

April 12, 2020

Dear Alsea Families,

I hope everyone enjoyed the nice weather this Easter Weekend. I had a chance to connect with friends and family like Easter's past except this time it was all online. We are very fortunate to have the ability to face time, hangout, and zoom during this protracted COVID quarantine. I wanted to reach out and update everyone on some of the latest guidance from the State as well as touch on a couple of subjects such as Graduation and deliveries of locker and desk contents for all our kids.

GRADUATION:

This past Thursday the Alsea School Board had its first online virtual Board Meeting. It was a bit rough, but it got better as it went along. I think the highlight for me was having the opportunity to see our Elected School Leaders all working together in support of our staff, students, and parents. The School Board made the message loud and clear that we Will be holding a Graduation Ceremony to honor our Seniors and maintain the important traditions and milestones that are such an important part of our school culture. Since I work exclusively for the Board, I can speak with confidence that some way and how, we will hold a ceremony. When, What, and Where will depend on how things progress with the quarantine, but it will happen.

RETURNING STUDENT ITEMS:

Now that we are officially closed for the remainder of the school year many of you have inquired about your students' "stuff" that they left before Spring Break. We will be working this week to get all desk/locker items appropriately packed up and labeled for home delivery. This will take some time, but we want to make things as easy as possible and to limit travel from homes as much as possible. Please be patient with us as we find ways and means, but all student items will be returned.

STATE GUIDANCE CHANGES:

This Saturday, the Department of Education finally updated guidance on enrollment, grading and funding. In a nutshell, the ban on enrollment and withdrawals has been lifted so students and parents can "move around if needed." This is good news for the many students who have applied to join us before Spring Break but were prevented from enrolling.

In addition to student enrollment, the Department of Education is recommending that all students be graded Pass/Fail for the fourth quarter term. This policy will work to support most students and allow us time to acclimate to online/distance learning. If you prefer

that your student have the opportunity to receive a letter grade, please let us know by responding directly to this email.

Finally, the issue of funding. Please know that our little school district is in a good position to weather the financial storm that is brewing. The Department of Education is honoring its commitment to keep School Districts funded at the second quarter level as existed on December 31st, 2019. This will provide some certainty for school districts across the state and get us over the finish line in June.

Moving forward from June is a bit speculative, the State Budget picture is going to get a bit stormy. Fortunately, the education reserve accounts are well funded, and these funds will help ease any financial blows coming our way.

I hope you are all staying safe and staying well. As always, we welcome your ongoing communication. If you have any questions, requests, or need more information please respond directly to this email.

Thank you again for trusting us with your student(s),

Sincerely,

Marc Thielman
Alsea Superintendent/K-12 Principal
541-487-4305 Ext. 201