

CREATING
OPPORTUNITIES
FOR STUDENTS TO
KEEP WYOMING
STRONG

MEMORANDUM NO. 2020-060

TO: School District Superintendents
FROM: Jillian Balow, Superintendent of Public Instruction
DATE: April 20, 2020
SUBJECT: COVID-19 Guidance Updates



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COVID-19 GUIDANCE UPDATES

CARES Act H.R. 748

GEER - Wyoming's share of the Governor's Emergency Education Relief Fund (GEER) will be distributed in the form of emergency support grants to child care and educational institutions. The State, and each Local Education Agency, Institutes of Higher Learning, and other education-related entity that receives GEER funds will, to the greatest extent practicable, continue to pay its employees and contractors during the period of any disruptions or closures related to COVID-19 in compliance with Section 18006 of Division B of the CARES Act. Districts not compliant with this provision may see funding withheld.

ESSER - Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief. These funds will be administered by the Wyoming Department of Education (WDE) to school districts. Additional guidance and an application for the funds will be provided as the WDE receives information from USED. Funds should be prioritized for preparedness and response efforts related to COVID-19 and to prepare for future pandemics.

Adapted Learning Plans District Check-ins

Beginning this week, districts will receive a phone call from me, or Chief of Staff, Dicky Shanor, Chief Academic Officer, Shelley Hamel, Chief Policy Officer, Kari Eakins or Chief Operations Officer Trent Carroll to discuss the progress of Adapted Learning Plan implementations. Questions will include how the plans would change should schools reopen before the school year ends. Districts can expect additional guidance on school closures from the WDE and the Governor's Office later this week.

Operations Updates

WDE652 Spring Data Collection - The WDE is required to collect the data in the WDE652 regarding staff member assignments and experience in order to calculate the funding model accurately per W.S. 21-13-309. Guidance will be issued later this week with more information on this upcoming collection. The collection window is currently scheduled for June 16 - July 31, 2020. Two areas to pay special attention to are special education and transportation.

- Special Education - Chapter 44 rules have not changed. Reimbursable expenses are still limited to those required to provide special education to children that extend beyond amounts necessary to provide general education to all students and should directly related to a student's IEP or be direct costs associated with special education. Example: Wages reported for a special education paraprofessional should be earned doing special education work. All non-special education wages should be reported using a general education assignment.
- Transportation - Chapter 20 has temporarily expanded the reimbursement of transportation services to include any services related to student needs such as delivering meals or education instructional materials during this crisis. As long as duties are related to student needs, continue to report these staff as normal. Districts may find a transportation [FAQ document](#) on our website.

Legislative Management Council

Management Council met last week to discuss interim topics and special sessions. There will likely be a virtual special session in late May or early June in order to address economic and healthcare issues prioritized by the Governor. Additional special sessions are also likely in order for the Legislature to address bills brought forward by committees. Management Council is planning to meet again before the end of the month in order to assign COVID-19 specific topics to committees, including the education committee.

WDE Conferences

Conference planning committees continue to monitor information being provided by the Governor and Wyoming Department of Health Offices regarding safe meeting practices. Both the Week of Academic Vision and Excellence (WAVE) and the Innovations in Learning conference planning committees have chosen to alter the platform for these conferences. WAVE will be offered as ongoing professional development throughout the calendar year. The Innovations in Learning conference will be held virtually. Additional information will be forthcoming for various conferences as final decisions are made.

The WDE and the University of Wyoming are currently collaborating to host a conference focusing on K-3 Literacy professional development sometime this year. Information on all current WDE conferences is available [here](#).

- Summer Technical Assistance Retreat (STAR) - June 8-10
- Week of Academic Vision and Excellence (WAVE) - July 28-30
- Native American Education Conference - August 5-6
- Wyoming Education Summit (formerly S5S) - September 21-23
- Wyoming Innovations in Learning - November 5-6