

TO: ALL NMMI CONSTITUTENTS

FROM: MG (RET) JERRY W. GRIZZLE

DATE: MARCH 19, 2021

RE: UPDATE

I will start my update from a current status perspective as I have done in the past. When I sent out my last update, within 30 minutes after distributing the update, it was obsolete. The State of New Mexico released the updated county-by-county color coded report and Chaves County had moved from “red” to “yellow” after I had made distribution.

The color coded system allows us to have greater freedoms from the restrictions if Chaves County can progress forward in the system and not fall back. Some counties in New Mexico have moved forward only to have their numbers reverse and they have to go back to red. Our next measurement period is next Wednesday, March 24<sup>th</sup>. If Chaves County can move to “green” several significant things will directly affect NMMI.

The first thing is the restaurants and eating establishments will move to 50% of capacity for indoor dining. If this occurs, our plan is to reopen Bates with two meal periods. We will leave the outdoor tables and chairs for those Cadets who enjoy the outdoor dining option. We will still have to comply with the wearing of masks and social distancing. Our tables in Bates have been equipped with plexi-glass barriers and those will remain.

The next significant change will be the ability to have spectators at indoor sporting events. We will be limited to 25% of the capacity of the facility and 50% for any outdoor facility. We still have to comply with the NMAA rules and the Intercollegiate rules as published in the state COVID Safe Practices manual. Let me caution everyone – we cannot allow visiting spectators to interface with Cadets. This includes family members. There will be dedicated seating for Cadets and dedicated seating for visiting spectators. I know these rules are harsh but you have to understand they are not our rules. If we want to have spectators/visitors, then we must comply with and enforce the rules imposed on us by the governing authorities.

This morning on the national news I watched a report by the head of the Center for Disease Control (CDC) about social distancing in the classroom. The report supported reducing the distance to three feet from six feet. As I have stated many times, the guidelines are changing constantly. We have four agencies that we must follow and then compare what they put out as guidance to see if it is in conflict. Frequently it is. We will take this new guidance from the CDC, compare it with the NM Department of Health, NM Public Education and NM Higher Education and see if we can come to a consensus on how to apply the new perspective regarding social distance. If we can adapt this new guidance, it would mean that we could eliminate all of our currently split/hybrid classes.

Let me move to sports. Colt football will play their last home game this Saturday afternoon. We will be able to allow some Cadets and family to attend the game. It will be great to allow our seniors to play their last home game in front of family and friends. Colt volleyball is being able to play, but without spectators. The indoor games we are broadcasting on the web. Colt soccer is able to have

spectators/visitors. The games are held on Stapp Field. Just as football, players (Cadets) and visitors cannot mingle. When the game is over, visitors must leave. All game results are posted on our website.

Bronco volleyball has only lost to Odessa this season. The Conference tournament is next weekend. We anticipate that we will be seeded number two in the tournament behind Odessa. Bronco basketball is playing well and will be playing in the conference tournament the first week in April. All indoor games are streamed on the web. Bronco football has their first game on March 27<sup>th</sup>. Bronco baseball has been playing both at home and away. We have been able to allow fans to attend the home games, limited to 25% of the capacity of the field.

One note of caution to Parents if you have not been advised. Many of our teams, both high school and junior college, could go past graduation on May 15<sup>th</sup> with post-season play. Because of the late start of the season, the district tournaments, etc., several of our teams could be here and playing into June.

Let me move to next school year. I have had numerous Parents ask me about dates so they could start planning for next year. We have finished the school calendar for next year and here is a listing of the critical dates for planning purposes:

August 2021

4<sup>th</sup> – Junior College Matriculation

4<sup>th</sup> – Parent Orientation – 7:00 pm – Pearson Auditorium

5<sup>th</sup> – High School Matriculation

16<sup>th</sup> – First Day of Classes

September 2021

4<sup>th</sup> – 21 Day Celebration

6<sup>th</sup> – Labor Day

October 2021

1/3 – Parent Weekend

4 – Fair Parade

20/23 – Homecoming

November 2021

25/28 – Thanksgiving (we will not close the entire week)

December 2021

10 – Mid-term Graduation

## SECOND SEMESTER:

January 2022

10 – First day of Classes

March 2022

21/25 – Spring Break

April 2022

15/18 – Easter

May 2022

13 – Commissioning Activities

14 – Graduation

We are starting our recruiting for the 2021/22 school year. We were pleased that despite all of the challenges and obstacles represented by COVID, we started this school year at 85% of capacity. We had many more “on the books” but due to travel restrictions, both domestically and internationally, they were not able to make it for matriculation. Last year, when we left at spring break and were not able to return, we lost the entire spring recruiting season. April, May and June are our biggest months for high school recruiting. This year we are planning open houses, with on campus visits and tours. I have instructed Kris Ward and our Social Media Marketing team to promote the fact that we never closed, we provided an in-classroom experience and we will continue to provide a safe environment for our students, staff and faculty. Currently our retention rate is fantastic. We have more Cadets on Post today than we have had in five years. We have a great base to build upon and look forward to bringing in a new group of RATS to carry on the NMMI traditions.

As we enter the last eight weeks of this semester, I cannot thank all that are involved, Parents, Alumnus, Cadets, Staff and Faculty for the collective effort that has made this last year possible.