



# SDE Briefing on COVID-19 for Superintendents & Charter School Administrators Webinar Q & A

Updated 3-25-2020

## GENERAL OPERATIONAL QUESTIONS

At the last two meetings we had with the SDE, it was clear to us that the SDE was there to support us. You shared that we had flexibility and should implement emergency closure as defined in Idaho Code. Has this direction changed?

A: No. The direction has been to have a plan in place to deal with a closure and then how you would continue instruction and services to students in the event of an extended closure. Your plans should also include re-opening guidance.

Q: Is there guidance or support documents to inform development of re-entry plans?

A: The CDC guidance is to work with your local health department for guidance on closures and re-openings. More information can be found here:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/index.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/considerations-for-school-closure.pdf>

Where will the form for Submitting district COVID-19 plans be located?

A: Please share details of your response plan using the form found at this link

<https://form.jotform.com/200784448319158>. This form also conveniently supports plan documents to be uploaded.

We would like to count our attendance based on completion of assignments. We are doing virtual and book instruction?

A: Guidance for measuring online / distance learning attendance is being prepared and will be distributed soon to all school districts and charter schools.

Kansas moved to shut down all schools for the remainder of the year. Can you work to ensure if that were to occur in Idaho, there is guidance outlining it doesn't impact full-time virtual schools?

A: We have communicated this concern to the Governor's office.

We are running virtual school. I have reached out to the state (Peter) and the Charter Commission. Is there anyone else I need to inform?

A: Not at this time.

How might a state-wide emergency closure get implemented since it is not under the guidance of the SDE?

A: The Governor would need to issue a state-wide school closure.

If staff express concern for their health due to age or compromising conditions, or even the ability to provide childcare, and do not want to come to the site, do we still have the flexibility to try to accommodate their duties at home. How does this apply toward bus drivers and instructional aides who mainly are involved with students in school?

A: This is a local decision. Please discuss with your School Board of Trustees and include this information in your plan.

Several years ago, the OIG directed attendance could not be collected from parents. Has that restriction been removed?

A: No. The Office of Inspector General's directive was specific to the virtual schools based on the audit of virtual schools. It applies to the full-time virtual schools.

How do we report attendance when students are online at home? Is there a code we should use to report it in our student information system?

A: Guidance for measuring online / distance learning attendance is being prepared and will be distributed soon to all school districts and charter schools.

Digital infrastructure and capabilities vary in districts and charters across Idaho. Given your statement just now that schools continue teaching kids during this extended break, should LEAs not capable of reaching ALL students do what they can? Some districts are saying they won't reach out online if they can't reach all kids.

A: For funding purposes, providing education to some and not all students will likely impact attendance, which can be adjusted upon receipt by the State Department of Education (Public School Finance) of a school district's or charter school's board of trustees certification per section 33-1003A, Idaho Code.

For districts who do not have good connectivity, are packets of work qualifying as providing an education? Or does this only work for online learning?

A: Yes.

Our teachers are preparing to be digitally ready to provide instruction April 6th and our teachers are sending packets of work home with kids. Do we even complete the emergency closure forms or work through ISEE on how to code?

A: An emergency closure form is not required if you are continuing to provide education. If your attendance is impacted, it can be adjusted upon receipt by the State Department of Education (Public School Finance) of a school district's or charter school's board of trustees certification per section 33-1003A, Idaho Code.

Will the May ISEE submission window be opened early? I know Tim Hill stated before that they would need extra time to figure out funding after submittals.

A: Not at this time. If necessary, you will be notified. Public School Finance will use all available attendance / staffing data within a reasonable time prior to each payment. Data received afterwards will be factored in to the next payment, either in the current or following fiscal year.

Do we still have to say closed in ISEE if we are trying to do something for our kids?

A: No.

Should we wait to apply for the waiver if there is a chance of a statewide waiver?

A: You should proceed with submitting your attendance / calendar waivers as soon as you know what days (attendance) or reduced calendar hours have been determined.

