May 5, 2020

Monna Johnson, President
Glendale Council PTA
223 N. Jackson Street
Glendale, CA 91206

Dear Ms. Johnson:

At the outset, I want to thank you and the Glendale Council PTA for your ongoing support and efforts in ensuring that the students of Glendale Unified School District receive the richest education and are afforded every opportunity for academic success. I appreciate your taking time to share your members’ concerns and experiences regarding GUSD’s remote learning process. We value your insight as we continue to navigate this new opportunity and we look forward to partnering with you and our teachers to build and improve upon the current Remote Learning model.

As we move forward and continue to evaluate our processes for Remote Learning, we will work collaboratively with the Glendale Teachers Association leadership, site-based teachers, site-based principals and support staff, District support staff, parents, and our students on developing a more rigorous, research-based model that incorporates the following:

- A structured schedule;
- Four-part daily instruction
  1) Daily synchronous direct instruction (via live face to face platform);
  2) Small group discussion based upon direct instruction (with teacher synchronous involvement);
  3) Differentiated small groups via breakout rooms utilizing data from the curriculum program (i.e. Edgenuity, Springboard) for target instruction; and
  4) Informative assessment;
  Note: All four parts must incorporate teacher synchronous instruction and student voice.
- Google classroom platform for assignments/collaboration/student feedback;
- Synchronous or asynchronous office hours for additional support;
- Daily attendance tracking by teacher;
- Parent and/or student communication response turnaround within 48 hours; and
- Administrator access/visit to instruction on a weekly basis with advance notice.

The District has also recommended the foregoing instructional components for the District’s Summer School model to the Glendale Teachers Association in an email to GTA President Taline Arsenian and CTA Director Nat Banditelli earlier today. Building our Summer School model on these instructional components will allow us the opportunity to assess, evaluate, and improve upon this structure to implement a more robust and rigorous GUSD Remote Learning experience going forward that promotes student engagement and learning to prepare our students for their next level of education.
The District further commits to providing additional extensive Professional Development for our teachers to ensure that they are well equipped and prepared to deliver students meaningful instruction in a productive learning environment in a Remote Learning format. Additionally, the District will work towards developing more resources and tools assist and better prepare our parents so they can effectively support our students in a Remote Learning model.

In the coming weeks, we will continue to monitor various teachers’ methods and models to develop best practices for all our stakeholders and continue to implore all of our teachers to adopt and implement those best practices to enhance our students’ learning experience. I have invited several teachers and administrators to the upcoming Board Meeting to showcase and highlight their current practices that are proving to be effective and successful for student engagement, which I hope inspires and motivates our teachers across the District. I encourage all parents as well as students to continue to provide suggestions and express their needs to our teachers in a positive manner so that we are all working towards improving and building upon our District’s Remote Learning experience.

While our work will continue to evolve during this unprecedented time, my commitment and priority is the achievement, emotional wellness, and safety of our students. Thank you for your communication around our practice, and I look forward to our continued collaboration in informing the work of GUSD.

Sincerely,

Vivian Ekchian, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools