



# COTOPAXI CONSOLIDATED SCHOOLS

Fremont County School District RE-3

P.O. Box 385 ~ 0345 County Road 12  
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Mrs. Danielle Van Esselstine - Superintendent

Mr. Ken Eckelberry - Principal

November 20, 2020

Hello again Cotopaxi Staff, Families and Community and



**Greetings:** Thank you to everyone for your support of our students, teachers and staff. We live in a truly wonderful community. A big 'Thank you' to our parents and middle school leadership team for their efforts in collecting and organizing this year's Thanksgiving basket give-away. They were able to provide 10 baskets to families for this holiday season which is exciting and much appreciated. As well, Mr. Dane DeVries and the 4-H Club added to the efforts with a basket as well. We hope everyone has an amazing Thanksgiving. We are 'Thankful' to each of you!

**Reminder:** Just a quick reminder that the *school district is closed Monday, November 23rd through Thursday, November 25th* so that everyone can take a much needed break from the high stresses created by the ever-changing demands associated with COVID-19 guidelines. School will *resume on Monday, November 30, 2020*.

**COVID Guidelines:** We continue to update and build upon our earlier communications as impacted by changes from the Governor's Office, Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment, CDC, Fremont Public Health, the Colorado Department of Education and the various sub-groups. Although information is posted on our website, you can access many of these documents on those individual entity websites as well. Nurse Debbie, our supervisory team and administration continue to meet regularly to review plan details as well as new regulations and requirements. As updates are made, we will continue to share out.

I enjoy leading off our conversations with, **we currently do not have any 'positive' cases within our schools and district** and hope to continue to reiterate that message. When you look around us, that is truly amazing and gives credence to our students, staff, families, and community for all the measures everyone has put into place and guidelines followed. THANK YOU! When the time comes to announce a positive case within the district, I am confident in our team and the processes we have in place, but it will be a learning tool. Fremont County will play an essential role within that process and notification will also be directed from them.

A couple of general guidelines that are important to note:

- We continue to recommend our students, staff and families remain mindful of preventive measures and helpful tips.
  - ◆ Frequent hand-washing, social distancing, masks, etc.

- Please remember that ALL students and/or staff who are sick or experiencing symptoms of any illness remain home. Nurse Debbie is always available to talk through or provide recommendations if needed.
- Individual situations and independent contact will continue to be made by Nurse Debbie as necessary.
- All staff and parents will be notified of a direct positive case through our all-call communication system and a public announcement in collaboration with Fremont Public Health.
- Our school nurse, Nurse Debbie, as well as administration will **directly call families if a known risk is identified with your child(ren)**. As well, we have notification letters prepared which will be provided to those individuals directly impacted.
  - ◆ If you are not called, you do not need to take any specific action.
- Quarantine is an established safety strategy to reduce the potential spread of the virus. It is not a punishment and does not mean individuals are sick.
- Instruction (teaching and learning) will continue for all staff and students as appropriate.

We want to continue to stress our intent to remain “In-Person” following our Board approved Calendar. Only those individual staff/students and/or cohorts impacted will be quarantined as needed. Once a quarantined window has expired, that individual or individuals will return to on campus, in-person learning. Unless mandated otherwise, this will be our focus.

**We do need your assistance**, parents are a critical component to our success, every year, but equally so within this unique environment. Whether in-person or a remote instructional format is utilized, we MUST work together to ensure that adequate and effective learning is taking place. As parents/guardians you will need to be an active participant in this process and assist your child(ren) and the teacher. If your child is quarantined or if you choose remote learning, our expectations for learning remains consistent. Students MUST be present for learning; present just looks differently. Students will be held accountable for following established expectations and obtaining the information necessary for growth and advancement of skills. Some general rules are listed below:

- Attendance is required, although it may look different. When present, in front of a teacher, evidence clearly indicates personal growth and development.
- You child may need your assistance, not just with logging into the system but homework help as well. Please work directly with your child’s teacher if questions or concerns arise. Younger students may require additional help throughout a lesson while older students may be able to work independently. However, your reinforcement of the educational importance goes a long way toward advancing a student.
- If possible, provide a quiet or consistent location for their classes so they can focus on instruction or assignment completion.
- As staff and students will be following the established schedule whether in person or remote, class times remain consistent. However it is important to note that we do NOT expect students to sit by the computer for 8 hours a day. Each teacher has established specific instructional time as well as independent (off-screen) time.
  - ◆ Be sure to talk to your child’s teacher.
- Within the schedule, time for breakfast and lunch are built in. Please ensure that your child(ren) take time for breakfast and lunch.
- If out for an short or extended window, meals may be needed. Breakfast and lunches can be picked up from the school. We do request that you please notify Mrs. Devin Gulliford in advance so her team can prepare those meals for you.
- Timely completion and submission of assignments will be expected. Again, reach out to your child’s teacher for those deadlines.
- Communication is Key! Please let us know if you are having any difficulties or need assistance in any realm. We will do our best to assist with any needs you may be experiencing.
- Encourage your child to work hard and ask lots of questions. This is a learning experience for all of us.

