

ACADEMY ADVENTURES MIDTOWN

Public Charter School * Serving Grades K-5

Wednesday, August 12, 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Thank you to all our families for beginning the school year with us! In these challenging times, our goal is to provide your child with as much support and continuity in their education as possible. Since the first Executive Order in March that closed all schools, we have learned to adapt, persevere, sacrifice and navigate the ever-changing dynamics of life during a pandemic.

On July 28, 2020, Pima County issued a statement to school districts that included recommendations from Chief Medical Officer Dr. Francisco Garcia and Public Health Director Dr. Teresa Cullen with guidance that stated that the earliest in-person instruction could safely be anticipated to resume would be after Labor Day, September 7, 2020. Furthermore, on Thursday, August 6, 2020, under the direction of an Executive Order by Governor Ducey, the Arizona Department of Health (ADHS) released public health benchmarks that are intended to guide the safe return to in-person instruction. You review the ADHS benchmark at: <https://www.azdhs.gov/documents/preparedness/epidemiology-disease-control/infectious-disease-epidemiology/novel-coronavirus/covid-19-safely-return-to-in-person-instruction.pdf>

Based on the benchmarks set by ADHS for in-person instruction, in-person instruction will not be able to resume on August 17th as originally planned. The good news is that the benchmarks are trending in the right direction.

My recommendation to the School Board is that we follow the public health data provided by ADHS and Pima County Health in determining when it is reasonably safe to resume in-person instruction. Based on the data, in-person instruction will most likely not take place until after Labor Day.

The School Governing Board will be meeting the week of August 10th (please watch for a notice to be posted) to review the ADHS benchmarks and review adjustments to instructional options that may need to be put in place in order to reopen schools to provide in-person instruction. In addition, the School Governing Board will review and approve the required Mitigation Policy that outlines the instructional plans. Once the Mitigation Policy is approved, it will be posted on the school's website.

We recognize that COVID-19 is creating challenges beyond just the physical safe return to school. The social, emotional, and academic well-being of our students is of utmost importance to us. As we plan to offer in-person instruction as soon as possible, we are also dedicated to continuing to connect with our students. As per the Executive Order (2020-51) the school building will be open beginning August 17th for those students who need Support Services which are outlined in the Mitigation Policy. You must notify us the week prior that your child will be participating in these services. This will not be in-person instruction, students will be doing their Distance Learning with monitors available for supervision. **Students will be socially distanced. Students will be required to wear masks at all times. Students will be assigned a seat that they will remain in for the day, with bathroom and short breaks.** "Schools are not required to provide all available support services on-site daily to every student who expresses any need and can optimize resource utilization by ensuring parents and guardians have the opportunity to identify which specific service their student needs" (taken from the *Arizona Department of Education, Office of the State Superintendent - Guidance on On-site Learning Opportunities and Support Services, and District or Charter Waivers*). We are required to comply with these restrictions.

Operating in a pandemic is historic and unfamiliar for all of us. We will continue to adapt, persevere, sacrifice and offer grace. Perhaps these are the most important lessons presented to all of us this year!

Please do not hesitate to contact the school with any questions and/or concerns.

Thank you for your continued support.

Mr. Jack Penczar, Superintendent