



February 26, 2021

Good afternoon, SUSD Parents and Guardians,

While your students are focused on closing out the third quarter strongly, it is good to take note of an annual sign that spring is approaching: the return to the Valley of “America’s favorite pastime.” Baseball spring training games get underway in just a matter of days, and although fewer fans will be in the stands to hear the crack of the bat, it is yet another sign of the creative ways we continue to find to observe our classic traditions.

On Tuesday, March 2, the SUSD Governing Board will meet at 5 p.m. at the Mohave District Annex to consider the instructional learning plan for the final quarter of the 2020-2021 academic year. You are invited to watch the meeting live, or later, on our [YouTube channel](#) and to provide your thoughts in advance or afterwards through [Let’s Talk](#).

Weekly COVID-19 Update from Supt. Menzel

The COVID benchmark indicators continue to decline for our [Scottsdale zip codes](#). While the cases per 100,000 remain in the substantial transmission area, it is possible that by next week the indicator will return to yellow, along with the percent positivity, which has been yellow now for two weeks. The COVID-like illness metric is green across Maricopa County. In order to sustain this positive trend, it is important to continue following the mitigation strategies that have gotten us here, including consistent and proper wearing of face masks, physical distancing, frequent handwashing, and staying home when sick. Our [building-level dashboard](#) also indicates relatively few confirmed active cases, and I am pleased to report that we have not yet had to return to virtual learning at any campus as a result of worrisome virus spread. This is due to the efforts of our staff, students, and families to follow the mitigation strategies, and, as a result, our students are the beneficiaries of being able to attend school in person.

Earlier this week, the Maricopa County Department of Public Health issued [updated guidance](#) in response to the new recommendations from the CDC. They specifically address districts like Scottsdale that have been able to provide in-person instruction safely, noting the following: “*Schools who have successfully implemented mitigations strategies with hybrid learning scenarios without evidence of sustained COVID-19 spread can continue to operate using their current strategies, as long as this includes wearing masks at all times, maintaining physical distancing of 6 feet or more to the greatest extent possible, and careful surveillance for COVID-19 cases and outbreaks on a school-by-school level.*” The CDC introduced a new color-coded system of measuring community spread (blue, yellow, orange, and red) and identified only two benchmarks, instead of the three we’ve been tracking since August. MCDPH will adjust its weekly dashboard next week to incorporate this change.

Strategic Planning Update

The first Strategic Plan Design Team meeting occurred on Feb. 17, 2021. After a general introduction, the members of the Design Team began their work on building a future-focused strategic plan. Participants were assigned to breakout groups, where they engaged in an activity, titled *Now and Tomorrow – Creating a Preferred Future*. They each selected a [quote](#) and responded

to the question/prompt following the quote. The members of the Design Team then reconvened in a large group to examine the [three-phased strategic planning structure](#).

The final section of the first session concentrated on the beginning steps toward creating a vision for Scottsdale Unified School District (SUSD) that captures a preferred future. The Design Team began a study on the future world of work by viewing a video, [The Future of Work: Will Our Children Be Prepared?](#) They also explored the international concept of [transversal competencies](#), skills and concepts that future-ready students must master in addition to academic standards.

The session closed with Design Team breakout groups determining and suggesting concepts to include in a vision statement. Ultimately, a draft of the SUSD vision statement will be shared with the SUSD community for feedback. Preparation for the March 3 Design Team session includes additional reading from international organizations about the future world of work. You can find the list of Design Team members along with future updates on our [website](#). Please let me know any questions or comments you may have regarding this process.

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Athletics Update

Middle Schools - We are pleased to be able to offer 4th quarter track and field to our grade 6 - 8 students. All participants will need to sign up through [Register My Athlete](#). See the instructions [here](#). Information on practice schedules is available from your school. Track and field meets will take place on the four Wednesdays in April: April 7, April 14, April 21 and April 28. Please keep in mind that Wednesdays are also Early Release days. If you have specific questions, please contact your school Athletic Director or track coach.

Performing Arts

Despite the challenges the pandemic has presented to our student musicians, singers and theatre companies, the show must go on! Just this week, 66 SUSD high school choir, band and strings students were named to the Arizona Music Educators Association's Regional Honor Ensemble. These students auditioned virtually, performing state-required scales and musical excerpts and, as a result of their practice and preparation, will now participate in the Virtual AMEA Regional Honor Festival on March 20. Thirty members of our middle school vocal groups will sing in that same organization's Junior High All-State Choir with vocalists from around the state, also on March 20. And this week at Chaparral High School's outdoor amphitheater, adorned with an amazing set, clear-masked theatre students offered wonderful performances of the classic *Peter and the Starcatcher*.

Board President Monthly Reports

We hope you enjoyed reading Board President Jann-Michael Greenburg's report yesterday on the Board's February activities. You will receive a new report each month. You can also find them on the SUSD website at www.susd.org/BoardUpdate.

Thank you, and have a safe and wonderful weekend!

Scottsdale Unified School District [Cabinet](#) and [Leadership Team](#)