Our combined goal remains a strong commitment to our students education, safety and increased opportunities along with supporting our families and community throughout this challenging time. Together, we make that a reality! Thank you for your amazing support and encouragement, you all have been truly wonderful.

I believe it is also important to reiterate that times are hard and everyone is under a tremendous amount of stress. It is natural to feel overwhelmed or in need of help. Please do not hesitate to reach out to us and together we can come up with a plan of support. We have many resources available here at the school as well as contacts for the community. We will make it through this situation together and supporting each other.

**Fremont County remains in level Yellow (concern):** Good news was released yesterday afternoon from Fremont Public Health. Fremont County has seen an increase in the positive cases, along with numerous counties across Colorado, which has the potential to move us up in restrictions guided by the ‘dial’ initiated through the State. This ‘dial’ can be found on our website, at the State or local Health Department websites as well. Through our county and their mitigation plan as well as efforts by the community, we did not move to Orange (high risk) or Red (severe risk) status as predicted. This is wonderful, not only for our schools but our local small businesses and economy as well. Restrictions are still in place however not as limiting as the higher levels. One clarifying point I do wish to briefly highlight is that the State added a new tier, a purple level was added in order to allow schools to remain ‘in-person’ even if a county moves into the Red or severe risk level. That conversation will be held that a local level and those decisions guided by the district and their local Public Health agency. I will be discussing the ‘dial’ in more depth at our ‘Conversation with the Superintendent’ Town Hall meetings if you would like to hear more.

➤ Please see the times and agenda below.

**“Conversation with the Superintendent” Town Hall/School-Community Connection:** Thank you for those able to join our prior zoom Conversations, it is wonderful to hear from you. **Our next conversation** will be held on **Wednesday, December 2, 2020 at 6:00 pm**. We will continue to provide updates in regards to COVID-19 updates, current hot topics and an open forum structure for you to ask me or other available staff questions. Each month the topic may be different yet we want them to be relevant to issues and timely in nature. The meeting will again be a town hall style meeting with specific time set aside for any questions you may have. We continue to seek your input and feedback as together we are stronger! To join the meeting, please click or add the Zoom link into your internet browser from the attached agenda.

<p><i>COTOPAXI 'S CONVERSTATION WITH THE SUPERINTENDENT</i></p> <p><i>AGENDA</i></p> <p><i>December 2, 2020</i></p> <p><i>6:00 pm - 7:00 pm</i></p>	
6:00 pm	Welcome - Mrs. Van Esselstine, Superintendent
	COVID-19 Updates Financial Audit Supervisor’s updates
6:30 pm	Question & Answer
**All times are approximate. Additional time will be allotted depending upon needs.	

Join Zoom Meeting, information listed below, to join the “Conversation with the Superintendent!”  
<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/76077656345?pwd=d3FZem1UM1BLOUpoS1gySDBQVS9rQT09>

Meeting ID: 760 7765 6345

Password: puu8C5

“Home of the Pirates!”

**Resources:** We are very excited, our new communication tool called Apptegy is on schedule to go ‘live’ in December. We have been completing all the training, transition and preparation for the roll-out of this tool along with the updated/new Website. As we approach our live mode, parent and community access and information will be pushed out so you will have access information and directions.

We are still utilizing our current website and Facebook page to provide valuable updates and information. Please do not hesitate to visit our site and let us know if you have any questions. Our contact information is listed on our website or you can contact us at [dvanesselstine@cotopaxire3.org](mailto:dvanesselstine@cotopaxire3.org) or [keckelberry@cotopaxire3.org](mailto:keckelberry@cotopaxire3.org). We can also be reached on our office line at (719) 942-4131.

Have a wonderful and safe Thanksgiving Break and I look forward to visiting with everyone on Wednesday, December 2<sup>nd</sup> at 6 pm. I continue to be honored and humbled to serve our students, staff and our community. Thank you for everyone’s support and encouragement during this challenging year.

Sincerely,

Danielle Van Esselstine, Superintendent