### Do we document our impacted ADA in a letter from the superintendent?

A: Guidance for impacted attendance is being prepared and will be distributed soon to all school districts and charter schools.

### Is there a projected community spread model for Idaho yet? Have you seen such a model?

A: This is in process. We are waiting for more information from the CDC.

### Can you define community spread?

A: Community spread means people have been infected with the virus in an area, including some who are not sure how or where they became infected. For more information see <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/transmission.html>

### How soon will Idaho get faster test kits?

A: There is movement on testing. For example, they are starting to ramp up by converting machines into rapid testing machines. The federal guidance is to move ahead, but we are still not testing people who are asymptomatic.

### Is there a risk that the expected economic downturn will impact 2020/2021 state funding for K-12?

A: Yes. In his press conference on March 18, 2020, Gov. Little acknowledged that there would be an impact on the economy. We don't know the extent at this point in time.

### Is it true that if we cannot provide an open model with special ed services for elementary but we could for secondary, we could just run a secondary school?

A: The response addressed providing what education you are able to, and if attendance is impacted, submit the necessary certification to the State Department of Education (Public School Finance), per section 33-1003A, Idaho Code. Any requirement for providing education to students with an IEP should be addressed by the Special Education section of the State Department of Education.

I don't see that IC 33-1006 (6) is specific to charter schools. We will have costs associated with providing online education.

A: Idaho Code 33-1006 (6) is not specific to charter schools; however, it is specific to public virtual schools. Public virtual schools is defined in Idaho Code 33-5202A (11). Briefly, a public virtual school is a school, which delivers a full-time sequential program.

In the requirements to provide four hours of education a day, is this the same for Kindergarten, since the state does not fund or require full day K?

A: No. A full-time Kindergarten student is a minimum of 2.5 hours per day, or the equivalent of ten 2.5 hour sessions over a two-week period if you are using an alternate schedule (e.g., every other day).

Any updates around Medicaid and being able to provide/bill behavior interventions in the home?

A: This was answered in the first webinar, so we suggest you go back and listen because it was fully addressed there. There is also a link to Medicaid school-based services and we gave examples of when this might be appropriate.

Can you point to links for recorded webinar regarding Medicaid?

A: We sent out the link if you participated in the first webinar. It should have gone out and it was also posted with the recording, so you can go to the ITC. It was also posted on the Governor's website, but if you can't find it please email Charlie Silva at [csilva@sde.idaho.gov](mailto:csilva@sde.idaho.gov) and she can send it to you.

Do we need to submit two different waivers? One for ADA and one for reduced instructional hours? Or is it just one waiver for both?

A: Yes. Both may be submitted to the State Department of Education, Public School Finance.

In terms of the waivers for ADA Impact and Calendar hours, do we wait until after the IDBOE meeting? Where do we get these waivers?

A: You may submit the impacted ADA as soon as you know which day or days will be affected. Please keep in mind that the affected weeks will be considered for your best-28 weeks of attendance, which is used for discretionary funding. Public School Finance will need time to process this data and will let you know whether to submit in batches, if closures and/or impacted attendance is for an extended timeframe.

Can charter schools whose LEA is a School District go online if they can meet the needs of their SPED population even if the LEA cannot?

A: The charter school needs to work with the LEA to ensure the charter is meeting the needs and IEP requirements of their SPED population.

When should school districts submit attendance waivers? Now? Or wait until we know how many days students will actually miss?

A: You may submit the impacted ADA as soon as you know which day or days will be affected. Please keep in mind that the affected weeks will be considered for your best-28 weeks of attendance, which is used for discretionary funding. Public School Finance will need time to process this data and will let you know whether to submit in batches, if closures and/or impacted attendance is for an extended timeframe.

We need help to get internet to our students.

