

**June 19, 2020**

Greetings Bellevue Learning Community:

As we close out this historic year, I would like to extend my gratitude to you all.

None of us could have predicted the course our year would take. We launched our year optimistically – invested in the success of each and every one of our students.

In February, the Bellevue community once again voiced its belief in our mission. Voters approved the largest bond in our district's history: \$675M to rebuild Jing Mei Elementary School, International School, and Big Picture School; provide safety and security improvements across the district; and upgrade numerous school facilities. Thank you for your confidence in what our educators and staff do day in and day out - provide a world class education to each and every student.

By March, however, we were forced to close our school buildings due to the COVID-19 pandemic. But, we did not close our schools. We quickly implemented viable remote learning opportunities for all our students. Even though we were remotely navigating uncharted waters, we stayed together as a viable and effective learning community. And, all of you rose to the occasion – joining in partnership with our educators; in turn becoming educators yourselves.

You learned to navigate the virtual world of remote learning and kept your students motivated to stay connected and continue their learning. We know that remote learning is no substitute for in-person learning, but 91 percent of our students remained engaged in learning throughout our closure.

One of the more challenging areas was serving our students receiving special education services. Lessons and activities were tailored to each individual student and many involved sensory objects and other activities done one-on-one. Without the partnership of parents, learning would not have happened. I thank you for helping your students thrive in these challenging times.

Of course, we have another historic moment upon us – one that has long shadowed our nation: creating a more just and equitable society, free of racial discrimination and bias.

Much has been done by the district. We created an Equity Advisory Committee and Equity and Accountability Policy to guide our work; increased hiring and retention of staff that reflect our community's diversity; and adopted inclusive curriculum where all students see themselves and hear their voices.

The path of racial equity is not one I can walk alone. I ask you to join me in accomplishing this important work together. We must redouble our efforts to confront inequitable behaviors and

systems in our own community and nation-wide. Much work lies before us as we plan for the fall; to ensure that our students are not only safe and well-educated, but also treated equitably.

Please stay connected with the district this summer. Though with less frequency, we will continue to keep you informed about our plans and how you can be involved in the process.

Two historic challenges - the twin pandemics of COVID-19 and racial inequity – have dominated this year. We have a profound responsibility to write the next chapter so that all our students are fully prepared to be creators of their future world. That chapter will be remarkably different than the past months, and I am honored to be serving as your superintendent in these historic times.

In partnership, until we meet again.

Thank you!

## **Bellevue School District News Digest**

**Our Commitment to Racial Equity Webpage:** Please visit this site to follow our progress in becoming a more equitable and inclusive school district that believes in the potential of all students. The site has educational resources for families, links to the work of our Equity Advisory Group and Equity and Accountability Policy, and messages from Superintendent Ivan Duran. This site will continue to grow and evolve with the district's equity work. [Learn more.](#)

**Celebrating our 2020 Graduates:** If you missed your student's important milestone or just want to watch it again, the district website is hosting recordings of all the high school graduations. Also scroll through photo galleries of our seniors. [Watch and explore.](#)

**Four New Summer Meals Sites!** The Bellevue School District will continue to provide free meals to any child 18 and younger during the summer. Meals will be provided Monday through Thursday from June 29 through August 13. Four new locations have been announced: Eastgate, Enatai, Newport Heights, Sherwood Forest Elementary Schools. These are in addition to previously announced Lake Hills Elementary and Sammamish High School. Learn more on our website: <https://bsd405.org/FreeSummerMeals>.

**SAT Testing for 2020-21:** The Bellevue School District (BSD) remains committed to hosting the SAT on select Saturdays at one or more of our high school sites, as we have done for many years. The district usually hosts three Saturday SAT exams annually, and we plan to do so during the 2020-21 school year. However, at this time, there are still a number of unknown factors related to physical distancing and limitations on large gatherings due to COVID-19. [Learn more.](#)