



RIVERSIDE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 2
"A Highly Excelling School District"
1414 S. 51st Avenue
Phoenix, Arizona 85043

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July 23, 2020

Dear Parents and Guardians,

We greatly appreciate all of the time and support you have given your children as they have been learning from a distance. You are amazing! We know it has not been easy juggling "school" for your children, your career, your household and your entire family's emotional health during this time of school closures. We thank you for believing, trusting and supporting R2 in our effort to address all of the challenges faced by the COVID-19 pandemic. There is no doubt that it will continue to be a difficult road ahead, but we have faith in our R2 community that by working together and supporting one another, we will succeed. We will begin the school year on July 27th, completely online through our STEM² Distance Learning platform.

Please note that our current school calendar is subject to change due to the COVID-19 pandemic's rate of infection, state health orders, the Governor's additional executive orders, changes in legislation and our own assessment of when it will be safe for our students to return to in-person instruction.

Based on the current rate of infection and our own assessment, we have determined that a realistic date to allow students to return to in-person instruction will extend beyond August 17th or even September 8th. Therefore, as of this date, we have decided that October 12th, or until further notice, will be the timeframe for students to safely return to the school for in-person instruction. These dates are fluid and may change as we receive additional guidance from the Governor, Arizona Department of Health, Arizona Department of Education and the Centers for Disease Control.

We will continue to monitor the spread of COVID-19. This has been a very difficult decision to make as we recognize that children learn best when physically present and engaged in the classroom. Not only do they learn social and emotional skills; they receive healthy meals, exercise, mental health support and other services that cannot as easily be replicated at a distance. However, our commitment to the health, safety and well-being of our students and staff is paramount and is the driving force behind this decision. We hope that you understand our unwavering focus on health and safety. We appreciate your continued support of the Riverside family.

We have developed a strategic "Path to Recovery". This plan was developed through the hard work and collaboration of teachers, principals, classified staff and parents. The school principals will be sharing our "Path to Recovery" plan and will be outlining the process we will follow upon our return to

in-person instruction. We are launching the school year in an enhanced STEM² Distance Learning format. This mimics the structure of our current Personalized Learning Platform (PLP) Online Program used at Maricopa Institute of Technology (MIT) which includes a grading process, daily attendance, recorded and "live" teacher lessons, student and teacher interactions as well as social and emotional learning.

Once it is deemed safe for our students to physically return to school, we will transition into the in-person instruction format and will continue our STEM² Distance Learning format for those parents who do not feel comfortable sending their students to school in-person. We understand that some families may have concerns about sending their children back to school in-person and may want to spend more time transitioning using our distance learning program. There will be no pressure to send your children back to school. We recognize that you know your children and personal situation, and that there are many factors which will influence your decision of when it would be best for your children to return to in-person instruction. Ultimately, the final decision to attend in-person instruction will be made by the parent(s). We are here to support you and will continue to provide you with the necessary resources for those who choose this option.

It is important to understand that all procedures put into place by Riverside are for the health, safety and well-being of our students and staff. These procedures are also subject to changes as the COVID-19 pandemic impacts our community. Should a second wave of the virus occur, restrictions will increase. Conversely, if the health concerns of COVID-19 lessen, there is a very real possibility that restrictions will be decreased and students may return to in-person instruction earlier than planned. When and if we return to in-person instruction, strict social distancing guidelines with appropriate use of personal protective equipment (PPE) such as facemasks will be expected. School principals along with health teams have built this safety design into the district's "Path to Recovery" Strategic Plan. Details about these requirements will be shared with parents during student laptop pick-up, teacher-parent virtual meetings, social media, robocalls and school and district websites. We encourage our parents to frequently visit our school webpages and to follow us on social media for up-to-date and accurate information.

Thank you all for your continued support, understanding and cooperation. This is not an easy situation for families or for our schools, but together we will be successful! My heart is full of gratitude for all the support you have shown our teachers and staff during this challenging time. Thank you for choosing Riverside Elementary School District.

Respectfully,

Jaime A. Rivera

Dr. Jaime Rivera

Superintendent of Schools/CEO

Riverside Elementary School District No. 2