



GADSDEN INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT *CHILDREN FIRST*

The Gadsden Independent School District recognizes that we are in the middle of a pandemic and numerous factors guide us in submitting this request to Governor Lujan Grisham and the New Mexico Department of Education. The request to untie the return to school guidelines with the ability to participate in extra-curricular activities is based on the social and emotional well-being of our students. In the spring of 2020 our students, specifically high school seniors lost out on proms, graduations, athletic events, and activities. The culmination of thirteen years of commitment to their education was swept away through no fault of their own.

One year later we are wiser and have put in place procedures to safely return to campus. Daily health screenings, mask wearing, social distancing and PPE/sanitation policies have been implemented and our extra-curricular sponsors have been fulfilling these guidelines during the allowable small pod activities. High school extra-curricular activities provide an opportunity for students to engage with their sponsors and peers. Our students find strength, confidence and academic success when allowed to participate in activities that they are passionate about. The activities they pursue are voluntary and the ability to opt out should be the decision of the student and their family. We respectfully ask that you allow local school boards to do what is best for their communities and unlink the hybrid return to school guidelines with the return to extra-curricular activities.