A: If you have any questions regarding providing internet to students including internet access at home or opening up internet access to your parking lots, etc. please contact Christopher Campbell ([cacampbell@sde.idaho.gov](mailto:cacampbell@sde.idaho.gov)) for assistance from the Broadband Program team.

Where on the website are the resources for the internet companies offering programs for low income families?

A: A resource will be posted to [coronavirus.idaho.gov](http://coronavirus.idaho.gov) that contains information regarding what Internet Service Providers are offering reduced cost services for low-income families.

What is the deadline for offering child care for the children of health care providers, etc.?

A: There is no deadline that we are aware of. A few districts have stepped up to the plate to offer child care. They're getting creative and believe this is a community issue, not an education issue. This is ultimately a local control issue, but some districts are getting creative with how they are addressing it. Hopefully we will be able to provide more guidance soon.

Please help us understand what a "Soft Closure" looks like. Who defines to whom and when we must provide daycare?

A: On March 23, the State Board of Education approved COVID-19 School Operations Guidance. The board's memorandum states:

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.

### Can school libraries be open during the soft close weeks?

A: Remember, you're supposed to be in groups of less than 10 and it's supposed to be essential personnel to provide services to kids. At the local level, you need to make decisions about whether that is an essential service and if you can do it with less than 10 people. Also, think about safety. Some districts are doing curbside library services, so really think about how you can be creative to offer those essential services to kids.

### How do we equitably approach staff with fear of reporting to work or refusal to report to buildings?

A: Your May 15<sup>th</sup> payment is still a function of activity between the first day of school and the first Friday in November. Don't be concerned that your May 15<sup>th</sup> payment is going to be

adversely affected by any activity after the first Friday in November. The first 10 weeks or so of school (that first day of school through the first Friday in November) is driving your salary and benefit apportionment and that is not going to change unless you have any revisions to that first period attendance. If staff is refusing to show up, you need to ask yourself if you have sufficient funds to pay those individuals if they're salaried or in contract. The answer should be yes. For any of your classified staff, it gets a little bit more complicated because you'll need to make that decision individually, at each local level, as to whether you're going to continue to pay those individuals. But, your salary based apportionment isn't going to go down.

It was suggested that districts have the responsibility of childcare for essential personnel. If your district is a bedroom community for another county, is the local LEA required to provide childcare for those parents working outside of the school district boundaries or only for essential personnel within the school district boundaries?

A: On March 23, 2020, the State Board approved guidance asking LEAs to develop and implement a plan that should include childcare for community members. The language in the SBOE guidance document is permissive, i.e. may or should, not shall. Additional guidance from the State Board is coming. DHW offers a temporary child care day camp license to assist caring for children of employees or community members due to Corona COVID 19. The CARES Act stimulus package, which just passed the Senate, includes a provision for child care. It's expected the House will also approve and the President will sign this Act. An Idaho city, county, school district, community organization or business may request a temporary child care license for a day camp to assist employees due to COVID 19. Day camps must operate for less than twelve weeks during a calendar year (Idaho Code 16.06.02.05 Sec 39-1103). Temporary child care licenses do not include the requirement for fingerprints or background history checks. The SDE is staying closely connected to this information.

As you stated, online teaching is new for some teachers. I am hoping to switch up and give PD credit for teachers who need them for certification. Are there guidelines (# of IDLA webinars for example) for creating inhouse PD credit? Is there a way to track who attends webinars?

A: We will get back to you on the certification piece. Lisa Colon Durham wasn't available for the webinar, so as soon as we get that information we will get it to you. Regarding tracking attendance in webinars, we do not have it set up to track who can sign in. Will Goodman said that they purposely set up their webinars so that you do not have to register or sign up to make them as accessible and easy to launch as possible.



These resources are fantastic. Thank you again for IDLA, eday, etc. However, our obstacles aren't lack of content in most cases. They are 1. Supporting SPED (legally) 2. Supporting student's w/o internet access. (equity)

A: Please review the Special Ed document for guidance on supporting special ed students. Regarding internet access, please reach out to our team to discuss your needs in your particular district. Obviously, it's very different around the state. Different districts have different options available in their area. We are watching for any potential changes, but please contact Chris Campbell directly to discuss your specific needs.

