



## Weekly Update—Tuesday, February 2, 2021

### New Updates:

1. **Virtual Meeting.** The next virtual meeting is (Wednesday, February 3, 2021) from 5:00-6:00 pm via Zoom. Here is the link:  
**Join Zoom Meeting:** <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89504891076>
2. **In-Person Learning.** Thank you to each and every one of you for helping us to remain in-person by supporting us with all of the procedures and routines. It is critical that individuals stay home when ill or when living with (or in close contact) someone who is being evaluated for COVID. The completion of the [MSSD COVID Intake Form](#) and participation in follow-up calls has been so important. We appreciate the communication and collaboration.
3. **Important\*\*Schedule for Returning Middle School and High School Students to Fully In-Person Learning.** I know that the thought of bringing more secondary students back to fully in-person schedules brings a mixture of thoughts and emotions. We have always communicated that when we have a planned return that we will attempt to communicate two weeks prior to the change. We are now at that point.

### **Tuesday, February 16—(Monday, February 15--No school due to President's Day.)**

- 6th Grade Students will return to fully in-person learning at MSMS (Note...6<sup>th</sup> Grade students at UPES have been fully in-person since January 19).
- 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Grade Students will return to fully in-person learning.

### **Monday, February 22**

- 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Students will return to fully in-person learning.
- 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> Grade Students will return to fully in-person learning.

### The Why

- The incidence and hospitalizations rates continue to decrease in the county.
- Our students have missed so many opportunities for learning and engaging impacting academics and their wellness.
- The change to the quarantine process allows us to complete targeted contact tracing, which potentially impacts fewer individuals.
- As a district, we can do this when we all maintain best practices:
  - Staying home when a person is sick.
  - Staying home when a person has been in close contact with someone who is being evaluated for COVID.
  - Wearing a mask.
  - Washing hands frequently.



4. **Parent/Teacher Conferences—February 18 & 19.** We are looking forward to the opportunity to connect with parents and students during parent/teacher conferences. This will be a time for discussions related to the progress each student is making and areas for supporting further, especially with the transitions that have happened this school year. The fall conferences were such a success, and we are looking forward to strengthening the relationship and communication between our school staff, students, and parents. Principals will be communicating the details for the school in their weekly updates.
5. **Bus Transportation Update.** Manitou Springs School District, along with school districts across the region, is experiencing a shortage of school bus drivers. This, in conjunction with the possibility of COVID quarantines, may impact student transportation. While it is not the current reality, there might be a time when a bus route may be cancelled, and there would not be transportation provided to/from school for that route. Alternatively, a route might need to be delayed, so the bus driver can run two routes.

Please know....We are fully committed to doing everything we can to prevent this situation from occurring. In fact, our Transportation Department has already made significant adjustments throughout the year. Thank you to our bus drivers for their flexibility and willingness to make changes as needed.

If this happens, we will notify families as early as possible so families can make alternate arrangements. We ask that families consider coming up with alternative transportation plans in the case that routes may be cancelled or delayed for a period of time.

6. **It is National School Counseling Week!** We are so thankful for our amazing School Counselors.
  - Ute Pass Elementary School—Stephanie Wilson
  - Manitou Springs Elementary School—Ashley Root
  - Manitou Springs Middle School—Lisa Ward
  - Manitou Springs High School—Alisha Strupp & Jennifer Trainor



7. **Vaccinations.** You might have already learned that last Friday Governor Polis announced that educators will be able to start receiving the vaccination as early as February 8. We are working with El Paso County Health Department and a local hospital to provide this access to those educators who would like to receive the vaccination.
8. **Transition Events (Elementary to Middle & Middle to High).** We are planning the transition field trips for students going from 5<sup>th</sup> grade to 6<sup>th</sup> grade and 8<sup>th</sup> grade to 9<sup>th</sup> grade. These are exciting



experiences for students. While we know these visits will look different this year, our school teams are still planning ways for students to experience. Parents and students...please be on the lookout for communications related to these visits.

9. **School Choice Window is Now Open.** Links to the Virtual Choice Information Sessions are posted on our district page at <https://mssd14.org/cms/One.aspx?portalId=57448&pageId=6086603>.

