Full-Time Online Learning by Request
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ PreK-12 Instruction ➤ Students who elect this option will attend school in school buildings every day ➤ Social and emotional supports available as appropriate to promote student, staff and family wellness ➤ Support services provided to eligible students ➤ Bus service will be available to eligible students ➤ Schools to implement new required health and safety protocols within classrooms and non-instructional settings to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Frequent hand washing ✓ Physical distancing as feasible ✓ Enhanced cleaning protocols ✓ Face coverings as required by government mandate ✓ Protocols in place to limit sharing of supplies ✓ Facility enhancements for improved ventilation ✓ Signage posted and visible throughout campus on expected health and safety protocols ✓ Trainings on expected protocols for employees, students, families, and any other regular visitors required for student programming and safety ➤ Implemented changes for minimizing exposure between grade-levels/cohorts and to enable physical distancing during student transitions and in the cafeteria ➤ Electives/specials will observe physical distancing and safety protocols ➤ Mesa Distance Learning Labs continue at school ➤ Modified breakfast and lunch to reduce physical contact with food servers and expanded cafeteria seating options ➤ Recess as permissible ➤ Extracurricular activities and sports when feasible ➤ Visitors/volunteers limited to those necessary for student safety and programming ➤ Starts under the contingency plan for intermittent Remote Learning by Necessity (see page 10) ➤ Transitions to Remote Learning by Necessity contingency (see page 10) intermittently as needed once students are in schools ➤ Option for students to transition to full online instruction (Scenario 2) available upon consultation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ K-12 Instruction ➤ Alternative instructional model designed to be completed 100% percent outside of traditional school through the Amphitheater Academy Online, our state approved K-12 school ➤ Social and emotional supports available as appropriate to promote student, staff and family wellness and to connect students with their home schools ➤ Students receive full-time instruction via online courseware and digital curriculum resources along with some direct instruction and support from an online Amphitheater teacher as appropriate ➤ Support services provided to eligible students ➤ Participation in extracurricular activities and sports when feasible ➤ Option for students to transition to in-person instruction (Scenario 1) available upon consultation



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Consistent Elements in the Amphitheater Scenarios

However reopening actually looks on the first day of school and throughout the fall, some elements are consistent in both scenarios to provide support and continuity of learning across the entirety of Amphitheater Public Schools' programs.

✓ Technology and Connectivity

In June, the District purchased 4,000 additional Chromebooks through the bond initiative that Amphitheater's voters put into place on November 8, 2016. This purchase of new laptops will extend the availability of loaner laptops for students who elect the remote instruction option identified in Amphitheater Scenario 2. The District is working to partner with internet service providers to expand free and low-cost home service options available to Amphitheater students.

✓ Assessment

Student assessments are a priority and included within all reopening plans to help teachers to identify students' learning needs and plan for upcoming instruction. Resources and professional development will be provided for staff to support effective and appropriate assessment practices in a distance-learning environment, including limitations tied to test security in some cases.

✓ Curriculum

Recognizing the challenges and limitations many students may have experienced with learning during spring 2020, teachers will use a common platform and grading practices at elementary, middle, and high school levels to ensure that there is equitable learning access if students need to quarantine or during intermittent closures (District, school or class) due to COVID-19. In addition, staff will restructure curriculum to bring students up to appropriate levels at the beginning of school in a manner that highlights essential standards for the grade level or course, as well as the prerequisite knowledge and skills learners need, so that students can be successful with new content. Updated individualized education program's (IEP) or 504 plans will offer strategies for staff to support learners with differing needs.

✓ Digital Resources

Whether learning takes place primarily in an online environment or in-person, expanded digital resources will ensure students have consistent access to high quality learning tools. Staff will continue to receive training and support in applying blended learning strategies, which involve a mix of teacher-directed and self-directed learning.

✓ Social Emotional Learning and Wellness

The direct and indirect impacts of the global COVID-19 pandemic are expected to have a lasting effect on students and staff. Amphitheater teachers and school staff will reinforce and enhance curriculum and supports focused on social-emotional learning, relationship building, and successful transitions to new schools, classrooms, and environments, whether in-person or through distance learning. Amphitheater began trainings last year on trauma sensitivity and trauma-informed practices, as well as set up multiple social emotional learning programs in its schools. These trainings will continue through professional development with prioritized focus on social-emotional learning and supports surrounding the reopening. Similarly, staff will continue to qualify for support services at no-cost through the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), as well as through the flexibility afforded them through the District's sick leave policies.



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✓ Intervention Services

Administration and staff are cognizant of the fact that all struggling learners must continue to receive flexible and responsive support for their academic, behavioral, and wellness needs. Amphitheater already has multiple resources in place to support ongoing intervention services for students. Classroom teachers and support staff will continue to receive professional development to plan and implement plans for student achievement through instruction and tutoring both online and in-person. Support staff and resource teachers, including school counselors, psychologists, and social workers, will work flexibly across the school to address student needs.