**Where can we find the Google Doc with all of the links for IDLA?**

A: If you go to the eday page ([eday.idahodigitallearning.org](http://eday.idahodigitallearning.org)) and click the "Request IDLA Content" button you will get an email immediately with a link to a Google Doc that has every course that we've made available.

**If we have 7th/8th graders using IDLA classes, will they still be required to "pay" for that course?**

A: If the student is just taking a regular IDLA course in the regular manner that they always would, then yes, they would still need to pay for that course. If you're withdrawing the students because the course was only offered in your local district, and not in a way that students could take it at home, that's what we're looking at providing a solution to you right now. And expect some more information to come from us in the near future.

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

**Can you provide a list of all the upcoming coronavirus-related webinars hosted by the SDE?**

A: Given our goal of providing school districts and charter schools with the most current information available, and the fluid, rapidly changing coronavirus situation, webinars will be held every week on Monday and Wednesday at 1:00 pm until further notice. If you are a school official and have not received our emails, please check your spam folder/filter or contact Scott Phillips by calling 208-332-6816 or emailing [sphillips@sde.idaho.gov](mailto:sphillips@sde.idaho.gov).

## Do you have a model policy we could review that could help our schools prepare for a prolonged closure?

A: Superintendent Ybarra surveyed school officials and many said they would like to learn the best practices of their peers for ensuring the continuity of teaching and learning in schools. She's asked them to share their continuity of teaching and learning (emergency/disaster) plans with other Idaho districts and charters. Our office is poised to facilitate this exchange of best practices by compiling plans emailed to Scott Phillips at sphillips@sde.idaho.gov into one exemplar document that will be provided to all school districts and charter schools.

## ASSESSMENT & ACCOUNTABILITY

### We have not had time to spend all literacy dollars and we may not get an opportunity to spend them. Will we lose them?

A: We are required to follow the statute which states funds must be expensed to support literacy intervention programs. Schools can consider online resources and supports of distance learning during extended closures specific to literacy intervention. In addition, licenses for online instructional programs are allowable expenses. Please contact Karlynn Laraway for more guidance or to discuss options. 208-332-6976

### ACT website says they are rescheduled to June 13

A: ACT has rescheduled its April 4 national test date to June 13 across the U.S. Students

### Can you clarify the process for submitting waivers for assessments? Are state requirements included in this waiver, such as civic tests, senior projects, IRI, etc.?

A: On Monday, March 23 during a special meeting, The State Board of Education took the following action.

#### Graduation Requirements

- The board waived the graduation requirement in IDAPA 08.02.03.105.03 for the college entrance exam for seniors who would have taken it during the 2020 administration.
  - The board will include in the 2021 rule-making an exemption for juniors in the 2019-2020 school year from the college entrance exam graduation requirement.
- The board waived the graduation requirement in IDAPA 08.02.03.105. 04, requiring the completion of a senior project for students on track to graduate at the end of the 2019-2020 school year.

#### Statewide Assessments

- The board waived the requirement in IDAPA 08.02.03.111 for the administration of the Idaho Standard Achievement Test (ISAT) and alternate assessments for students with significant cognitive disabilities, in English Language Arts, Math and Science, in grades 3-8 and high school for the 2019-2020 school year.
- The board approved the submission of Idaho's waiver request to the U.S. Department of Education from administering statewide assessments, accountability and school identification requirements and certain reporting requirements detailed in the state's ESSA plan. The waiver was submitted by my office to the U.S. Department of Education late Monday.

At this time, the Board has taken no action on suspending the May IRI administration but will take it up in a future meeting.

