



8/7/20

Dear Khalsa Community,

Thank you for attending the KMS Roadmap for Re-Opening Town Hall this last Wednesday. As there is new information offered to schools regarding metrics for re-opening, the deadline for deciding on distance learning or in-person has been extended until Sunday, August 9 at 5pm. The State of Arizona continues to experience consecutive rolling two weeks periods of declining cases (<https://www.azdhs.gov/preparedness/epidemiology-disease-control/infectious-disease-epidemiology/covid-19/dashboards/>) as well as decreasing positive percentages of those tested and declining numbers of patients in the Emergency Room who are positive or suspected positive for COVID-19 (<https://www.azdhs.gov/preparedness/epidemiology-disease-control/infectious-disease-epidemiology/covid-19/dashboards/>). This is continuing the previous weeks' downward trends. The John Hopkins Coronavirus Resource Center (<https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/data/new-cases-50-states/arizona>) is showing Arizona as green with declining cases. This data is trending in the direction that we want.

This week the Arizona Department of Health Services released their recommended metrics for re-opening schools. (ADHS Safely Returning to In-Person Instruction) These metrics or benchmarks for decision making are based on the following standards: Arizona and/or Maricopa County has experienced two consecutive weeks of declining cases, 7% positive results for those tested, and finally, 10% of Emergency Room visits were suspected COVID-19 or positive for COVID-19. As of today, one of these metrics has been met: two weeks of declining cases. Currently, the other two metrics have not been met.

While specific criteria to gauge community spread is helpful, Khalsa Montessori School has implemented risk mitigation strategies that align with creating a safe environment for students and staff to return to school. Many aspects that are challenging for larger schools are not problems for Khalsa Montessori School. Our students do not ride buses to school, we do not have a cafeteria or auditorium, students do not change classrooms nor enter through one hallway and mingle as they go to class. We have separate entrances into every classroom, our classroom spaces are larger and our student class size is smaller. We have two adults in every charter school classroom. Lead teachers have been redesigning their classroom spaces to accommodate physical distancing,

separate bathrooms are designated for every class, and hand hygiene will be emphasized so that hand-washing habits are established for every transition. All students and staff will have their temperature checked upon arrival and frequent cleaning will take place throughout the spaces used by students. Each classroom will be its own cohort throughout the day, including extended care. Masks will be worn by all staff at all campuses and all students in Lower, Upper, and Middle School as feasible.

Our plan has been to start school on August 17th, offering both in-person and distance learning for charter school students. The Board of Directors will meet this coming Monday to review the plan and affirm this recommendation. If the Governor issues an Executive Order that requires that all learning be distance learning, then we will begin all charter school students with distance learning.

The younger students in the Primary and toddler programs will start on August 17 in person and with a distance learning component for those families who choose that option. The younger children are licensed through the Arizona Department of Health Services as a daycare center. This program can be open. *The private Primary School plans on staying open regardless of the charter school's status.* If the Governor orders all daycare centers closed, we will close. At this point, the likelihood of that happening is not likely.

Thank you for all your support and generosity regarding PPE and supplies. We will continue to find our way through this uncharted territory as one community. We can find a balanced approach that leads to our continued success.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Karen Paxton". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Karen Paxton