



Schuyler Community Schools  
ALL STAFF Zoom Meeting: May 11th Update  
Monday, May 11, 2020 8:00 AM  
Schuyler Community Schools Board Room  
120 West 20th Street  
Schuyler, NE 68661

## I. Discussion Items

| Effort | Communication | Respect | Responsibility | Belief |
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**One Good Thing!** Please add your affirmations or "one good thing" in the chat box on the right.

**MEETING AGENDA AND DISCUSSION TOPICS:** This meeting included ALL-STAFF.

- Directed Health Measure (DHM):** We continue to operate under a state-wide Directed Health Measure for the remainder of the school year. While the directed health measure requires us to practice social distancing and limit groups to 10 or less, we are required to provide our students with continued access to education.
- Expanded Flexible Workdays:** We will continue with flexible workdays through the remainder of the school year. Thank you for your continued professional use of this time, whether at school or at home to work on school related work, conducting online or zoom classes, reaching out to students and parents.
- School Calendar:** Our final workday is May 21st (185 Day Contract). We will be closed on Friday, May 22nd through Monday, May 25th. Extended contracts may begin May 26th. Teachers and counselors on extended contracts must coordinate days with their building principals.
- Preschool-8 4<sup>th</sup> Packet Preparation:** The fourth and final packet for preschool through 8<sup>th</sup> grade should be completed today, Monday, May 11th, ready for pickup on Thursday, May 14<sup>th</sup>, remaining packets will be mailed on Friday, May 15<sup>th</sup>. Thank you for your efforts to make this a positive experience for our kids.
- 9-12 4<sup>th</sup> Packet Pickup:** High school teachers and administrators are working on a 4<sup>th</sup> packet to be picked up at the high school with student awards and year-end communication to our students. These packets should be completed by Friday, May 15th and pickup will be next week. Final grades are due on Wednesday, May 20<sup>th</sup>. Your principals will be providing guidance on grading for 4<sup>th</sup> quarter and second semester final grades.
- Graduation:** Seniors will be checking in their iPads when they are finished and will pick up their caps and gowns and have a picture taken with their diploma in their graduation attire. We have no more guidance on graduation. We are *tentatively* planning on an in-person graduation ceremony on August 1-2, or if not allowed, move to September 5-6 (Labor Day weekend).
- Teacher/Administrator Work:** While you are busy working on your educational packets, attending and/or hosting zoom meetings, working in your classrooms, etc... additional work items to be completed on your own include:
  - Continue listing support staff jobs and verifying completed work.
  - Homework completion: We are pushing for May 18th, but high school students have until May 20th to turn in completed work. Any work not completed at this time may be completed in summer school or in the fall when/if we return.
- Staff Leave:** Remember, if you use contracted leave (**PTO, Sick, or Vacation**) or if support staff work at school, no work assignment is required. However, if you are working from home, we expect continued work. Administrators and support staff, working from home, must list their work assignment daily. Please make sure you have a job assigned and cleared by your supervisor. Teachers and administrators, if you post and assign a job, you must also mark the job as complete in order for us to verify pay.
- Food Service:** Thank you to the food service staff for your continued work in this program. Our food program will

suspend services on Friday through Monday for Memorial Day. Any staff who want to work in this program may sign up at the middle school. We are also moving the high school kitchen equipment, utensils, supplies, etc...into the connex this week. We need additional help as all food service workers are needed to prepare meals.

10. **Backpack Program:** We received word that there will be an additional shipment of food for the backpack program. Staff interested in working in helping out with the backpack program on Friday mornings can sign up at the middle school.

11. **Summer School:** We are considering options for July summer school. At this time, it looks like our best option may be to provide virtual, remote, and/or online classes. If you are interested in teaching a class. Below are some considerations for summer school if allowed to be "in-person" traditional summer school.

