

CREATING
OPPORTUNITIES
FOR STUDENTS TO
KEEP WYOMING
STRONG

MEMORANDUM NO. 2020-103

TO: School District Superintendents
FROM: Jillian Balow, Superintendent of Public Instruction
DATE: July 1, 2020
SUBJECT: COVID-19 Guidance Updates



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Superintendent of Public Instruction

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COVID-19 GUIDANCE UPDATES

Smart Start Activities and Plan Update

An update on the activities of the Smart Start Working group and a glimpse into some content in the Smart Start Guidance document was provided. Discussion specific to School Operations provided superintendents the opportunity to consider elements specific to their school district's plans for a fall reopening.

A confidential copy of the Smart Start Guidance document was sent to superintendents the morning of July 1, in advance of the press conference at 2:30 p.m., which was hosted by Governor Mark Gordon and Superintendent Jillian Balow.

Equitable Services Rule

It was noted that communications from WDE related to prior U.S. Department of Education (USED) non-binding guidance is no longer accurate. Under the new rule pending this week, districts have the following options:

- Option A - distribute Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) money only to schools that received Title I for the 2019-20 school year. If this option is chosen, then there are two methods available to calculate equitable services: (1) use the same amount for equitable services you set aside for the 2019-20 school year, or (2) conduct a count of low income students in local private schools to determine a new proportional share.
- Option B - distribute ESSER money to schools that didn't receive Title I in 2019-20. If this option is chosen, then districts must calculate equitable services using a count of all local students enrolled in private schools in the district (*the non-binding guidance method*).

Recalibration Report

A recap of the two-day meeting of the Select Committee on School Finance Recalibration was given. More updates will be provided as the process continues forward.

Moving forward

The WDE has transitioned to a schedule of every two weeks; the next COVID-19 Update with the WDE is set for 8:30-9:30 a.m. MDT on July 13. 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 adapted learning plan at any time.