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July 29, 2025

Hello Dennis Chavez Families,

I know you have anxiously been waiting for news regarding the new school year at Dennis Chavez Elementary. I apologize for not being able to provide information to you all sooner, but with an occurrence of this type, there are many agencies who are involved in the solution, and each one of those agencies needs to give their approval of the plan.

With that being said, since the cafeteria roof collapse on June 24, the goal of the District was to have students start school in person on August 4. Working with multiple agencies, the District has met every expectation of these agencies to gain occupancy approval and in turn the ability to have students back in person on August 4. The district needs one final seal of approval, and that is from the Office of the State Fire Marshal. Two fire marshals will be on the DCE campus on the morning of Wednesday, July 30 to conduct an inspection and assure the campus is safe for staff and students. If the site passes the inspection, we will be able to start school in person on August 4. If the site does not pass the inspection, we will go to Plan B which is discussed in the next paragraph.

Plan B entails having students start the school year in remote learning. The District cannot go to a remote learning model without approval being given by New Mexico Education Secretary Mariana Padilla. The District submitted a waiver application last week. Secretary Padilla approved the waiver this morning. Students would only remain on remote learning until we were given approval to occupy the site by the fire marshal.

Once we know the decision of the fire marshal tomorrow, DCE principal, David Marquez, will notify via our Thrillshare messaging system.

Sincerely,

Lawrence A. Sanchez
Superintendent
Belen Consolidated Schools