

CREATING  
OPPORTUNITIES  
FOR STUDENTS TO  
KEEP WYOMING  
STRONG

## MEMORANDUM NO. 2020-081

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



**JILLIAN BALOW**  
Superintendent of Public Instruction

**DICKY SHANOR**  
Chief of Staff

**SHELLEY HAMEL**  
Chief Academic Officer

**KARI EAKINS**  
Chief Policy Officer

**TRENT CARROLL**  
Chief Operations Officer



**CHEYENNE OFFICE**  
122 W. 25th St. Suite E200  
Cheyenne, WY 82002  
307-777-7675

**RIVERTON OFFICE**  
320 West Main  
Riverton, WY 82501  
307-857-9250



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## COVID-19 GUIDANCE UPDATES

**Update from Dr. Alexia Harrist, State Health Officer/State Epidemiologist**  
Governor Mark Gordon, along with the Wyoming Department of Health, took a second step toward relaxing some orders and restrictions recently, including for schools and educational institutions. Schools now can allow limited on-site instruction to students who need specialized assistance or services, or for technical courses that require specific equipment for instruction. The new guidelines allow for groups of up to 25 people, using social distancing, screening teachers and students for illness before entering a school facility, and following cleaning protocols during and after an on-site visit.

District superintendents should continue to work with their county health officials for exemption requests, as well as to monitor the Wyoming Department of Health [website](#), which also includes county-specific dashboards that are updated frequently.

### Special Legislative Session Update

The Wyoming Legislature convened for a Special Session virtually on May 15-16, 2020. Five pieces of legislation were filed to be considered as mirror bills. Three passed and two failed.

#### Passed Legislation:

- [SF1001](#) - Appropriates federal CARES Act funding in three phases and gives the Governor authority to spend funds for identified priorities.
- [SF1002](#) - Adds COVID-19 to worker's compensation, clarifies statute regarding immunity from liability during public health emergencies.
- [HB1004](#) - Establishes small business relief program.

Failed Legislation:

- HB/SF1003 - Failed in House after Senate amended bill to allow Governor to make cuts to school block grant funding.
- HB/SF1005 - Failed introduction in the House because many members were uncomfortable with the lack of public input, amendments were instead made to SF1002 with differences resolved in conference committee.

Upcoming Legislative Activities:

- June 3 - School Facilities meeting virtually.
- June 4-5 - Joint Education Interim Committee meeting virtually.
- June 24-25 - School Finance Recalibration meeting TBD.
- June 29 - July 3 - Tentative dates for next Special Session.

**Moving forward**

In the coming months the Wyoming Department of Education (WDE), in conjunction with the Governor’s COVID-19 Education Task Force, will provide more guidance regarding on-campus instruction for the next school year, including guidance for Smart Start plans. The WDE will continue to answer questions regarding operating under the current state health orders. WDE staff remain available by email or telephone to discuss any aspect of a district’s adaptive learning plan.

As for the Monday meetings with superintendents, the WDE will transition to a schedule of every two weeks; the next COVID-19 Update with the WDE is set for 8:30-9:30 a.m. on June 1.