Dear Phoenix Union Community,

I want to start by thanking the many individuals who have given up their Spring Break to monitor the spread of the Coronavirus disease (COVID-19), attend webinars, track recommendations from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and engage in planning for possible short-term and long-term school closures. Phoenix Union remains committed to neither over-reacting nor under-reacting to the Coronavirus outbreak.

To date, there are still no reported cases of the Coronavirus within the Phoenix Union family - staff and students. Although subject to change prior to next week, as of today, school will resume as normal on Monday, March 16.

The following precautions have been taken as of today:

- All PXU campuses, facilities, and school buses have been cleaned and disinfected in preparation for school this Monday, March 16.
- All out-of-state and international travel has been suspended through early April. Earlier this week, we released the statement below:

  “Although PXU is highly supportive of travel for clubs, sports, competitions, professional development, and other opportunities outside of Arizona, we are at a place where we are unable to predict or control cancellations, closures, or quarantines in other states and countries. Therefore, we are suspending all out-of-state and international travel through the first week of April. We will continue to monitor the spread of the virus and CDC guidelines to determine travel approval beyond early April.”

- All in-state travel to large, public venues will be cancelled. Only travel to smaller events or venues, such as a sporting event, will be allowed.
- All sporting events will continue yet spectators will not be allowed.
- All employees who travel out of the state and country are required to disclose the details of their travels in order to determine if a 2-week quarantine is necessary.
- Extra supplies, such as sanitizers and cleaning/disinfectant materials, have been ordered and will arrive to campuses tomorrow.
- Staff and other organizational meetings of 100 persons or more are to be done virtually or be postponed.
- We will cancel the use of facilities for most/all non-district events.
On Wednesday, March 11, Governor Ducey declared a public health emergency in Arizona, in response to the spread of the Coronavirus. It is important to note that this declaration does not include the closing of schools at this time. Governor Ducey’s declaration provides for the following to help address the spread of the virus:

- Establishes the Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) as the responsible organization for coordinating all matters pertaining to the public health emergency response of the State.
- Allows ADHS to waive licensing requirements to provide healthcare officials with assistance in delivering services during times of heightened demand.
- Allows the State to access $500,000 in emergency funds to aid in the protection of public health.
- Provides the State with emergency authority to purchase goods and services as needed to protect public health.

In preparation for potential school closures, the following plans are being developed:

- Critical central services would continue throughout a shutdown, including payroll and network services.
- A full inventory of laptops has been completed. Our Teaching and Learning Division is finalizing a professional development plan to train all certified staff on Phoenix Union’s virtual platform in the event we must move to online instruction.
- We are compiling a list of all essential and non-essential events/assemblies. A protocol for large gatherings is also being developed. If and when necessary, Phoenix Union will only permit essential events.
- Certain campuses and District facilities would remain partially open to the community to serve as resource centers for students and families.
- Our Food Services Department will continue to provide food to students. Plans to turn school buses into food distribution vehicles are being finalized.

We thank you for your continued support and commitment to our community. The health and wellness of our students and staff remains our highest priority. Our teams will continue to work around the clock to keep you updated as soon as new information becomes available. Please visit our website (www.PhoenixUnion.org/CoronavirusInfo) to stay informed. Daily updates from our Communications Department will begin tomorrow, which would include information about school closures, if necessary.

Respectfully,

Chad E. Gestson, Ed.D.
Superintendent