

## **Governors Orders**

One of the biggest questions from several groups this week was about doing face to face evaluations, re-evaluations or teaching during this time. In our weekly president's statewide call last night, our guest was the MN Commissioner of Education – Mary Cathryn Ricker. I was lucky enough to be able to ask this question directly to her during our call. The answer was that it is the district's choice and that the district can do that as long as they are following the health and safety protocols, provide appropriate PPE for staff and that there isn't a wide spread transmission of COVID in the building. This goes against an earlier answer that was given September 23, where the answer from the MDE after the **Executive Orders 20-81 and 20-82**. As we have seen with the pandemic, directives can change rapidly as more things are learned about COVID. The focus has been placed on a very thin sliver of our population because they are the students that have some of the highest needs or are close on time lines. We know there are some families who will turn down the offer, at this time, but all families will be asked before a child is asked in to one of our buildings. A related concern that was sent was if there is liability if a student gets COVID while at school? No, this is no different than when all the students were in Hybrid.

## **Distance Learning**

The stress level is high and my email and phone calls prove that. Concerns were about the daily schedules in different buildings for the students. You have some autonomy when it comes to designing your day. Sample schedules went out to admin in your buildings. That schedule had Math, ELA, Science, SS, Health, Specials, conferencing and preps on it. The idea was to give an example of what a day may look like for you and your students. I was assured that you could sit with your team and plan how you wanted your days to look as long as all the components were in place during the week. Earlier this year, you also received a guiding document from our Summer planning group that said:

K was supposed to have 30-60 min direct instruction + Individual Reading Time  
1-2 / 60-90 min direct instruction + Individual Reading Time  
3-5 / 90-120 min direct instruction + Individual Reading Time  
\*There was a sample schedule in that document as well.

How does your schedule look? Are there tweaks that you can make to it before the 2 Trimester? Don't forget that with the Governor's Executive Order, you will receive 30 min prep during the Specialists time and another 30 minutes which could be done 3:00-3:30 p.m.

Now, is this going to make everything perfect....not by a long shot. What you need to know is that you can take some control of what you are doing and that may add a little bit of sanity to your day.

## **PGP**

Several staff wished these to be gone all together, but that isn't going to happen. The state isn't letting evaluations slide, so the district can't either. What I can tell you is that the administration is dispensing with the Class Tool number system. Instead, they are going to have you focus on your goal of self-improvement in you practice and when meeting with

you create a narrative feedback. This is meant to be very low key because of all the changes that are happening and because the DL or Hybrid classroom are not equivalent to what you normally do in teaching.

### **Thanksgiving**

You are probably thinking “really, that is what he is going to bring up now with all that is going on!?” This week was American Education Week and like many things this year, it was pretty much overlooked like everything else these days. We are in a profession that puts our hearts, souls and lives on the line for our families. Thank you will never be enough, but it still needs to be said. Although it doesn’t feel like it, many do appreciate and care what you do. I had a grandmother stop me as she walked by yesterday to tell how her grandson really liked the game night at Mayo and that the teachers really got the hang of this DL thing! My neighbor, a Boy Scout, that dropped off my wreath yesterday said how much he missed seeing his teacher and his friends at school, but they were trying hard on the computer to keep in touch. His dad said the teacher was working super hard and was glad to see his son wanting to participate. These are important stories, when you hear them – let people know because I can’t think it is just happening to me.

So what am I thankful for? My family that supports me and keeps my feet on the ground. My parents who at ages 91 and 86, still keep me hopping only for some different reasons now days. For my mentors who I lean on for advice and direction in troubled times. And finally, for all of you. What you give every day, if it could be harnessed, could run the world with a lot more compassion and caring than we see lately. Thank you!

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