For Immediate Release

July 21, 2020

Pueblo District 70 Board of Education to open schools remotely

Citing numerous safety and health concerns from staff, teachers, parents, and students the Pueblo District 70 Board of Education voted unanimously to start the school year remotely.

The virtual Board meeting was convened Tuesday evening to recommend and approve the Remote Start option for D70 schools.

Students in D70 schools will start on August 24 with Remote Online Learning for 4 weeks. Students will then transition (depending on local COVID-19 positive case conditions) into a Hybrid In-Person delivery mode on September 21 with ½ of the student population reporting on Monday and Tuesday, and the remaining ½ reporting Wednesday and Thursday. This A-B Hybrid schedule will continue through October 8. Full In-Person Delivery could possibly occur as soon as October 12 if local positive daily COVID-19 cases average 2 or below for two weeks. There will be updates and reviews at each Board of Education meeting to determine the movement into the next phase or phase to a previous phase. Of course, changes in local and regional pandemic conditions or changes in variance could force a change earlier.

“Parents and student can remain in the remote online learning mode for as long as they need during this pandemic,” said District 70 Public Information Officer Todd Seip. “We know some students will be ready to return to our hybrid and in-person classes, and some will want to continue learning remotely. We can accommodate both.” Benefits of the hybrid mode is that only ½ of the students will be in classrooms, lunchrooms or on busses at any time – greatly helping with social distancing in those high occupancy areas. “For example, instead of 30 students in a class, teachers will have 15. Instead of 50 students on a bus, we will have 25” added Seip.

More specific information about the remote learning and hybrid schedule will be sent to parents and teachers next week.

Board President Debbie Houghton referred to the hundreds of emails and messages that the BOE has received over the weekend. “There are passionate opinions on both sides of this dilemma,” said Houghton. “We realize that we have a duty to our staff and students and the community.”

Superintendent Ed Smith stated that staff and teachers remotely teach students from their classrooms. “There they (teachers) will have internet and class resources available to them to help with their curriculum delivery. Students and parents will begin to receive instructions from their
school Principals and classroom teachers beginning August 10 on how to access the new
SCHOOLELOGY platform. We want parents to understand that Remote school will look and feel as
close to a normal setting as possible.”

“We will allow those students who receive special services to access our buildings as they and their
parents feel comfortable,” added Student Services Director Greg Keasling. Those students will be
contacted by their school instructors and case workers to set-up in-person teaching schedules. “It’s
best when we can meet those needs on a face-to-face basis.”

As for extra-curricular athletics and activities, District Athletic Director and CFO TJ Vinci
recommended that fall sports and other activities continue following the strict guidelines that the
District and CHSAA have currently in place.

The first review date for full In-Person re-entry will be October 6 with In-Person classes possibly
starting at 2nd Quarter on October 12, 2020. Parents will have the option of continuing remotely if
they choose.

The Board last week officially approved a calendar revision that moves back the student start date
one week from August 17 to August 24, 2020.

District 70 staff reports back to buildings on August 10 for two weeks of training and preparation.
Parents will be receiving communication from their school soon with information on schedules,
and registration. School officially begins (remotely) on August 24, 2020.

The Board of Education meeting is available for viewing on the District 70 YouTube page at
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC0X3-WmRaMW3iAhrFvHjcDg

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