The Civics test requirement is found in Statute and the board is unable to waive statutory requirements. Keep in mind, local districts and charters have a great deal of flexibility in that you decide how the assessment is given, i.e. multiple choice, question and answer, orally, etc. Districts also determine the passing threshold a student will need to meet in order to fulfill the graduation requirement, so you can likely address this at a local level.

### If Idaho submits a waiver and has it approved by the US Dept of Ed, and state testing is canceled, will IRI also be canceled?

A: The Board took no action on the IRI during their special board meeting on Monday, but is expected to discuss it in a future meeting.

### So, we did get the waiver for State Accountability. Does this mean that no ISAT and not IRI?

A: Yes – Idaho's waive for statewide assessments, accountability and some reporting requirements has been submitted and approved. The waiver is specific to assessments in ELA and Math administered to students in grades 3-8 and high school, as part of our state's ESSA plan. The IRI is a state requirement and not part of our waiver to the US Department of Education. At this time, the State Board of Education has not suspended the May IRI administration but will take it up in a future meeting.

### Will Assessment be sending out information to districts in more detail on IStation use?

A: Yes. The team is sending direct communication to our IRI Implementation team contacts and district test coordinators this week.

## STUDENT TRANSPORTATION

If we are out of school and run busses to deliver food for students is that reimbursable?

A: This could possibly be counted as reimbursable unique to/from miles or shuttle mileage. Child nutrition may also have funds available. It is yet to be determined.

Speaking of reimbursement: if there is full closure, will there be reimbursement for transportation. My school contracts for busing. The contractor is asking me.

A: If the contract is written as such, then the district would be obligated to pay for the number of days service designated in the contract.

How will a closure affect transportation funding? If we continue paying bus drivers, mechanics, etc. during a closure, we will receive normal funding for those payments in 2020-2021?

A: Continuing to pay employees while not running reimbursable miles could push a district into the funding cap as fewer miles results in a higher per mile rate.

Bus contracts - we are being asked to continue payments, what is guidance for paying bus contracts when we are not busing students.

A: No clear answer yet. Work with your legal team and review contract, review with school board for recommendation. I hope this will be answered and reimbursed soon. But no clear path yet.

Do you have any suggestions to compensate route drivers if we have an extended closure?

A: drivers are required a minimum of 10 hours training annually. May be good opportunity to do that training. Make sure your board will support this and submit for reimbursement this fall. I have no clarification on this being approved as of yet.

If we use our contracted bus company to deliver meals and homework using our contracted bus company, can we use our regular bus reimbursement through IBUS

A: Not yet. I have asked the question to get this approved. Many districts are using the “drive through” summer process for food now. If you do deliver track/document the miles in IBUS

under “other” reimbursable. Still today no confirmation this will be reimbursed, but hoping it will be approved soon.

Idaho Code 33-1006 (6) says any eligible home-based public virtual school may claim transportation reimbursement. If we offer virtual online education are we eligible for this reimbursement? (i.e. Idaho Virtual Academy received \$1,253,924 in 18-19 without running busses)

A: No. Idaho Code 33-1006(6) specifically references home-based public virtual schools. Idaho Code 33-5202A (11) defines a virtual school as “a public charter school or a traditional public school that delivers a full-time, sequential program of synchronous and/or asynchronous instruction primarily through the use of technology via the internet in a distributed environment.” Offering virtual online education during this time would not meet the full-time sequential program requirement.

Any decision on how transportation funds will be disbursed?

A: No. We are looking at a waiver that will allow yellow bus transportation of meals/homework supplies. This will enable districts to employ some drivers and technicians to do this work.

What if our transportation is contracted? Does that include "Paying our people"?

A: As I’ve stated earlier, districts need to pull contracts and review them with their legal departments to see what their obligations are.

Food: If under the summer feeding program only certain sites are approved, how can districts deliver meals with busses and so that food is provided and we can use our busses for reimbursement?

A: Track your mileage in IBUS under “Other” R. the mileage for meals, supplies, homework delivered by school busses is reimbursed.

