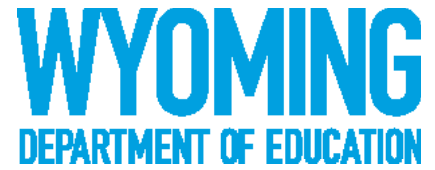


CREATING
OPPORTUNITIES
FOR STUDENTS TO
KEEP WYOMING
STRONG



MEMORANDUM NO. 2020-064

TO: School District Superintendents
FROM: Jillian Balow, Superintendent of Public Instruction
DATE: April 28, 2020
SUBJECT: COVID-19 Guidance Updates



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Superintendent of Public Instruction

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COVID-19 GUIDANCE UPDATES

Governor's Emergency Education Relief (GEER)

The office of Governor Mark Gordon will receive \$4.7 million in direct, flexible COVID-19-related education funding for school districts, higher education, early childhood education and other education entities. The Wyoming Association of School Administrators (WASA) will be reaching out to school districts for suggestions for the use of the GEER funds. WASA will then provide a report to the Governor's COVID-19 Education Task Force by MAY 1, 2020. Information in the report will be considered by the task force before making a final recommendation to the governor for the use of funds. Information WASA will be seeking from districts can be found [here](#). The task force is also gathering input from higher education, early childhood and other entities, to help inform the recommendation to the Governor.

Terms of Art or Terms Artfully Difficult to Understand

- (A) "Closed" - Two distinct state level "closure" declarations—one by the State Superintendent (W.S. 21-13-307(a)(ii)(B)) and one by the State Health Officer (W.S. 35-1-240(a)(iv)).
- (B) But "Open" - During both of these state closures, however, districts have been "open" in that they are delivering educational services in an adapted fashion.
- (C) Nuance to "Closed" - The State Health Officer's order to close contains specific guidance for [Educational Institutions](#). That guidance includes flexibility for "in-person instruction" for students in the "greatest need."

- (D) Nuance to “Closed” Evolved - Possible expansion by the Department of Health of “in-person instruction” flexibility for more students than just those in the greatest need. “Soft reopening.”
- (E) “Reopening” - At some point closure orders by the State Health Officer will be lifted or modified in a fashion that allows for substantial in-person instruction for most children. At that point, the Superintendent’s orders holding districts harmless for pro rata reductions will likely be modified as well.

Next steps: Find ways to use existing and potential expanded in-person instruction flexibility to begin working with your county health officer on safety best practices. Piloting small groups of students and programs now and over the summer can help prepare for the eventual reopening in the fall. Please update your Adapted Learning Plans with addenda when utilizing this flexibility. WDE will work with you all and state experts on developing a template for reopening plans in the coming months.

Examples of Limited In-person Instruction

Dr. Joe Schaffer and Dr. Jill Koslosky from Laramie County Community College shared [examples](#) of limited in-person instruction for Career and Technical Education students in welding and diesel engine maintenance. Lincoln County School District #1 Superintendent Teresa Chalk discussed student groups that are receiving limited in-person instruction and the [criteria](#) used to allow students in school buildings.

Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER)

USDE will grant funds to the WDE for the purpose of providing local educational agencies (LEAs) with the emergency relief funds to address the impact that Novel Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) **has had, and continues to have**, on elementary and secondary schools. An overview of state and district application processes and the appropriate use of funds can be found [here](#).

Chapter 3 Rules

The State Board of Education approved Emergency Rules for Chapter 3 during their meeting last week. Once these rules are approved by the Governor, a WAEA Exception Form will be sent to all districts which will allow them to request an exception to state accountability requirements from the State Board for the 2019-20 school year.

Management Council Update

Management Council met last week and discussed conducting a one-day special session virtually in order to pass two draft bills: [20LSO-0700](#) - Emergency Expenses of Government-COVID-19 and [20LSO-701](#) - Emergency Government Action-COVID-19. 20LSO-700 includes a section which would allow school districts to carryover 25% of their funds for the upcoming fiscal year. 20-LSO-701 includes an amendment to worker’s compensation to add COVID-19. They will meet again on Friday in order to set the date for the first special session, finalize the two draft bills, and assign additional COVID-19 topics to interim committees.