1. Class Dates: July 6th through July 24th (15 Days)

2. Class Times: Morning Session: 8:30 to 11:30 AM  
Afternoon Session: 12:30 to 3:30 PM

3. Class size: 6-10 Students

4. Teacher Pay: \$1,500 per session Para-Educator Pay: \$750 per session

5. If we are not allowed to have students in session, we plan to host virtual summer school sessions.

6. Please let your principal know if you are interested in working summer school.

7. High school summer school will be online classes and/or packet completion.

12. **Food Pantry:** Schuyler's next Mobile Food Pantry will be held at SES on Thursday, May 14 at 4:30 pm. Volunteers are needed from 3:30-6:00 to help unload the truck, put food into vehicles, and clean up. Social distancing will be observed and I have gloves and a limited amount of masks for volunteers. Let me know if you would like to help. Thank you for considering! (Meridith Riha)

13. **May School Board Meeting:** The May 11, 2020 Regular School Board Meeting is posted on the board meeting site.

## **NDE and Federal Updates:**

**Friday's State Board Meeting.** This past Friday (May 8th), the State Board of Education met. At the beginning of the meeting, Commissioner Blomstedt invited two parent/student advocates to present on schools' approaches to special education during the shutdown. The presentation was not particularly positive towards some school districts (though no names were mentioned). Towards the end of the discussion, the Commissioner commented that he will be recommending changes to State Board policy/rules to implement more "accountability" powers for NDE to take against school districts, including for special education requirements. In addition, the Omaha World Herald has reportedly started working on a story about schools' treatment of and attitudes towards special education students during the shutdown. We will keep an eye out for those proposed revisions and work with our legal counsel to respond with necessary policy changes.

**CARES Act.** Last Friday, the U.S. Department of Education issued new "guidance" on certain CARES Act funds. The most controversial aspect of the "guidance" includes the requirement that public school districts use their CARES Act funds to "provide equitable services to nonpublic schools." If NDE requires public schools to provide equitable services to nonpublic students, our district's portion of its CARES Act funds could be significantly decreased. These CARES Act funds can be used for any and all COVID-related expenditures that were incurred on or after March 13, 2020. CARES Act funds are available to be used through September 30, 2022. NDE will be rolling out a plan for schools to apply for and receive CARES funds.

**Title IX Regulations.** Last week, the U.S. Department of Education issued new Title IX regulations and guidance. The new regulations are set to go into effect on August 14, 2020. There is a reasonable likelihood that a federal court will enter a nationwide injunction to block the implementation of these regulations. There may be some policy and handbook changes that need to be updated this summer to comply with the new regulations.

**Launch Nebraska.** As you now know, NDE released "Launch Nebraska" last week. It remains unclear whether the "steps" within Launch Nebraska are mandatory or suggested. We will continue to secure a definitive answer on this question.

**Extended School Year (ESY):** It is important to remember that the purpose of ESY is to prevent regression, while compensatory services are to make up for a school's failure to deliver appropriate services as needed to deliver a free and appropriate education (FAPE). It remains unclear whether schools will be allowed to have in-person summer school. The current DHM (that prohibits all schools from education students in-person) expires at the end of May.

**Reading Improvement Act:** Requires each school district to "make available a summer reading program each summer . . ." 79-2605(1)(c). Governor Ricketts' prior Executive Order only waived 79-2603(1), so the summer reading statutory requirement remains in effect. We are hoping to receive some direction from the Governor's Office as to whether the summer reading program's requirements will be waived or will continue to apply during this summer,

**Fall Return to School:** Depending on how the virus and DHM's play out this summer, schools may need to be prepared to act on a number of important items at their June or July (perhaps even August) board meetings. If schools are not allowed to educate students in-person (or will need to have partial remote and partial in-person), we will need to have a plan for a safe return to school. We will use thoughtexchange to receive staff perspective on the effectiveness of our current continuity of learning plan. This information is necessary prior to us making any plans for a modified start to our school year in the fall. We will let you know when the exchange is live and the deadline for participating.

I know this is a lot of information to take in. Please don't hesitate to contact your principal with any questions or concerns. Have a great week and thanks again for all your work in helping us complete our school year in a positive way.