✓ Supports for Special Populations

Students who need additional supports for learning (including students who qualify for REACH, students with disabilities and English learners) will be given special consideration to ensure appropriate instruction while complying with federal and state requirements. REACH will continue services under either Amphitheater scenario for SY 2020-2021. Instructional delivery for students with a disability will be designed to ensure the least restrictive environment as required by their IEP. As needed based on IEP goals, this may include in-person specialized instruction as appropriate even if the student elects a complete online instruction program (Amphitheater Scenario 2). When necessary, virtual meetings will be used to convene special education procedural meetings, such as local screening committee, reevaluation, eligibility, IEP teams, etc. Similarly, instruction for English Language Learners (ELLs) will include a defined minimum time allocation for English language development (ELD) instruction within the student's schedule. ELD assessments will continue to monitor student progress in development of reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills. In addition, counseling, social work, psychology and other special education support services will be available to support students and assist their families' understanding of distance learning models as necessary.

Contingency Plans for Remote Learning by Necessity **If Schools Cannot Start In-Person or Must Close Intermittently**

Families who elect to have their students return to school in-person (Amphitheater Scenario 1) with health and social distancing protocols in place can rest assured that any intermittent closures due to COVID-19 will look different from what occurred in spring 2020. Then, teachers had to change their instructional delivery practices without any notice or advanced planning. This time, an intermittent school closure will look differently because Amphitheater Administration and staff have planned for and trained on remote instruction practices designed to teach students outside of the traditional brick and mortar buildings.

Amphitheater's contingency plans for "Remote Learning by Necessity" only applies to students who elect in-person school (Amphitheater Scenario 1). Intermittent closures due to COVID-19 do not affect students who elect full online learning (Amphitheater Scenario 2) since their online instruction remains consistent even if the Governor closes brick and mortar schools.

Under the Governor's Executive Order 2020-44, dated June 29, 2020, all students who elect Amphitheater Scenario 1 (In-Person Learning) will start under this contingency because schools are not allowed to open physically for students yet. It is clear from the Executive Order that Amphitheater Schools must continue to follow the advice of the state and local health departments to determine the in-person opening date as the health departments are responsible for directing decisions related to public health during a state of emergency like the COVID-19 pandemic. See A.R.S. § 36-787.

If an intermittent closure precludes a class, school or the entire District from going to an Amphitheater brick and mortar school, then the contingency "Remote Learning by Necessity" implements to allow teachers to instruct students remotely without any extensive delay. Here are some key points on the plan:



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- This option may be implemented intermittently (District-wide, school-wide, or class-wide) as COVID-19 cases require.
- Remote Learning by Necessity is available for PreK-12 instruction.
- Regular contact with teachers will continue without any extensive delay.
- Social and emotional supports will continue to be available as appropriate to promote student, staff and family wellness.
- Support services will continue to be provided for eligible students.
- Expanded digital access and digital curriculum resources, as well as additional staff trainings, will be in place before school begins in August 2020.
- Instructional practices will have been revised to include lessons learned from spring 2020
- Limited school building access may exist as necessary during the closure for staff, distributing technology or instructional resources and individual appointments for certain screenings or assessments that cannot be completed online.
- Extracurricular activities and sports may be closed as appropriate.

Necessary Changes to the SY 2020-2021 Calendar

The Governor's Executive Order 2020-44 delays the start of in-person school until August 17, 2020. Amphitheater is scheduled to begin school on Thursday, August 6, 2020.

Administration fully intended to begin school as scheduled when Administration believed in-person attendance would be possible. Now that school must start online (under the Remote Learning by Necessity Plan), Administration recommends that the first day of school be rescheduled to Monday, August 10, 2020, to provide teachers and educational staff two additional days of professional development and planning before remote instruction begins for all students in the District.

Unlike last spring 2020, the remote instruction that teachers must provide this August will typically be with entirely new students who are not yet known to the teachers. These students may not have met or even seen their new teachers and may find the new year start difficult without some one-on-one connection in place beforehand. By keeping August 6-7 as teacher work days, Amphitheater may also provide teachers with some time to try to connect with students before their lessons start remotely.

Barring unforeseen circumstances, this delay of the school year start for students should not require any other calendar adjustments for the year. There is enough educational time built into the Amphitheater school calendars to absorb the student report time by two days. If, however, the start of school is delayed further, staff will have to work additional, non-scheduled days at the end of the year per contract, or breaks may have to be varied, in order to correct instructional time requirements.

