

Updates from the District Office

June 4, 2021

Dear BSCSD Parents and Caregivers:

With only three weeks left to our school year, there are lots of events happening in and around our schools. I encourage you to keep watch for updates from building principals and our communication office, and to check our website for updates on many of these events. Thanks to the many of you who have stayed in touch with us on the details of these events and offered suggestions, and to all of you for understanding that we are a) still limited in what we are able to do for end-of-year events, and b) packing in a number of events that we typically spread over a number of weeks and months. Our goal is to provide as many in-person celebrations as possible to end the year on while still ensuring the health and safety of all involved. To that end, a few additional updates for your attention:

1. **Masks** – Despite statements by the Governor this week that requiring the wearing of masks outdoors may be “a bit extreme”, the requirements from the CDC and the New York State Department of Health have not changed at this point and so we must continue to wear masks at all times while at school/on campus. The good news is that our county seven-day average for positive cases continues to go down and currently stands at .9%. Similarly, Saratoga County is now classified by the CDC as being at *Moderate Risk* for community transmission. Please continue to adhere to these rules.
2. **Next Week’s Temperatures** – We are watching the forecasted high temperatures for the weekend and into the early part of next week. While we have all experienced this before, the discomfort that will come from wearing masks and our inability to move students around in our hottest buildings is concerning to us. We have been in conversation with the county health commissioner, with the State Department of Health, and with the State Education Department regarding these concerns and it is possible that we may have guidance coming out on this that will inform our decisions. Should the forecasted temperatures hold true, we *may* have to make schedule adjustments – particularly at the elementary schools – utilizing early dismissal, for example. Should we need to go further and utilize a remote learning day, Principals have been asked to ensure the elementary students take their Chromebooks home with them today. If this is the case, we will follow our usual snow day protocol and notify all of you with as much advance notice as possible.
3. **Improving Communications** – As we continue our work on improving/simplifying/making our communications more efficient and effective, one of our key initiatives is updating our District website. Earlier today you received an email with [a link](#) to a survey that will help guide us in our processes. We know it is just one more thing, but your input is very valuable to us and can help make the website more accessible and user-friendly.
4. **Class of 2021** – Thanks so very much to all of you who have supported our senior class as they near graduation day on June 24. This week’s honor ceremonies included scholarships and awards worth thousands and thousands of dollars to help these students in their next

steps. The demonstration of family and community support has been truly overwhelming and we just couldn't be more proud of our students, parents, faculty and staff, and community for the collective work that has gone into this year. We are so very humbled and grateful.

5. **Next Year** – As an update, our working assumption for next year has not changed in that we anticipate being fully open five days a week and expect that there will be some variation of restrictions whether it is 3 feet of social distancing, continuation of masking, or possibly even testing protocols being put in place. Until the guidance comes out on this, anything else would be mere speculation at this point. As soon as we have any additional information on this, I will let you all know.
6. **Federal Funding** – As I have noted in previous *Updates*, the District will be receiving approximately \$4.2 million dollars in additional federal aid over the next three years under the American Recovery Plan Act. This week we updated the Board of Education on where we are in the process, what some of our targeted areas of investment are, and our next steps. One such step is getting your feedback on our draft plans for these monies as we seek to strengthen a number of areas of student programming, faculty and staff training, and improve the air quality in a number of our buildings. To accomplish this, in the weeks ahead we will be sending out a survey and hosting informational sessions via Google Meet. Much more to come on this!

Thanks very much for your time and please don't hesitate to let me know if you have any questions on this information.

Thanks very much!

Ken

Ken Slentz
Superintendent of Schools