



September 3, 2020

Dear Bulldog Families,

First, thank you all for the sacrifices you have made to help your students and support our teachers these first few weeks of school. While many things have gone well, I know that there have and continue to be struggles. Please know that we are listening and are intent on continuing the methods that are working and changing the ones that are not. We appreciate your patience and cooperation and ask you to continue encouraging your students to try hard, to never give up, and to communicate with their teachers, counselors, and principals.

As we learned this afternoon, Eddy County is not currently meeting the criteria in regard to COVID-19 cases to return to school in the Hybrid mode September 8th as we had hoped. Our average number of cases per day and positivity rate currently exceed the targets that have been set. However, I am hopeful COVID-safe practices in our county including the wearing of masks, social distancing to the greatest extent possible, diligent hand-washing, staying home when sick, and avoiding large gatherings will bring our numbers down allowing us to get more kids back in school soon.

We are anticipating that the status of each county will be updated every other Thursday. When Eddy County meets the criteria to be considered green making us eligible to return to school in the Hybrid mode, we will take one week to make the transition. So, the Thursday/Friday group of students will be the first to attend in the Hybrid mode. Please watch for more information on the transition.

As we continue in the Remote mode, the New Mexico Public Education Department, the New Mexico Activities Association, and the New Mexico Music Educators' Association allow some opportunities for in-person learning with strict guidelines. For us, this means the following:

- Pre-K, Kindergarten, 1st, and 2nd grade students may continue attending two ½ days in groups of no more than five per classroom.
- Special Education students of all ages may begin attending two days per week in groups of no more than five per classroom.
- Athletic workouts may be held in pods of no more than five.
- Band and choir students may work one-on-one with an instructor.

Numerous precautions are being taken at each campus to bring these students to school safely.

I encourage you to review our “Fall Reentry Plan Procedures and Protocols” and our “Fall Reentry Instructional Plan”. These have been revised as of 9/2/2020 based on new guidelines from the NMPED and NMDOH. Both are available on our website at www.bulldogs.org. Click on the “School Reentry Plan” button.

Since our entry into the Hybrid mode will be delayed, this is a great time to solicit feedback from you on how things are going so far. We are preparing surveys that will be available tomorrow afternoon. The surveys will be e-mailed and available on our website at www.bulldogs.org. We value your feedback and appreciate you taking the time to share your thoughts and experiences with us.

There is no better place to work as an educator than Artesia, New Mexico, and our dedicated staff members have shown tremendous commitment to making it the best place to be a student, too. The incredible support of students and teachers by families and our community make this the ideal place to persevere through these challenges we face. At some point, we will look back with great pride on all we will accomplish. It's Great to Be a Bulldog!

Sincerely,

John Ross Null, Superintendent