



GILPIN COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT RE-1

*10595 CO 119*Black Hawk, CO 80422*(303)582-3444*

Home of the Eagles!

March 17, 2021

Dear Gilpin School Community,

The distribution and administration of the vaccine has substantially mitigated the year-long COVID-19 pandemic that has affected school staffing for in-person learning. Eighty-seven percent of Gilpin School staff received their second Moderna vaccination dose on March 11, 2021. Vaccinated school staff will now be excluded from school quarantine groups after March 25, 2021 (14 days after the second vaccine dose). As the number of individuals who choose to be vaccinated increases, the likelihood of returning all students to in-person learning increases.

Following the current downward trajectory of COVID-19 positive cases and hospitalizations along with the prediction that cases and hospitalizations will continue to decrease into the summer months, it is time to look forward to the start of the next school year. In August, the District will be offering two learning programs: ***In-person Learning*** and ***Gilpin Online***. The ***Remote Distance Learning Program*** will not be offered to students for the 2021/2022 school year.

Gilpin County Public Health will apply to the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) to move to “Green” status on the COVID-19 dial. “Green” status approval is pending. With “Green” status, the Gilpin County pandemic restrictions will continue to be reduced now and into the summer.

With staff vaccinations solidifying the delivery of in-person learning, parents are asked to voluntarily transition their remote child(ren) back into in-person learning after Spring Break for the remainder of the 2020/2021 school year. Contact your principal Heather Huntoon hhuntoon@gilpin.k12.co.us and/or Alexis Donaldson adonaldson@gilpin.k12.co.us to return your child(ren) to in-person learning after Spring Break.

The ***Gilpin Online Learning Program*** will continue through the 2020/2021 school year for students currently enrolled. ***Gilpin Online*** will be offered again in August for the 2021/2022 school year.

Many teachers have been challenged and burdened with double-duty this school year by providing both in-person and remote teaching and learning to students. Although 80% of the student body has returned to in-person learning, the concurrent teaching delivery for remote learners creates additional time and preparation outside of the school day for teachers. Inadequate home internet connectivity and/or bandwidth is still a difficulty and frustration for some remote learners.



The *Remote Distance Learning Program* has evolved during this school year. Most teachers have transitioned to primarily providing synchronous teaching and learning to remote learners: the teacher and in-person and remote students are “live” in real time for teaching and learning during the scheduled class time during the school day.

The expectation is that after Spring Break teachers continue to transition away from holding a separate time of the school day to meet with remote distance learners and provide synchronous teaching and learning to remote learners through the remainder of the fourth quarter.

The vaccine will greatly reduce the COVID-19 exposure to school staff. However, with over 500 people at school each day, individuals in the school environment may still contract the virus. COVID-19 protocols and precautions for the next school year will be better known at the end of the coming summer prior to the start of the next school year. Through the remainder of the current school year all individuals in the school must maintain diligence and adhere to all the social distancing expectations: wear a mask, wash hands, social distance, and cohort.

The COVID-19 vaccines provide the hope that the pandemic is beginning to subside and a return to school life as students, parents, and staff want it to be is possible with each new day.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David S. MacKenzie".

David S. MacKenzie, Ph.D.
Superintendent