

***PLEASE FORWARD TO MEMBERS IN YOUR BUILDING. THANK YOU.***

To all members –

Today and next Monday are designated as planning and development days. Hopefully, you will have a better idea after these two days what will be expected for the rest of the year and what sort of timelines are out there. I know that some buildings have already been given direction on when they are to have their rooms cleaned and packed. There are also plans being made for when buildings will be holding tech turn in. If you have any questions regarding either of these issues let me know.

Panorama Survey

Denis Moody has emailed me about the upcoming Panorama Survey. The window for the survey will be May 4<sup>th</sup> – May 18<sup>th</sup>. You will be receiving an email with a link to take the survey. There have been many questions in the past about privacy. Denise has once again assured me that in this platform confidentiality is assured. I have not heard of any issues since the first Panorama survey was completed, so I would imagine the same with the second. Please take the time to fill out the survey and return it. Students will also be surveyed again, but only at the secondary level. It was decided that elementary students needed more support to complete the survey than could be given during Distance Learning.

The Education Minnesota Representative Convention was held virtually last Saturday, April 25th. It was intriguing to attend through a webinar. There were a few glitches, but overall things went well. One of the by-law changes that was passed will lower your future dues to EdMN by approximately \$3 and another guaranteed that dues would never be raised by more than \$10 in a single year. Also, dues will be prorated by when you join. Never having been involved with a webinar before, I found the process interesting and it gave me some thoughts for our own meetings in the future. This reminds me, we have an FR meeting scheduled for this coming Wednesday, May 6th. Please contact your FR or myself with any issues.

Grading seems to be the hot topic this week. You will need to follow the guidance that is given to you by the district. I did see the comments that came in from each building and have emailed with Brenda Wichmann regarding concerns that have been sent to me. MDE still is finalizing their guidance on this topic and the district will be looking at that as well. I know that equity has been raised as an issue for grading and everyone that has contacted me understands that is important. One thing we have to remember is that we still have to educate every child the best that we can given the circumstances we are experiencing. Look for direction from the district as we move forward.

It is times like this that I am reminded of a story that Father Nick told our staff many years ago. It is about a donkey that falls into a well and the farmer thought he would never get it out. Giving in to fate, he asks his neighbors to come over and cover the well. So they all grabbed a shovel and started putting dirt into the well. At first the donkey was not happy, but pretty soon it settled down and let out some happy braying. Curious as to what was happening; they looked into the well to see what the donkey was doing. To their surprise, the donkey kept shaking the dirt from its back and stomping it down. As they kept throwing dirt in, the donkey kept shaking and stomping until at last it stepped out of the well and walked away. That is what our staff is doing every day! You have taken a situation that was tenuous and filled with lots of holes. Yet, every time life has thrown more stuff at you, you have shaken it off and have been rising to the occasion. Please don't forget to rest from time to time. This process has not been easy and I want you to know how grateful I am to work for you!

Thanks for all you do!

Dan Kuhlman  
President, Rochester Education Association  
[dan.kuhlman@edmn.org](mailto:dan.kuhlman@edmn.org) 507-319-7321