



Superintendent Telluride School District
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September 11, 2021

Good Afternoon TSD Families,

I hope you are enjoying yet another wonderful weekend. We have now completed four weeks of school, and while some parts have been challenging, many parts have been fun and rewarding. We all want to be done with COVID, masks, testing, and all the other things that get in the way of our mission, and I appreciate your patience as we head that way while acknowledging sometimes it feels like painfully slow progress. I cannot express enough my gratitude for the work that our staff does. Even though I hear a variety of feedback at times about all kinds of things, the overwhelming majority is gratitude for the work that our staff do!

Board Governance, Mission/Vision Information –

- BOE seats - There were two seats up for this November's election; Stephanie Hatcher and Jill O'Dell. Stephanie and Jill both submitted petitions, and no other petitions were submitted. For that reason, there is no need for a November election for seats, and we will operate under the same BOE for the next two years.
- BOE Governance – While our district has had board governance policies referencing Policy Governance on record, the BOE has not operated under a true Policy Governance model for decades. Our current BOE worked with the Colorado Association of School Boards (CASB) at retreats in May and this past week to develop a deep understanding of Policy Governance, and the BOE is invested in following a Policy Governance model moving forward. More detail on Policy Governance can be found [here](#), but in a nutshell policy governance consists of the following:
 - Clearly defined roles and responsibilities for board and superintendent
 - Clear definition of “ends” (i.e.: goals, outcomes, expectations)
 - A clear process for providing evidence that those ends are being met, through a structured BOE calendar of agendas that includes “monitoring reports” which provide that evidence.

This Policy Governance process will be put in place over the next few months as all governance policies are finalized and adopted.

- Vision/Mission/Ends Statement Forums – As part of the work the BOE has done toward Policy Governance, the Telluride Graduate and Vision/Mission work has been drafted into what is called a “Global Ends” statement, meaning “what do we expect for and from our students and our system?”. In late September and early October, the BOE will host staff and

community forums to get feedback on this work, as part of the process toward putting the Policy Governance model into place. Look for more information soon on specific dates and locations for these forums.

Follow-Up on August 17 Lock-Down

Our admin team had a debrief with the Telluride Marshall this week. At that debrief, we discussed some questions, details, and future plans so we can continue to be as well-prepared as possible should any event happen in the future. Here is some of what we discussed:

- We will fine-tune our chain of communication between the Incident Command (the Marshall in this case), me, and school staff and families.
- As an event unfolds, we will provide as much information as we can as clearly as we can. On August 18, the lockdown was started because there was a person who was deemed a potential threat to the building, and law enforcement did not know the whereabouts of the suspect and whether the suspect might be in the building. Soon before the lockdown ended, we confirmed the suspect was actually not in the building. Subsequently the suspect was taken into custody and the lockdown ended. After questioning, the determination was made that the suspect was not a credible threat. It is much easier now to look back and state the sequence of events as clearly and concisely as I just did than it was at the time, because at that time we did not have all the information and the ability to organize and synthesize that information. With that said, we will make every attempt in the future to improve communicating the information we have.
- In our debrief last Wednesday, the Marshall still did not share the name of the suspect, because of the particular circumstances and the confidential nature of the police investigation. Many of us have heard many things, some undoubtedly true and some definitely false. My job is to trust the information the Marshall shares with me; and ask you to do the same. If he tells me the name of the person is confidential, and that he has determined there is no longer a credible threat, then that is all the information I need, and that is all the information I can provide to you. Again, I apologize if, in the heat of the moment, the information shared was not as clear or complete as it could have been.

COVID Testing, Distancing, and Masks – We tested 525+ staff and students on Thursday. We had a handful of inconclusive results, 516 negative results, and 4 positive results. The 4 positives were 3 TIS students and 1 TES student. In addition, we had 6 other students test positive outside of our school testing since last week; 4 at TMHS and 2 at TIS. Families of all positive students have been notified, and contact tracing is currently underway. Again, our goal is to minimize quarantine by maintain a distance of at least three feet between students whenever possible as the criteria for quarantining is a distance less than three feet for a period more than fifteen minutes.

Data will be updated on our district [COVID-19 page](#) next week.

Lastly, I realize this is a sensitive topic, but we need everyone's to help enforce mask wearing. We do have students, mostly at the upper grades, who remain non-compliant even after several reminders. This leaves many of our staff feeling frustrated and even scared. Staff and administration will do our best, but we need your help from home to stress the importance of this expectation. If

administration needs to address chronically non-compliant students, they will likely be making phone calls home. Thank you for your help in keeping our school open!

A few additional items from our school nurse, please contact her with any questions (970-369-7103):

[CDPHE: Return to Learn Guidance](#)

Sincerely,

John Pandolfo
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