

I hope you and your families are staying healthy and safe. If there is anything you or your family needs during this time please don't hesitate to reach out. Please see updates below. I have also attached NYSUT's updated fact sheet which came out today.

### **SOCE/Limited Extension**

I have been working on contacting those who need to take some sort of action before June 30<sup>th</sup> regarding the new special education certification requirements. I will continue to work through this list over the coming weeks. At this time, there has not been any communication that this date will change due to the current state.

### **CENSUS**

Please take a moment to submit your family census information. It only takes a few minutes online. The online form is supposed to be filled out by April 1<sup>st</sup>. As you know it is critical that ALL of us be counted.

### **Update on Academic Calendar Issues**

Over the weekend, we learned that the New York State Council of Superintendents of Schools sent out a recent newsletter. Included in it is the following statement:

"Today we received clarification from the Executive regarding whether schools would have to utilize spring break, if we were to open by then, and emergency snow days to make up for days closed due to coronavirus.

Here is the official answer:

'Districts will not need to use vacation and emergency days to make up days missed in response to Executive Order 202.4. As part of the Executive Order, school districts are required to develop and implement a plan for alternative instructional options, including distance learning. It is expected that instruction and learning will continue during the two-week period.'

The other factor that remains in play is that the State Department of Education ("SED") will still need to determine whether the education delivered during this interval will count as appropriate academic credit to students. So far, SED has been silent on the issue other than indicating some flexibility for graduating seniors. While the Governor's orders may pressure SED to find it appropriate for academic credit, we simply won't know until more time passes and we learn the true length of closures and how the broader impacts of COVID-19 on society will impact education.

This information aligns with the guidance provided since 202.4 was issued. This situation is rapidly evolving, and information and positions can change very quickly. Please remember, we are still getting paid, these are not "days off" as we want them to count towards our calendar year. Think about it this way, you have been "reassigned" to a different work location, your home. So, if BOCES has specific work they want done during the normal work hours it is not

unreasonable for them to make this request. Keep in mind this is uncharted waters, if you have specific concerns please feel free to contact us.

### **Assessments**

SED has approved suspension for the remainder of the school year to the following New York State testing programs:

- New York State Grades 3-8 English Language Arts Test;
- New York State Grades 3-8 Mathematics Test;
- New York State Grade 4 Elementary-Level Science Test;
- New York State Grade 8 Intermediate-Level Science Test;
- New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT) in Grades K-12; and
- New York State Alternate Assessment (NYSAA) for students with severe cognitive disabilities in Grades 3-8 and high school

No other information regarding other assessments have been communicated at this time.

In Solidarity,

Deborah Hillburn