Our district continues to pay bus drivers, although they are not driving presently. We hope to continue to pay our bus drivers to year end, even if they are not driving. Will we be reimbursed for these salary and benefits?

A: I have forwarded that question and am awaiting an answer.

## **SPECIAL EDUCATION**

For guidance regarding Special Education, please see [this](#) document for ongoing updates.

## **EDUCATOR EFFECTIVENESS**

I ask that the SDE please give direction regarding evaluations so that we have a consistent approach. Each one of our districts could do something different which compromises the integrity of the process and leaves the SDE up for continued criticism regarding evaluations.

A: The SDE's certification department collects evaluations, which are spot-checked by the State Board. The State Board, not the SDE, sets the standards for evaluations. Standards are outlined in IDAPA 08.02.02.120.

The State is going to really have to think deeply about teacher evaluations and the career ladder. Students will not be getting the quality instruction online as they would in the school even if the school remains open and evaluations are tied to IRI and ISAT. If ISAT and IRI are suspended and long-term closures occur, accountability for teachers needs serious reconsideration

A: The Superintendent will seek the maximum flexibility for all schools in Idaho.

[Can we please suspend teacher evaluation requirements this year?](#)

A: According to IDAPA 08.02.02.120.2, in situations where certificated personnel are unavailable for two classroom observations, one observation is sufficient. The Career Ladder Data System (CLDS) application will be open until at least June 30, 2020.

[With a school shut down, would the requirements for teacher evaluations conducted by school administrators be adjusted? Will teacher observation requirements be altered? Are teacher observations for evaluation requirements being adapted? Will teacher evaluation timelines be extended?](#)

A: The Career Ladder Data System (CLDS) application will be open until at least June 30, 2020. According to IDAPA 08.02.02.120.2, in situations where certificated personnel are unavailable for two (2) classroom observations, one (1) observation is acceptable.

With no school, we cannot complete all required observations. Will you be flexing these timelines and/ or requirements?

A: IDAPA 08.02.02.120.2 provides for situations in which one (1) documented classroom observation would be acceptable. See underlined language below:

02. Professional Practice. All certificated instructional employees must receive an evaluation in which at least a majority of the evaluation ratings must be based on Professional Practice. All measures included within the Professional Practice portion of the evaluation must be aligned to the Charlotte Danielson Framework for Teaching Second Edition domains and components. Professional Practice shall include a minimum of two (2) documented observations annually, with at least one (1) observation being completed by January 1 of each year. In situations where certificated personnel are unavailable for two (2) documented classroom observations, due to situations such as long-term illness, late year hire, etc., one (1) documented classroom observation is acceptable. At least one (1) documented summative evaluation must include a rating for all components of the applicable professional standards used for evaluation of certified personnel. District evaluation models shall also include at least one (1) of the following as a measure to inform the Professional Practice portion of each certificated instructional employee evaluations: (3-28-18)

1. Parent/guardian input; (3-20-14)
2. Student input; and/or (3-20-14)
3. Portfolios. (3-20-14)

## **PUBLIC SCHOOL FINANCE**

If we are providing instruction on-line, how should we measure time for lessons as part of the ADA?

A: Measure all student time spent (time on computer, working on lessons, etc.) and submit in ISEE. Average daily attendance that is impacted will be adjusted per section 33-1003A, Idaho Code, upon receipt of the information as outlined in the statute.

During a webinar the department quoted the Idaho attendance manual about being under the instruction of a teacher and implied that we could count time if students were at home and still being taught, regardless of the online law. Is that still your interpretation?

A: Yes, for those students that are enrolled and were attending your school district or charter school. Average daily attendance that is impacted will be adjusted per section 33-1003A, Idaho Code, upon receipt of the information outlined in the statute.

Will there be any reimbursement for cost associated with providing classes on line?

A: The department is not aware of any additional funding available for added costs of providing classes online. Please keep track of these costs for future consideration of policy makers.

