



BSD Superintendent <superintendent@bsdvt.org>

Coronavirus Update 17

1 message

Superintendent Obeng <superintendent@bsdvt.org>

Mon, Apr 6, 2020 at 8:35 PM

Reply-To: superintendent@bsdvt.org

To: superintendent@bsdvt.org

Greetings BSD Community,

All indications are showing that the next eight days will be critical in managing the rise of COVID-19. As we see the modeling escalating across the country, Vermont's modeling seems to be looking better than most. Governor Scott has said a few times in the last week that we have reason to be cautiously optimistic that the steps taken are working, but we must keep practicing physical distancing and stay vigilant on personal health hygiene practices. We have a long way to go.

Appreciation: If you have been online you have seen many courageous stories of people going above and beyond in service of those in need. From first responders to essential workers to neighbors helping neighbors, people are really looking after each other, which is uplifting in a crisis. There are many examples here in Burlington. The photos below show our child care staff taking action to contribute during this time. Without these volunteers, we could not do our part in supporting essential workers with this resource. Please join me in thanking them.

Continuity of Learning Video Conference Thursday: As we move into the Continuity of Learning phase, I am still most concerned about the mental health of our students and families. I read a report today that shared data that approximately 24% of people in hot zones are experiencing mental health and wellness challenges directly related to COVID-19 housebound anxiety. Please exercise a healthy balance in workload.

Thank you to the two dozen individuals who spent time contributing feedback and questions last week. We are submitting our proposal for Continuity of Learning Plan to the AOE tomorrow and should receive feedback by the end of the week. I know many of you are wondering: What does continuity of learning mean or look like? What are the parent expectations? Please join us at 3 PM Thursday as we host a live video conference as an opportunity to start that conversation and answer some of those questions. We will likely use Zoom for this conference and are working to stream it to our Facebook and YouTube pages. We will send meeting information and/or any format changes Thursday morning.

April Break, Snow Days, End of Year: Earlier today, Secretary French [issued a memo](#) with the following guidance regarding Spring Break: *"School districts should follow their established regional calendars for the purposes of implementing April vacations for the 2019-2020 school year. Since teachers are contracted to work a finite number of instructional days each school year, it is important to follow April vacations as scheduled in order to preserve the potential option for implementing in-person instruction for students later this spring if the public health conditions relative to COVID-19 support such a decision."*

Burlington School District will ***honor this guidance and will not offer remote learning or school programming during the week of break.*** This means there will be no expectation for teachers and students to be working the Continuity of Learning from April 20-24. Of course, parents always have the option to access [resources on our website](#) if they wish to do some sort of continued maintenance of learning.

Please note, though we are "closed," I have instructed our Food Services and child care teams to continue operations during this break. These teams have ensured me that these programs are ready to continue to operate without any differences during the April break.

As you may know, administrators and various staff members often work during breaks like these when schools are 'closed.' During the April break, our administrators and I will be working with the curriculum team to assess how the first week of Continuity of Learning went in order to decide where and if any changes need to be made.

In addition, last week we were told that Districts will not have to make up any snow days this year. Guidance regarding the end of the year and end of year activities is also scheduled to come out before May 8.

Power School and Unified Classroom Issues: Last week, a Powerschool customer service representative told us that they have seen a 400% increase in user access for Powerschool and Unified Classroom as districts around the country use their products during this time of closure. They are having a hard time keeping up with the demand and often have

short periods of disrupted service. If you think you are experiencing issues, please go visit the [Powerschool Status website](#) to find out if there is an issue and learn when it might be fixed. (We have added this link to the “Curriculum” area of the District Coronavirus webpage.)

District Playgrounds: Last week I directed our Property Services team to follow the City’s lead and close our playgrounds to do our part to curb the spread of this virus. As of today, all athletic fields and any playgrounds not being used by our essential employee child care program have been closed. Signs have been posted and gates have been locked; thank you for respecting these physical distancing measures.

Thank you for reading this long message,

Superintendent Obeng

P.S. Please remember that free and reduced lunch applications are **due this week**. The recent federal stimulus package makes more resources for food available for those eligible for this benefit, so even if you have already filled out an application this year, you should fill one out again if your wages have been affected by this situation.

Thank you Child Care team for volunteering to TAKE ACTION!!!



UPDATED CHART FROM [VERMONT DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH](#)

Positive test results*	543**
Total tests conducted	6,633
Deaths+	23
People being monitored	68
People who have completed monitoring	745

SchoolMessenger is a notification service used by the nation's leading school systems to connect with parents, students and staff through voice, SMS text, email, and social media.