



SCHOOL DISTRICT OF OOSTBURG

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Senator LeMahieu and Representative Katsma,

Thank you for taking the time to meet on Wednesday, May 6th to discuss how our schools can be part of the solution to challenges created by the current health emergency. We appreciate your partnership and interest in how the Oostburg School District (OSD) is working to serve our students and our district residents during this difficult time. I would like to highlight a few of our focus areas and invite your continued input as we work together in serving our community.

- Our primary focus remains firmly grounded in ensuring essential learning for all students through a robust remote learning platform. A clear focus on essential learning standards allowed our team to pivot quickly to a virtual learning environment, and although we fully recognize this does not replace the impact we have through on-site instruction, we are pleased with the strong evidence showing that learning is continuing for our students.
- Our decision to continue services for all students involved creative thinking and shifting of resources to ensure that our most vulnerable students and families continue to receive the support they depend on from our public schools. Our special education programming continues to provide all services and individual attention in meeting student IEP goals. Data and progress monitoring continues on all IEP goals, district assessments, and curriculum progression.
- Early preparation provided an awareness of families with limited internet access. This priority was quickly addressed through district-provided mobile hotspots, making wireless access available to all families who expressed a need in this area.
- Direct contact with families has been a priority as we learn and adapt to provide support to families. In addition to regular emails, Google Meets, and community-wide weekly Facebook Live sessions, we are directly contacting a majority of our families with a basic goal of simply checking-in.
- Our guidance team is facilitating safe opportunities for students to connect with their peers. A primary focus on student social/emotional needs remains critical to our overall success.
- Our food service team provided over 7,000 meals in April alone with pick-up locations in Hingham, Gibbsville, and Oostburg. We appreciate the willingness from support staff to adjust responsibilities to ensure our students' primary need for food is being met.
- We continue to pay staff members as budgeted and appreciate the flexibility and willingness of our team to shift roles and responsibilities wherever there was a need. In many circumstances, our staff are now serving in areas which are quite different from the roles for which they were originally hired. A few examples include:
 - Instructional support staff contacting families individually for wellness / status check-ins.
 - Staff members from various areas shifting into supervision of children in our Dutch Bunch childcare program. This program opened to care for children of Tier One essential workers in response to a large community need.
 - Staff traditionally involved in supervision moving into learning support roles and conducting individual student follow-up.

- With numerous safety nets developed by the State and Federal Government, we are thankful for a staff that has been flexible in accepting whatever role has been necessary in our shift to remote instruction. We have only one current staff member who is not working. We believe this unselfish approach by our staff helps our team serve kids while also contributing to our economic recovery as a State.
- One of our biggest challenges has been helping our staff find balance as they seek to deliver instruction in a manner which is completely different than normal. Student-teacher interactions are no longer bound by the hours of a school day, and for many of our staff, a strong desire to help is creating a schedule where they can't "turn it off." This unsustainable approach brings concern for the mental well-being of our team in the same manner that we have concerns about the mental well-being of our students.
- For a glimpse into the time and energy given by our staff, please see a few metrics of our staff for only the month of April:
 - 9995.88 hours in Google Meets
 - 61,880 emails
 - 61640 Google drive files added

The clarity of our OSD mission and what learning is essential for students allows us to have an impact that is moving learning forward for our students. The adult learning has never been greater as we seek to add skills which improve our ability to continue educating students during a unique time in history. Beyond our learning impact, our OSD team has leveraged all available resources in order to serve our families and community. We remain thankful for the adaptability, resilience, and dedication of staff across all departments. We are proud that during a time when our best is needed, our team continues to be up to that challenge.

Sincerely,



Kevin Bruggink