April 15, 2020

Dear Nampa School District Parent/Guardian,

We just wanted to take a moment to update you regarding the latest news from Governor Little. As you are likely already aware, the governor extended the “Stay at Home” order through the end of April.

What does this mean for the Nampa School District?

For now, it means that we will continue to follow our plan with online/remote education. In addition, we will continue to provide other essential services to our students, including lunch and breakfast.

We will continue to staff two of our Family Community Resource Centers – at Central and Iowa. If your family or student experiences additional needs related to mental health, access to food, loss of housing or other significant hardship, please connect with your school who can connect you with additional services.

We want to thank you for taking time to fill out the surveys that have come your way in the last week. They have been extremely helpful and we are in the process of making and communicating adjustments based on your feedback.

One area that appeared frequently in your responses was student workload, particularly at the high schools where both students and parents expressed some concern over the amount of work expected from multiple teachers. While some teachers have already made some adjustments in workload, we are in the process of communicating some expectations that should provide some relief.

Remember, in an online/remote environment, the expectation is for your student to be engaged in their work 3-4 hours each day. However, please also be aware that your student is dealing (like we all are) with a new and different reality. Friends are not as accessible, routines have been disrupted, and uncertainty and fear may be impacting their emotional well-being. Therefore, sometimes, individual expectations and adjustments are appropriate. Please work with your teacher(s). Your child’s well-being is important to us!

Another concern that we can address at this time is around grading procedures. We have spent a great deal of time exploring options, considering pros and cons, and thinking about the consequences of grading in this unique time. Several students and parents mentioned their stress over the uncertainty of grades.

After a lot of discussion and thoughtful consideration, the Nampa School district continues to be committed in its support of students. We have agreed that student grades will not be negatively impacted by the current circumstances. We want to support students in their efforts to continue to learn and not be distracted or worried about a mark in the gradebook.
Curriculum has been planned to prioritize essential skill development and essential content for each course. Students will work to develop those skills during this time. **This is an opportunity for students to continue to learn and they can absolutely use this time to improve their grades.**

Specifically, Nampa School District’s grading procedures for Spring 2020 are as follows:

**Elementary**
Elementary schools will continue to proceed as normal with teaching, learning, and grading. No student will be penalized for not turning in or accessing curriculum. If there isn’t enough student evidence to assess a standard, the teachers will report NE (no evidence) as we usually do. This documentation will help us know what gaps might exist as we look forward to returning to school in the fall.

**Middle School and High School**
Secondary schools will ensure that all students’ end of year grades for all classes will be no lower than the student's 3rd Quarter grades. During this complex time, students are able to improve and remediate their overall grade. Building administrators will work closely with teachers to ensure that grading adheres to this policy. As a district, we will focus on giving students continued feedback on their learning and support students in their efforts.

1. During this time of distance learning, teachers will continue to support student learning and will provide feedback focused on student growth.
2. At the end of the second semester students will receive the grade(s) they have earned as of March 20th (End of 3rd Quarter) or better. Students can improve their grade by completing any incomplete work from 3rd Quarter and engaging in continued learning online throughout 4th Quarter.
3. School communities will work together to contact students that are struggling to access coursework to provide academic support and/or other necessary resources.

Now for the question you are wondering about. **Does this mean my student can stop accessing lessons and learning for the year?** No, we certainly hope not. There are gaps of knowledge that need to be filled in order to prepare your student for next year. There are AP and concurrent credit classes that will present information that is important for the next course in the sequence or to prepare students to take AP tests for credit.

Teachers are preparing lessons and working to connect with students. We believe that when the focus is on feedback and connections in learning between teachers and students, and not on grades, we will keep kids engaged. Would you help us send the message to your student that it is important to continue learning? This is about how we respond to crisis – we still have lots to learn in the next six weeks of school. It is not the grade that is significant, it is the learning. We hope you continue learning with us.

We hope to be able to communicate with you on Friday this week after the State Board of Education and the Idaho High School Athletic and Activities Association meet. Thank you for your continued patience as we navigate these uncharted waters together.

Dr. Paula Kellerer