Do we request the ADA waiver now if we know our ADA is going to be low, or do we wait until we know how far low it is likely to be before applying?

A: Please submit ADA waiver requests per section 33-1003A, Idaho Code, to Pam Brewer via email to

pbrewer@sde.idaho.gov, for any affected day or days that would be reported on ISEE upload submission dates. Minimum hours waivers should be submitted to Public School Finance as soon as Calendars have been revised.

Regarding seeking a waiver of the minimum number of instructional hours as outlined in Idaho Code § 33-512, Subsection 1.h., do we send this waiver request to the attention of Superintendent Ybarra and she then takes it to the State Board for approval or do we submit it directly to the Office of the State Board of Education?

A: You may submit the SDE's Public School Finance department. We will provide Superintendent Ybarra with a list of school districts and charter schools that have submitted waiver requests for minimum hours.

Tim Hill: Is there any reason to believe that our May or July payments will be delayed?

A: No. Public School Finance is on track to complete the calculation and distribution of the May 15 and July 15 payments as scheduled. Any data revisions received after these payments will be



incorporated into the next payment, even if it requires a previous year adjustment in the following year.

We are required to submit our budget hearing date to the county clerk by April 30th, by law. We are required to adopt our budget before June 30th, by law. My question is: have you discussed extending the budget deadline date by a month or two? It could be nearly impossible to adopt a budget under the current situation or worse, if we are in state lockdown.

A: Public School Finance has not yet had any discussions regarding extensions. These due dates are statutory, and may not be able to be amended without legislative action. Guidance will be provided as we approach these dates. In the meantime, please submit your budget hearing date to your county(ies) by April 30.

## **FEDERAL PROGRAMS**

Our district is canceling professional development activities, conferences, trainings and events. As a result, our carryover may be more than 15% for Title I-A. Is our district eligible for a carryover waiver?

Any LEA may request a Title I-A waiver to carryover more than 15% of its allocation once every three years. This request is made through the CFSGA. Federal Programs contacted the U.S. Department of Education on 3.16.2020 requesting the Title I-A three-year timeframe for submitting a carryover request be lifted for 2019-2020. The SDE is awaiting a response.

With the cancellation of many scheduled professional development trainings, we anticipate our carryover may exceed the allowable percentages for some of our federal funds. Will we need to request a waiver to carryover additional funds or will there be a statewide waiver?

A: Any LEA can request a waiver for excessive carryover of Federal funds once every three years. This waiver is requested through the Federal Programs Division CFSGA. However, due to these extraordinary circumstances, Idaho asked the U.S. Department of Education on March 16, 2020 for guidance on offering a one-time waiver for excessive carryover for the 2019-2020 school year.

Since many classified staff (e.g. paraprofessionals) are paid with Federal funds, may we continue paying classified, federally funded staff with Federal funds (Title I-A, Title II-A, Title I-C, etc.)?

A: Yes. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) on March 19, 2020 released a letter describing time-limited flexibilities to recipients whose operations have been adversely impacted due to COVID-19. LEAs may continue to charge salaries and benefits to currently active Federal awards that are consistent with the organization's policy during unexpected or extraordinary circumstances. When spending federal funds, LEAs should follow the same policies and procedures applied when spending state, local, or other non-federal funds. For example, if state funds will pay state-funded staff during a closure, then Title I funds can pay Title I funded staff, Title II funds can pay Title II funded staff, etc. Time and effort requirements apply to any staff paid with Federal funds.

If we bought gloves for science with Federal funds, will we be able to donate some of those to our local doctors?

A: ESEA Federal funds must support students and teachers for the intended purpose of the grants. Consider using state funds to reimburse the Federal account that paid for the gloves and then donate the gloves to your community's local doctors.

## **CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS**

If our school is closed, can we continue to provide school lunch for those in need?

A: Yes! The USDA has issued guidance that empowers local child nutrition programs to continue providing nutritious meals even if there is a school closure. Learn more at <https://coronavirus.idaho.gov/resources-for-schools/>.

