Spring Break Update #1

March 24, 2020

Welcome to our first Spring Break Update. Hopefully this email finds you enjoying some time with your family and friends. The State Board of Education announced some specific guidance for districts yesterday. March 23. We just wanted to take a moment to share this information and let you know how this impacts the district and your family.

Here is what the State Board said in its release:

“Given the current situation, the State Board of Education directs that all school districts and charter schools implement a soft closure through Monday, April 20. During this soft closure period, local districts shall follow national CDC guidelines pertaining to large gatherings and social distancing. While students are not permitted in schools, the State Board expects efforts to continue facilitating essential services and student learning. The Board will reassess this timeline as circumstances dictate. During this soft closure period, the Board expects that school districts will continue to provide these educational and essential services to the best of their ability. The school districts and charter schools are asked to focus on the following:

1. Develop and implement a continuation of essential services to your local communities. At a minimum, plans should include providing food service to Idaho’s underserved populations and childcare for our community members that provide critical services, with a focus on meeting the needs of local communities and supporting wider state emergency plans.
2. Implement and/or develop remote learning strategies that will benefit all K-12 students in school districts and charter schools. These plans should be designed in the event that a community needs to maintain closures for an extended period or the remainder of the school year.
3. School districts and charter schools shall develop a plan on delivering special education services, following recent federal guidelines, which may include revisions of Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and 504 Plans. The U.S. Department of Education has provided new guidance on revising IEPs and delivering remote education to special education students which can satisfy federal requirements”.

What does this mean for Nampa? Nothing new since our last update. It completely aligns with our plans and the direction we have prepared for! Soft closure means that with only a few exceptions, students cannot physically return to school until at least April 20. It means we move forward with implementing online/distant learning starting March 31.

It means that families should watch for an email or phone call from their teachers on March 30 letting them know what to expect on March 31.

We believe that IHSSA will follow suit and postpone any athletics until at least April 20. Nampa School District will do the same.
For those parents and guardians with seniors in high school, the State Board has granted districts flexibility for us to remove barriers that would have been difficult to break through. There will be some flexibility in graduation requirements such as college entrance exams, instructional hours and incomplete senior projects. We have NOT made a decision related to graduation ceremonies.

For parents whose students take the ISAT and IRI – the State Board has waived the ISAT for this spring and will consider whether or not it is feasible for the IRI to be given in May.

The State Board has given districts some flexibility in several other areas that will assist us in operations.

So in summary, you should have some type of contact from your school or teacher on Monday, March 30. Your student(s) will start online or distance education on Tuesday, March 31. We will work through this together as a community to support our students.

Thank you