



Philomath School District 17J

Benton County School District No. 17J, 1620 Applegate Street Philomath OR 97370 (541) 929-3169

March 20, 2020

Dear Philomath School District Community:

As we work our way into what would have been our Spring Break, we remain determined to decide what the remainder of this school year will look like because of the COVID-19 outbreak. We are attending virtual meetings every Tuesday and Friday afternoon with the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) and all Superintendents throughout the state. These meetings provide us with the most current information and an update of the decisions being made. After each meeting, I will communicate any changes that result from the new information provided. ODE is working with the Governor, State Board of Education and others to identify potential options and obtain the necessary authority to adopt those options.

This afternoon's update consisted of a potential framework directed at helping current seniors understand the path to graduation at the end of this school year. The framework requires input from the districts throughout the state and will be worked on by ODE through the beginning of next week, prior to being finalized. The next teleconference is scheduled for Tuesday March 24th at 2 PM. My expectation is that new announcements will come at that meeting. What I can tell you is that there is and will continue to be a clear and doable path to graduation for all PHS seniors who were planning to graduate. I cannot share any details as of yet because the state must approve rules and procedural changes to be made, followed by districts needing to evaluate their graduation policies to make sure they align. I know that what is currently proposed would not cause a problem for Philomath High School Seniors in any way, and that was a great relief to me. I wish I could be more specific, but decisions though proposed are not yet approved.

You might be thinking, "Well that is great for seniors, but what about my student who is not a senior?" ODE addressed that as well, assuring us that they are working on considerations for each grade level. ODE did suggest that they are addressing seniors first and expect to get that information out near the beginning of next week. When information is announced, I will pass it on to you. Rest assured that everyone from the State Agencies, through each district and school are working diligently to create and deliver quality information to you. My expectation is that during the week of March 30th each student and family will be contacted by a representative of their school, checking in to see how they are doing and provide additional information.

As a district, we are drafting a framework for a plan to recapture some, but not all of the instructional time that we are losing. In the meantime, we will continue to provide the "Grab and Go" meals at Clemens Primary and are in the process of creating supplemental educational materials. These materials, once identified will be provided by links to you on our website or via some other type of delivery system that may even include our bus company.

My hope is that all of you are safe and healthy. We are doing our best to navigate this situation in a manner that takes care of the needs of our students, district, and community. Unless there is a major change in the next couple of days, my next update will come to you following the release of graduation information. It truly is a time to be thankful we are all a part of the Philomath School District.

Sincerely,