Administration does not recommend any changes to staff work schedules with this calendar change. Nonteaching staff will also need these extra two days without students to train on the new protocols and to



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develop procedures to be ready for students to return to school. Therefore, the only recommended change to the 2020-2021 calendar is to reschedule the first day of school for students to Monday, August 10, 2020, which would continue on an online only basis until it is safe to reopen our doors as determined by our state health officials. Students who select Amphitheater Scenario 1 will begin attending in-person school after the Governor permits schools to open and once the Superintendent, in consultation with the state and local health departments, determines that it is viable for them to do so in-person.

Next Steps and Timelines for Key Decisions

The first step in the reopening and renewal of Amphitheater Public Schools for SY 2020-2021 is Board approval of a reopening plan. Following that, a formal communication will be sent to families and staff to outline the timeline for families to indicate their selection for their student learning experience in fall 2020. The communication will have sufficient information about the SY 2020-2021 options for families to make an educated choice between the alternatives. The communication will also provide a timeline for families to make their selections before school starts.

Additionally, it will include information about plans for classroom instruction, transportation, breakfast/lunch, recess and passing periods, hand hygiene and face coverings, health assessments, and limitations for visitors on campus. It will also contain answers to questions that parents have submitted about plans for sports and extracurricular activities, elementary specialty classes (art, music, and physical education), middle and high school elective and CTE classes, and student trips and assemblies.

Likewise, staff will receive a similar communication from their administrator or department manager detailing plans for their safe return to work, including information about work assignments, work calendars, and future training plans. They will also be provided detailed information about plans for SY 2020-2021, as well as information about when and how to take necessary trainings about the new health and safety protocols related to COVID-19.

RECOMMENDATION: The Administration recommends that the Governing Board approve the following three (3) recommendations for SY 2020-2021, each of which is detailed below:

FIRST RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Governing Board approve the District's offering of two learning modalities for students during SY 2020-2021. These learning experiences are explained in detail on pages 8-10 of this agenda item. They will provide the best outcomes for students to continue learning safely during the pandemic and assist in slowing the spread of COVID-19. Below is a summary of each scenario being presented in this first recommendation:



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Amphitheater Scenario 1: In-School Learning with Health and Social Distancing

1. This option will be available for PreK-12 instruction.
2. Students who elect this option will attend school in school buildings every day as long as schools are allowed to remain open. The additional health and safety precautions outlined above will be in place while students are at school.
3. This scenario also includes the detailed contingency plan identified above (page 10) as the “Remote Learning by Necessity” plan. Students who choose Amphitheater Scenario 1 will start school remotely per the Governor’s Executive Order and return to in-person schools when it is safe to do so as determined by the state government and the health department. With information provided daily, it is too early to determine when in-person instruction is viable, but under Amphitheater Scenario 1, the Superintendent may set the date for in-person instruction to begin once health departments have declared it safe to do so. At this point, however, it is presently clear that date will not be August 17. Once students do return to in-person schooling, the Remote Learning by Necessity contingency may also be implemented for intermittent school closure(s) due to COVID-19, to assist students and families to transition quickly to remote instruction for continued learning throughout an intermittent closure.

AND

Amphitheater Scenario 2: Full-Time Online Learning by Request

1. This option will be available for K-12 instruction.
2. Students who elect this option will attend full-time instruction online through the Amphitheater Academy Online. Courses will be taught through the District’s online courseware and digital curriculum resources along with direct instruction and support from an online Amphitheater teacher.
3. School staff will work with students to help keep them connected with their home schools while online.

SECOND RECOMMENDATION

Administration further recommends that the Governing Board approve the revised school calendar for SY2020-2021 attached to this agenda item. The revisions will permit Amphitheater to start school under the “Remote Learning by Necessity” plan with the first day of school being Monday, August 10, 2020. There are no other changes recommended to the SY 2020-2021 calendar.

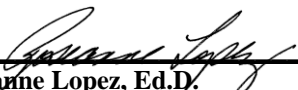
THIRD RECOMMENDATION

Finally, Administration recommends that the Governing Board extend its special thanks to everyone who volunteered valuable time during the month of June to serve on the Blue Ribbon Task Force.



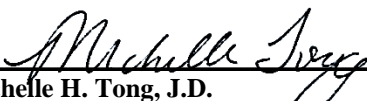
**GOVERNING BOARD AGENDA ITEM
AMPHITHEATER UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 10**

INITIATED BY:




Roseanne Lopez, Ed.D.
Associate Superintendent for Elementary Education

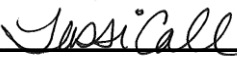
Date: July 13, 2020



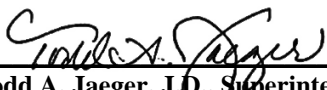
Michelle H. Tong, J.D.
Associate to the Superintendent and General Counsel



Michelle Valenzuela
Director of Communications



Tassi Call
Director of 21st Century Education



Todd A. Jaeger, J.D., Superintendent