SUBJECT: CCSD Will Switch to Remote Learning

Dear Cherry Creek School District families,

Today is the ninth day in a row that the district COVID Tracker dashboard has posted a “red zone” rating. The virus is now at a dangerous level in our community and we have seen a sustained trend in the data. Therefore, the district WILL transition to full Remote learning for all students currently enrolled in In-Person learning.

Our transition plan prioritizes moving secondary students to Remote first, because we are seeing higher rates of positive cases with older students. Elementary schools will go next. The schedule is as follows:

**Middle and High School**
- Middle and High school students will finish In-Person learning this week. Teachers will have Monday and Tuesday to prepare, and Remote learning will start Wednesday, Nov. 11.

**Pre-School & Elementary School**
- Pre School and Elementary students will have their last day of In-Person learning on Wednesday, Nov. 11. Teachers will have Thursday and Friday to prepare, and Remote learning will start Monday, Nov. 16.

I do not take the decision to switch to Remote learning lightly. I have said from the beginning that the data will determine whether we have In-Person or Remote learning, and the data has clearly shown a sustained trend of concerning numbers. I was hopeful last week that the data dump that impacted Tri-County Health Department numbers would be a single high point on our scale that we would quickly come down from, but we did not. The data since that time is actually worse and therefore causes this move. Our internal data continues to show that spread of the virus is minimal inside schools. However, the level of spread in the community is so significant that we are seeing increased student and staff cases coming into the schools from the community making it more difficult to operate.

The data has allowed us to have 11 weeks of successful In-Person learning and when the data indicates a sustained 7-14 day trend of ratings in the “green zone,” we will transition students back to In-Person learning. My hope is that this period of Remote learning is short-lived, and students are again in class very soon.

It is more important than ever for everyone to do their part to slow and prevent the spread of the virus in the community by wearing masks, maintaining 6 feet of distance, avoiding large gatherings and staying home when you are sick. Our behavior and decision-making will determine how quickly we can return to In-Person learning.

I have also started conversations with public health officials and our teachers’ association to evaluate the option of bringing our youngest students back for In-Person learning sooner, because we know and a growing body of scientific evidence shows, that there are fewer cases among elementary students.

You can read more about the Remote learning plan and view the schedule here. Please note, the decision to switch to Remote learning does not impact the schedule for K-12 Online learning students.
Here is additional information about the Remote learning plan:

**Technology**
If a family requires a device or Internet access for remote learning, please contact your school.

**Free Meals**
Food and Nutrition Services will provide free breakfast and lunch at remote locations. View the schedule and locations here: [https://www.cherrycreekschools.org/FreeMeals](https://www.cherrycreekschools.org/FreeMeals).

**Childcare**
Childcare will look very similar to the care provided this summer with curbside health screening, check-in/out and cohorting by grade level. What may be different for some families is that care may not be provided at your school, but a school close by.

In the remote learning model, the instruction will be a mixture of synchronous (students learning online together at the same time) and asynchronous. Extended Childcare Services (ECS) will provide space and supervision for both types of instruction for the children attending. However, ECS staff will not be providing instruction to students during this time. Children attending should bring their own technology to use, but back-up technology will be available, if needed.

**COVID Testing and Health Services**
We will continue to offer COVID-19 testing for staff and students through COVIDCheck Colorado. Please email your school nurse for more information regarding testing for students.

School nurses and mental health staff will re-introduce the Nurses’ HealthLine and MentalHealthLine to allow parents and students to connect with school mental health staff and nurses to access necessary resources during Remote learning.

The STRIDE Drive-Thru clinic scheduled at Smoky Hill HS on November 6th will STILL take place. Students can receive low or no-cost immunizations, flu shots, wellness check-ups, dental and behavior screening exams. Contact your school nurse for details.

**In Closing**
My hope is that during this time of Remote learning, we can work together as a community to take actions that significantly slow the spread of COVID and allow us to re-open schools for In-Person learning for families who chose that option. As I have throughout this year, I will continue to communicate regularly with you and be transparent about data and planning.

Stay healthy and safe.

Sincerely,

Scott A. Siegfried, Ph.D.
Superintendent