

To: Madison Local School District Community

From: John Thomas, Acting Superintendent

Date: June 4, 2020

Re: Update

End of Year Activities

Seniors participated in a video graduation ceremony. The traditional graduation ceremony was canceled due to the coronavirus, but seniors and their families and friends were able to attend a video version of graduation that included: valedictorian and salutatorian speeches, an address from the class president, remarks from the high school principal and the acting superintendent. Presentation of the class to the Board and acceptance of the graduating class by the Board President and awarding of diplomas to graduates and turning of tassels by each graduate. Bus drivers congratulated the seniors with a 2020 display using busing in the front parking lot of the high school and there was a parade through the neighborhood with signs congratulating each graduate placed in yards along the parade route.

Elementary students were able to parade past their schools and wave goodbye to their teachers on May 20th. And middle school students were greeted by teachers as the students returned school items and received awards in front of the middle school.

Library Books, Textbooks, and Chromebooks

Students and parents are reminded that school library books, textbooks and Chromebooks are all to be returned to the school building where they were borrowed from. Please return these items and other school materials as soon as possible, but no later than June 15th. Students will be charged late fees and fines for lost or damaged school property. There will be no refunds for items returned after July 1st.

Meals

The district food services department continued to provide school lunches and school breakfasts to students during the school closure. For the first three weeks of the Covid-19 school closure, bus drivers delivered meals to bus stops where students could receive a breakfast and a lunch meal each day. Starting with Spring Break, the bus delivery option stopped and meal distribution was limited to three pickup sites. Each of the three sites operated at a different time to accommodate work schedules for parents. Meals could be picked up each weekday at the middle school from 10 to 12; from South from 12 to 2 and from Trinity United Methodist Church from 5 to 6:30 pm. Bus delivery was done for three weeks and the three sites operated from mid-March through May 20th and provided over 22,800 meals to students. We thank the cooks, the bus drivers, the volunteer staff and volunteers from local churches that provided the support to make this all work.

Sports

The entire spring sports schedule was canceled. Students and coaches faced delay after delay and finally learned that the entire season was canceled. Last week, along with the opening of the economy, student athletes were permitted to begin conditioning under strict guidelines issued by the OHSAA. Student athletes are required to have no physical contact with other athletes and they are not allowed

to handle the same ball or equipment without the ball or equipment being cleaned and sanitized between uses. Phase 1 allows conditioning only, there is no practicing, scrimmaging, or inter-squad games allowed. After fourteen days, if there are no cases of the coronavirus, Phase Two starts. In Phase 2, the weight room will be used on a limited basis. Balls will be able to be used but only by individual athletes. Balls cannot be passed or shared. Fourteen days later, if there has been no cases of students with the coronavirus, students can start drills and they can start practicing. No contact-sports are allowed at this time, but non-contact sports like golf, tennis, baseball and softball, are permitted to start the regular season in August. Coaches, student athletes and parents are all hoping for the sports schedules to return to normal by August, but this decision has not been made by the OHSAA yet. We will announce this just as soon as we are told that this is possible.

Child Care and Preschool to Open

The Child Care and Preschool programs at Jesse Beer were told in late May that they could begin to open May 26th. On June 1st the Ohio Department of Education issued a directive that these programs were to be put on hold and await detailed guidelines and directives that were anticipated to be published by June 9th. These programs and services are critical to working parents and everyone was excited about the re-opening of these programs. The Madison Early Childhood Learning Center programs are governed by the Ohio Department of Education. Out of an abundance of caution, the ODE has directed us to put a hold on re-opening and they have told us to await the publication of new guidelines that they anticipate publishing by June 9th, so while we continue to work toward the re-opening of these programs, we are delaying this action until we have been given the green light by ODE. Watch for our announcement. We anticipate that the number of children allowed per adult will be reduced during this pandemic which will reduce the total number of children that can be served in our programs.

Adult Education

The Adult Education programs have continued to operate using distance learning whenever possible. These programs, however, depend on hands-on learning in labs where students are able to learn by actually using equipment and demonstrate what they have learned by showing the instructor how they can operate the equipment. Virtual learning has returned to this face to face, hands-on approach and many students are anticipating finishing their course work and graduating this June. Some students will continue with blended learning and anticipate completion in late summer or fall with graduation in December.

Announcements of 2020-21 Career Development programs will be available in July. Starting dates and fees will be published once we are given guidance for re-opening the Adult Education programs. Updates will be posted regularly on the Madison Adult Career Center websites and Facebook page.

Re-opening Schools

On June 2nd Governor DeWine indicated that he expected schools would re-open this fall but did not provide any specific guidelines for how this would look. We are currently working with all the other school districts in Richland County to plan for this re-opening and we are working to re-open in a similar fashion. None of us has any idea of the conditions or the guidelines that we will be required to follow, so we are all preparing for three possible scenarios. The first scenario is coming back to school in the

normal face to face format. This would allow students and teachers to return to the normal school day routine that is familiar to everyone. The second scenario would be to continue to use the distance learning format with all instruction taking place through the internet. While this format was successful for some students, it proved challenging for some and almost impossible for students that did not have access to the internet. We are developing plans and purchasing additional Chromebooks to make this work better should we need to return to this format. The third scenario is a blend of the face to face and the distance learning formats with some students in school each day while others attend class through the internet each day. This scenario has not been done and will require practice and adjustments in the event that this format is the one that is used. Being better prepared to return to the full distance learning format will help us develop important strengths and capacities for a blended learning format.

We are seeking feedback about how the distance learning worked or didn't work in March, April and May. There are survey links on our website for parents, elementary students and middle school and high school students. If you and your student(s) haven't already completed this survey, please go to this link and complete the survey in order to provide us with important feedback to help us be better prepared for this next school year.

Funding

Finally, the state of Ohio has already cut state funding to our district for this past school year by over \$411,000.00 dollars. We anticipate that the state will need to cut school funding in the coming year, but we have not received notice about the cuts at this time. We have received notice that we will be receiving some additional funding from the federal CARES Act legislation. Our district Treasurer has already included estimates of these amounts in the district's Five Year Forecast. Once we have received notice of the actual funding cuts and additional funds from federal sources we will share that information with you. We are already in deficit spending and expect that this will continue into this next school year. Fortunately we have built a "rainy day fund" through conservative managing and budgeting of your tax dollars. But just like your household budget, our expenses increase each year as the cost of things increases. We are in the process right now of determining which staff openings must be filled in order to serve students and which positions we can "hold open" for this next year in order to save money. One concern that we are grappling with is that the new guidelines that we may have to comply with may require us to add staff positions. Much of this remains unknown at this time but it will be shared with you just as soon as we learn what we are required to do in order to re-open schools.

Board of Education

The Board of Education continues to guide the leadership of the district through policies, Board actions, and direction to the Leadership Team. The Board has been meeting through zoom meetings since March, but they plan to return to face to face meetings soon. We don't know what guidelines we will be given for these meetings, but want everyone to know that all Board meetings can be viewed through Facebook using a link on the district website for each meeting.