

June 12, 2020

Greetings Bellevue Learning Community:

I would like to dedicate the beginning of this week's message to our over one thousand and six hundred graduating seniors.

This is your last week with us. It has been a momentous journey and we wish you much success wherever life takes you.

Though we may be physically distant, that does not mean we can't celebrate. I invite you all to share your joy of reaching this important milestone across social media.

You can do this by sharing your graduation photos with us using #BSD2020grads on your preferred social media platforms – Instagram, Facebook and Twitter – or email photos to communityrelations@bsd405.org for us to share on our website and social media platforms.

I am also happy to hear that our Department of Health has given our high schools and other schools the go ahead for our graduates to drive-through their schools for one last visit and to capture this important memory. Schools will be communicating with seniors about specific plans. Please be safe as your wellbeing is important to us all

We will miss you greatly and I look forward to hearing about your wonderful accomplishments.

In this message I would also like to give our learning community updates on areas of great importance. This week my focus is on equity work in the school district and I'd like to update you on our developing plans for our return to school this fall.

Our Equity Work

First, we have made important progress becoming not only a more equitable and inclusive school district but a district that believes in the potential in all students. This means that we are striving to reach our vision for each and every student so they will become creators of their future world.

We are not in the beginning stages of creating more equitable and inclusive learning environments. This work has been in place for many years. In October 2019 the district took a deeper step by engaging a larger part of our community and began establishing an Equity Advisory Group. The families, staff and community members who make up this group guide our critical equity work by providing recommendations to us and this group is still in place advising us.

The Equity Advisory Group work led to the Equity and Accountability Policy that was adopted by our School Board in June 2019. This policy includes commitments we work on, including:

- Creating a learning system that meets the needs of and reflects the diversity of our district.
- Ensuring all students have access to critical resources and programs.
- Eliminating any systemic barriers to student success.
- Making certain any student disciplinary actions are undertaken without bias or affecting one group disproportionately.
- Having every staff undergo professional development that addresses implicit bias, anti-discrimination, cultural responsiveness, and inclusion.
- Creating reporting, investigation, communication and accountability processes to address racism or discriminatory actions. And,
- A promise to foster strong partnerships with diverse groups of parents

Our work is not done. We reaffirm our commitment to equity and a more explicit focus on racial justice in our work with our leaders, educators, and staff. I want to ensure we are supporting all of our students and I will deepen my own understandings as the leader of our learning community.

Planning for Fall

As I mentioned last week, we are continuing to solidify our plans for fall. This planning includes you – our learning community. One way to participate is to take our survey. A link to the survey is below my message in the news digest.

We are asking important questions, such as:

- If we are allowed to re-open our schools in the fall, would you prefer to keep your child at home or send your child to school in a hybrid model – part in-person learning and part remote learning?
- What resources will you would need, such as bus service or childcare for when your student is not in school?
- If we have to close school, what option would you prefer: a return to remote learning, pausing in-person learning and using breaks for lost time, or pausing in-person learning and using summer for lost time?
- You'll also have a chance to indicate if you would like to be considered for a focus group to help with planning.

With one more week of school, I thank you for joining me on this journey. As we head into this weekend and our final week of school, please commit with me to making a small differences not only today when our hearts are broken wide open, but in a week, a month, a year until we realize a safer, more loving, and hopeful future for all of our students.

In partnership, until we meet again.

Bellevue School District News Digest

Planning for Fall:

- **Take the survey!** We invite you to take this survey to help us make important decisions in how we plan for our return to school this fall. [Take the survey.](#)
- **Listen in on Fall Planning.** The Bellevue School District has been organizing a fall planning team including a Steering Committee that will be tasked with providing on-going feedback to the implementation team and ensuring the plan satisfies the Board's commitment to our students and community. The committee will be holding its first virtual meeting on Wednesday, June 17 from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. [Join us.](#)

Congratulations #BSD2020grads! We want to celebrate you! Share your graduation photos with us using #BSD2020grads on social media or email photos to communityrelations@bsd405.org for us to share on our website and social media platforms.

P-EBT, or Pandemic EBT Emergency School Meals Program: because of COVID-19, families qualifying for free or reduced priced meals for their children can apply for assistance buying groceries. Apply for P-EBT by August 31 at www.WashingtonConnection.org or call 877-501-2233. To be eligible for P-EBT, families must be approved for free or reduced priced school meals by June 30. To complete an application for school meal benefits go to www.bsd405.org/freeandreduced.

Use of School Grounds for Recreation: As we enter the summer months, we know many students and community members would like to use our recreation facilities. Effective immediately, we will be reopening our tennis and pickleball courts to the public, in line with Department of Health guidelines. Signs are posted at each facility explaining the physical distancing expectations. The courts at International and Tyee will not be open to the general public until Monday, June 22. Our fields, basketball courts and playgrounds will remain closed until King County enters Phase 2, at which time we will begin allowing groups of 5 or less, following the [Safe Start](#) guidelines.