April 16, 2020

Hello Cotopaxi Families:

**Weekly Message:** I hope everyone had a wonderful Easter weekend and although colder weather moved in, we also had the sunshine which brightened our days. This week has not seen a lot of communication to report to you coming from the Governor’s Office, the Colorado Department of Education, CDC or our local health departments. However, I can assure you that all of these agencies are working behind the scenes to confirm data, develop guiding documents for school districts, and help businesses and other organizations who have been economically affected by the shutdowns. This week, we heard from the Governor’s office, Commissioner Anthes from the Colorado Department of Education, CDC, mental health officials, State Treasurer, the Secretary of State and our BOCES superintendents. As a result, I can report that every district is working through the current challenges much the same as we are.

**Board Meeting:** Our Board conducted their very first virtual April Board Meeting via Zoom this past week and it was very well attended by almost 30 teachers, parents, staff, and community members. Thank you to everyone who was able to join the Zoom Board Meeting. The virtual method of conducting a monthly Board meeting is new for all of us, however, I have to compliment the Board members and all those in attendance for their engagement and cooperation within these changing times. The meeting ran smoothly through the collaborative efforts of all involved. Please join us for our next virtual May Board meeting currently scheduled for Monday, May 11th at 5pm if you are available. Please be advised that the Board Meeting date is subject to change due to conflicting times with our food distribution and instructional packets to our Cotopaxi families. Be sure to check our website to get the information on our next Board meeting.

**Governor Polis expected announcement:** Based upon discussions this week, it appears that Governor Polis will be making his announcement towards the end of this week whether or not he will be reopening schools for in school instruction or whether he will be extending the stay-at-home order currently in place. Several committee data reviews and discussions are scheduled for April 22nd so we should learn more regarding any changes in his stay-at-home orders and what the next steps for our schools and community might involve at that time. I know I continue to say this and you are probably getting tired of hearing it, however, there is still a strong indication that in person instruction will not be possible. Therefore, our current alternative to in person instruction at school will remain remote and online instruction as implemented on March 30th and this will likely continue throughout the remainder of our school year. We recognize that remote learning has not been easy for the majority of our families, however, you are all doing great. We will continue to navigate these turbulent waters together. I am impressed with your determination and flexibility as we balance this new way of learning and instruction. Stay strong and remember to reach out to your teachers with any questions.

**Task Force Created:** One new item on the Governor’s agenda this week is the formation of a specific task force to evaluate and make recommendations on what would a re-opening of school districts and businesses look like in terms of new guidelines to keep everyone safe and prepared. Even if the Governor lifts the stay-at-home order, very specific guidelines will need to be addressed for this to happen. **Please Note:** these guidelines may affect not only this year but also may affect the start of the next school year as well. We should know more details on this topic in the coming weeks and we will keep everyone updated whenever possible. The Task Force consists of governmental agency representatives, medical experts, CDC personnel, educational leaders, designated military personnel, business representatives, etc. For school districts this means that there might be different expectations for the different levels, ie: elementary versus secondary.

**Meal Delivery:** We will send our reminder message this Sunday, however, our next delivery is schedule on Monday, April 20, 2020 from 5 pm - 7 pm at all four locations. Remember we are delivering 4 days-worth of both breakfast and lunch to any child 18 years of age or younger. Our locations include the Howard Volunteer Fire Department, the Coaldale Community Center, the Cotopaxi School and the ‘Y’ bus stop. If you are switching stops from last week, please contact the school and let us know which location you intend to visit in order to collect the food and instructional packets. As always, if you are unable to make our scheduled delivery date/time, just contact us at 719-942-4131 and we can make other arrangements with you throughout the week.
**Website & Resources:** We will continue to provide updates as they become available on important COVID-19 announcements so please check our website often. Important updates and messages directly connected to the Cotopaxi School District will be sent through our ‘all call’ system as the first means of communication, then posted to our Facebook page and website. If you have questions, concerns or comments, please do not hesitate to contact us at either dvanesselstine@cotopaxire3.org or keckelberry@cotopaxire3.org.

Remain positive and as time continues, we want to remind everyone to continue to reach out to one another. That phone call, text, email, etc can make all the difference. We are in this together and united we will remain strong.

Stay healthy!

Danielle Van Esselstine, Superintendent