

June 5, 2020

Greetings Bellevue Learning Community:

I'm Ivan Duran and it is my privilege to be your superintendent.

As our school year nears its end, I must admit that it has been a very challenging chapter in the life of our district. Both the disruptive and deadly COVID-19 virus, and the aftermath of the tragic and senseless death of George Floyd, have forced us to confront serious issues in our community and nation.

First of all, I want you to know that I stand in complete and unconditional support of our African American and Black students, families, and educators during this difficult time. The cruelty, indignity, and loss of life that our black community have endured for centuries must stop now. As I stated in my community letter this week, all of us, no matter our race or ethnicity, must stand and speak out for equity, respect, and justice of all – not just for the people who look and think like us, but for everyone.

And, our job as a school district is to help lead this effort. We must focus on creating more inclusive learning environments where all students are safe, welcomed, and valued. Again, when I say all, I mean all. Everyone.

To our graduating seniors, I know you have been handed a bad deal by the pandemic. Well-deserved ceremonies and celebrations with family and friends are somewhat muted by these trying times. But, I am in awe of your resilience, optimism, and ingenuity. You are a unique group who will achieve great things in the future. Keep on pushing. Bellevue is very proud of you and we all need you to be leaders.

To those students returning to our campuses in the fall, please be assured that we are committed to maintaining Bellevue's health and safety and academic excellence. We will keep you, your families, and the entire learning community informed about our plans.

Our commitment is to inform you sooner rather than later about any changes or updates. Now, this may mean that we will occasionally share information before all details are finalized, but you are part of our team and we want you to know what's going on as soon as possible.

So, briefly, here are some updates I want to share with you:

The plan for our return to school this fall progresses as we seek feedback from all members of our learning community. In the coming weeks, you will receive an invitation to take a survey or join a focus group. We want to learn from you what worked during remote learning this spring and what you think of a high-level plan for the fall should include.

During the pandemic, many in our learning community expressed concern about COVID-19's impact on the district budget and the quality of education for our children. We're

prepared to tackle these challenges. The budget for next year was set by the Washington State Legislature in March and we expect minimal impact on our own budget for the 2020-2021 school year.

Any changes to staffing and programs for next year will be based on the mission, vision, and shared values of our Strategic Plan. This means that we will continue to make decisions focused on a learning community design that serves each and every student academically, socially, and emotionally so that they can learn and thrive as creators of their future world.

Finally, we also heard concerns from some members of our community about SAT testing. The pandemic led to cancellation or rescheduling of testing in the spring, and anxiety for students and parents planning for the future. As we learn more about this issue, we are committed to finding a solution, mitigating the impact on our high school students, and communicating fully with their families.

Thank you again for letting me serve as your superintendent. I am honored to be a part of the Bellevue School District family and extremely proud of the work our educators, staff, and community do in serving our students.

In partnership, until we meet again.

## **Bellevue School District News Digest**

**Return-to-School Planning – Commitments, Goals and Assumptions:** At the June 2 School Board meeting, we finalized BSD's commitments to our community for the return to school in the fall. In short, the Board and the Superintendent commit to the following: Protect Health, Educate Each and Every Student, Engage and Support Stakeholders, and Help Meet Essential Needs. See the full list of commitments at <https://bsd405.org/fall2020>.

**Summer Nutrition Program:** BSD will continue to provide free meals to any child 18 and younger during the summer. Our nutrition program will be offered at Lake Hills Elementary School and Sammamish High School from June 29 through August 13. <https://bsd405.org/FreeSummerMeals>

**6th and 9th Grade Orientation Dates for Fall:** To help families transition to the 2020-21 school year, schools are offering virtual parent information and student orientation sessions for incoming sixth and ninth graders. [Learn more.](#)

**Upcoming Graduation and Promotion Events:** Our elementary, middle, and high schools have upcoming graduation and promotion ceremonies. Please use this list of calendar events to help you find out when your school's ceremony is happening. [Learn more.](#)

**Returning District Items and Picking Up Personal Items:** As the school year ends, students will be able to pick up personal items left in buildings and return district

items such as laptops and library books. Your health and well-being are our primary concerns. We will be following state guidelines and physical distancing during this process.

The exchanges will take place via your vehicle in the student drop-off/pick-up zones at your school beginning the last week of school. More information will be coming from your school, including what to do if you cannot get to the school for this event.