



April 9, 2021

Dear Scottsdale Unified School District Family,

Signs of spring really having ‘sprung’ are everywhere: Major League Baseball teams have departed for their regular-season homes; high school baseball, softball, tennis, track and beach volleyball seasons are in full swing; annual state assessments of student learning are underway; and spring concerts are around the corner. Thank you for supporting your students’ many endeavors!

A few weeks back, nearly 200 SUSD families ‘Zoom-ed’ in to a screening of the documentary *The First Day*, the story of former NBA player Chris Herren and his battles with substance abuse. His story and the discussion that followed centered on how you, as parents, can prepare yourselves to help your children navigate high-risk decisions they’re making at younger and younger ages. We are pleased to offer a second presentation of the documentary at 6 p.m., Thursday, April 15. Register for the Zoom event at <http://bit.ly/thefirstday2021april15>. A Q&A session with local childhood advocate/educators Katey McPherson, Michael Klinkner, Angie Burleson and Shane Watson follows. Many thanks to [notMYkid](#) for offering this presentation to our families again.

K-12 Virtual Learning for Next School Year

We look forward to welcoming back our students currently attending school online, either through Enhanced Distance Learning or Scottsdale Online Learning, to their brick-and-mortar campuses on August 4! If, however, you wish your student(s) to attend school online next school year, please go to this [Enrollment page of the SUSD website](#) and choose ‘Enroll Online’ to register for Scottsdale Online Learning for the 2021-2022 school year. If you need assistance logging in to your ParentVUE account, please call 484-HELP (4357), Option 1, or send us a Let’s Talk message at the Enrollment link.

Weekly Report from Supt. Menzel

COVID-19

The most recent [weekly update](#) reflects a slight increase in the number of cases per 100,000 and a decrease in the positivity rate. The overall transmission level remains in the Substantial range, using the CDC metrics. It has been reported that the UK variant of the virus is now the most prevalent form in Arizona. This variant is more easily transmitted and is a reminder that for all of the progress we’ve seen, we still need to continue following mitigation strategies to reduce the risk of spread on our campuses. The number of [confirmed active cases](#) in our schools remains relatively low. As you know, last week we announced modifications related to wearing masks at recess. Our COVID specialist has developed [FAQs](#) to help address many of the questions and concerns that have been raised.

You will recall that the district was recently looking into adding voluntary surveillance testing to our mitigation strategies. At this time, our families did not express significant interest in pursuing this. Should circumstances change in the future, the idea may be brought back for renewed consideration.

Also, it has come to our attention that our school nurses are at times on the receiving end of aggressive remarks regarding the district’s COVID-prevention practices. These dedicated

professionals play a key role in our successful efforts to-date to keep the virus away from our school populations, and they should be treated respectfully when they reach out to our families. Thank you.

I also want to take this opportunity to remind you that if your student or someone in your home has tested positive for COVID-19 or is exhibiting virus symptoms to please keep your student at home and notify the school nurse.

Focus on the Future Town Hall Conversations

Our first two Town Halls were held this week at Arcadia and Coronado High schools. Engaging conversation occurred at both locations, both with those who attended in person and with those who joined virtually. The questions, concerns and comments we've received so far are helpful to the SUSD leadership team as we continue to plan for next year and beyond. We know your schedules are busy, so please know that you are welcome to attend any of the remaining sessions, regardless of which Learning Community you call home.

Below, please find the remaining schedule. All of the Town Halls take place in the auditoriums and begin at 6 p.m.

Saguaro High School:

Monday, April 12

In person at 6250 N. 82nd St., Scottsdale

Virtually at <https://bit.ly/3m4p6gI>

Desert Mountain High School:

Wednesday, April 14

In person at 12575 E. Via Linda, Scottsdale

Virtually at <https://bit.ly/39w7Mw2>

Chaparral High School:

Friday, April 23

In person at 6935 E. Gold Dust Ave., Scottsdale

Virtually at <https://bit.ly/3cD8UQo>

Videos of this week's Town Hall meetings can be found on SUSD's [YouTube channel](#).

Strategic Planning Update

The March 31 Strategic Plan Design Team meeting opened with a video narrated by Linda Darling-Hammond, titled [How PBL Taps Into the Science of Learning and Development](#). The Design Team members broke into small groups to answer the following question:

What do schools and districts need to know and do in order to implement an innovative change that impacts teaching, learning, and leading? Reflect on instructionally focused collaboration, a trust-based culture, professional learning, district support, community connections, and resource management.

This discussion was followed by feedback on [suggested vision statements](#) generated by the question: "Is this statement inspirational and aspirational?"

As a segue to the creation of an SUSD mission statement, the Design Team next reviewed the first portion of [Leading High Performance School Systems](#) by Marc Tucker, then concentrated on possible mission statements. A mission statement states an organization's purpose and provides a collective identity for an organization. It also aligns with the organization's vision and guides its deeds and accomplishments, motivating people within the organization to act. The Design Team

studied several organizations' mission statements and viewed [Simon Sinek's Ted Talk on *The Power of Why*](#). The team will consider mission statements at its next meeting on April 14.

Finally, there are two news items of note this week:

Tax Credit

The state of Arizona has extended the filing deadline for 2020 income tax returns to May 17, 2021, to match the new federal filing deadline. If you have not yet submitted your state tax form, there is still time to make a tax credit contribution to SUSD!

Governing Board Meetings

We are happy to report that starting April 20, the Governing Board will return to the Board Room at Coronado High School for its Regular monthly meetings. As a reminder, our meetings now start at 6 p.m. We hope that both actions encourage greater attendance, participation and engagement by the SUSD community. The Board's monthly Special meetings will remain at the MDA and also get underway at 6 p.m. Please note that face masks are still required of meeting attendees at both locations.

Thank you for another great week. We look forward to seeing your students and you on Monday!

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