

Oregon Department of Education COVID-19 Process Update

I must be honest as I prepare this update for you, the meeting today did not provide nearly the information we were hoping it would provide. The update on 2020 graduation requirements was limited to acknowledgement that the proposal that was presented to us originally has not changed, but it is not yet approved. The plan is to get that entire proposal in front of the State Board of Education for their approval as soon as possible with the target being sometime next week. Questions were asked during the meeting about districts getting out ahead of the announcement and the caution was given that if we were out in front of it and it changed we would need to change with it. I do not believe it is fair to give you or our senior's incorrect graduation guidance information in the middle of this crisis. What I can tell you is that under the Oregon Department of Education's proposal Philomath School District seniors are not negatively impacted and will graduate as planned.

The administrative staff in our buildings are working to get the distance learning materials prepared and out to families as quickly as possible. Next week will be a very active week for our schools. On Monday, the high school will begin to start the process for forecasting classes for the 20-21 school year. Students will be forecasting online this year. Tuesday and Wednesday will be dedicated to families who have identified as needing a district chromebook to be able to come to their buildings to check out the device. We are also working with local providers to get internet service to families in our district who do not currently have service. On Thursday, the K-5 schools will be handing out the packet materials appropriate for their student population by teacher. Those who are unable to pick them up will have them delivered to their residence. In the back ground the middle and high school teachers are working to combine Google Classroom assets with an online asset to provide learning opportunities for your high school student, with the expectation of going live on the following Monday. In an effort to best serve you and your student, we will be leaving the decision of what grading policy to use to the student and family. It is particularly important at the high school where classes are transcripted. A student will be able to choose to receive a grade, take the class on a Pass/No Pass basis, and/or audit the class. We have also created the opportunity to offer a robust summer school learning opportunity to students again using the same grading and decision process I outlined previously. The implementation of these strategies at each level will allow our students the opportunity to continue to learn as well as doing our best to make sure that the decision to transcript remains open. All of the Supplemental Materials that are already available on our website will continue to be available during this time of crisis. Just today, I received notification that the IXL program that is part of the Supplemental Materials has already seen 10,000 answers to questions in their system. The learning process that will primarily be used at the middle and high school will include a model of recorded Google classroom sessions, allowing access when a student or the internet allows, as well as live, via email set times for teacher "Office Hours" to provide feedback and answer questions.

The Department of Education announced today that they are moving the ODE update meetings to Tuesday instead of Friday so I will provide you with new information as I get it. Currently the Governor has closed schools in Oregon through April 28th. We are told to expect a change in that time frame, our border states have already adjusted their closure period, but Oregon is still operating within that order and we are doing our best to accommodate the expectations of the order as well as preparing for a change. If you have, any questions please feel free to email me and I will do my best to either answer your question or find the answer for you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bob Benson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial "B".