April 2, 2020

To our Cotopaxi Families:

**Weekly Message:** April is now upon us and with it perhaps more questions than answers. However, with the camaraderie and collaboration that we have witnessed over the past few weeks, I have confidence that our community will overcome the challenges and uncertainty that exists. It has been another information packed week with numerous updates at the local, state and federal levels. At all levels, people are trying to figure out what the best next steps should be.

**Executive Order D 2020 007 extended by Governor Polis:** On April 1, 2020, Governor Polis extended his suspension of normal in person instruction at all public and private schools in the State of Colorado through April 30, 2020. **What this means for you and your children is that we will continue to have no in school instruction and will instead continue with our alternative online instructional practices initiated on March 30th through April 30, 2020.** The executive order is posted on our website for our reference.

**Week 1 of Online Student Instruction during school closure:** I cannot thank everyone enough for your support and participation as we returned to instruction. We recognize all of this is new and with it will come some frustrations, anxiety, and yet successes too. Please remember that it is important to assist your child in returning assignments through google classrooms, emails, photos, hard copies, etc. As staff initiated their first zoom meetings this past week, students and staff were able to reunite, connect and these conversations provided the safety and reassurance that instruction will go on even during these challenging times. These new instructional practices are a totally new experience for all of us and we are working through this together as a team.

**School Closure Information:** Based upon the extension of this executive order, Cotopaxi Fremont RE-3 will continue the suspension of all in-person instruction now through **April 30, 2020.** The situation revolving around COVID-29 continues to evolve and with it, direct changes to how things have always been done. This is not a negative, it challenges us to do things differently and become the change agents we teach our students to be. Although the Governor has only extended the timeline to April 30th, there is the real possibility that it could extend through the end of the school year. Based upon our conversation with Governor Polis and Commissioner Anthes, additional updates should be expected the week of April 20th. Our approach to these deadlines and closures has been consistent in that we will face the outcome when the time arrives and will take on these changes on a day by day basis. At this point we will continue to adapt and refine our instructional practices to best meet the needs of all our students and families.

**Meal Delivery:** Again another thank you to our families and community. Our deliveries this past Monday were very successful and you turned out in large numbers with over 406 meals provided daily for the week. Our next delivery is on **Monday, April 6, 2020 from 5 - 7 pm at all four locations:** the Cotopaxi Schools, the Coaldale Community Center, the Howard Volunteer Fire Department, and the ‘Y’ bus stop. Please reach out to us through email or calling our main line at 719-942-4131 if this date and time does not work and we will make separate arrangements. We do not want any of our students to go hungry. If you need support, please do not hesitate to reach out to us as well. We may be able to assist or most definitely, we will be able to connect you to other resources that can.

**Stay Connected:** Balancing ourselves during this time is very important. Take advantage of things you may not have had time to do like enjoy the outside with walks, hikes, bike rides, or just sitting in the sun or inside with playing games, reading or cooking. Strategies were sent out earlier to help, yet those are just ideas. Be creative. As a means to stay connected, Cotopaxi will be conducting online ‘spirit’ days and themes which will be shared with you soon. Be sure to join in the fun and send pictures to acanterbury@cotopaxire3.org. Please take a look at the Cotopaxi School District Facebook page to see many of our Cotopaxi families sharing pictures of what they have been up to and ways they are learning to connect with each other during these difficult days. It is important as we move through this journey together that we make positive memories!
Many facets of this pandemic continue to evolve and remains a fluid situation, please be sure to check out our Cotopaxi School District website and Facebook page for updates and valuable links. As well, we will continue to provide messages through our ‘all call’ system as they become available. However, if you have any questions, at any time, please do not hesitate to contact us at either dvanesselstine@cotopaxire3.org or keckelberry@cotopaxire3.org. Please continue to reach out to each other and your neighbors. It is a good day to be a Pirate!

Danielle Van Esselstine, Superintendent