Any update on waivers from the USDA on grab-n-go food locations?

A: Grab-N-Go is currently an allowable option to request on your waiver to the State Agency

Do you anticipate buses being allowed to deliver food?

A: Buses can deliver food to eligible sites.

What about meals on the weekend?

A: Meals are not NSLP on the weekends. They are allowed when administering SFSP or SSO on the weekends.

If a district is doing online learning can they serve food under a summer program or does it have to be under National School lunch Program?

A: If the district is considered open then they must do NSLP. If the district is closed they can apply for either SFST or SSO depending upon their eligibility

We understand that the meal funds can be used to transport meals. But, if the law does not allow transportation funds to be used to deliver meals, is it possible to seek an emergency exception to the law? We need all of our food funds to pay for food. We know funds for transportation have already been appropriated. Why wouldn't we seek an emergency exemption to be able to use the buses and drivers to get meals to kids?

A: This is a transportation question, not a CNP question. Meals are reimbursed on a per meal bases. There are not additional funds in the USDA programs for this purpose.

Regarding food service, why are regulations restricting us from taking prepared food to more than one location in our district? If we aren't able to take it to more than one location, we will severely limit the number of high needs students that can have access to meals

A: USDA regulations do not restrict school districts from taking prepared food to more than one pre-approved site.

Free meals for children are available at approved sites across the state.

Children ages 1-18 may pick-up meals at any site, regardless of enrollment. Children must be physically present at the feeding site to receive a meal. Please contact individual sites for meal service times. To locate a feeding site near you, go to

<https://batchgeo.com/map/3195baf394a7f7db04ce06c69b17842f>

The following outlines the most common scenarios. Additionally, please follow any directions from your local health jurisdiction regarding meal distribution.

One or more schools OR our entire district is closed. We participated in the SFSP/SSO in the past two years, can we serve meals and claim them under SFSP/SSO? Yes!

- Serve meals through SFSP or SSO .
- Serve all children ages 0 – 18 years.
- Meals may be served as “grab n go”.

- Meal counts for SFSP or SSO can be by tally sheet (by name meal counting is NOT required).
- Serve up to two meals at one time (i.e. breakfast AND lunch).

One or more schools OR our entire district is closed. We have never participated in the SFSP/SSO, but we have area eligible sites (50% or more Free and Reduced-Price (F/RP)) are there for meal service options for us? Yes!

- Serve meals through SSO (at schools that qualify as area eligible).
- Serve all children ages 0 – 18 years.
- Meals may be served as “grab n go”.
- Meal counts for SSO can be by tally sheet (by name meal counting is NOT required).
- Serve up to two meals at one time (i.e. breakfast AND lunch).

One or more schools OR our entire district is closed and schools in our district are not area eligible (less than 50% F/RP). Are there options for feeding students? Yes!

- Serve meals through NSLP/SBP (if some schools are open)
- Operate a “Closed Enrolled Site” through the SSO program.
- Closed Enrolled Sites target low-income students in non-area eligible schools.
- This option takes careful planning

**Do kids have to be present to receive meals? If yes, may we ask for a waiver on this?**

A: Yes. At this time students/children need to be present to receive a meal. An SFA can submit a waiver. The Idaho State Department of Education would send that waiver to USDA. Until approval is given, the SFA would need to continue with the current USDA guidelines.

**If we open our schools, and a large number of families still decide to keep their students’ home, can we continue to do drop off meals for those families who stay home?**

A: No. If school is open then the child nutrition program will administer the program as they did before the COVID-19 situation.

**What day is the weekly webinar with food nutrition?**

A: Thursday. 9:00 to 10:00. Please submit your questions. All Idaho State Department of Education, Child Nutrition staff members will be available for questions.

Can you serve meals and not provide educational services until you have an educational plan in place?

A: Yes. USDA has granted this flexibility and Idaho State Department of Education supports this flexibility.

If we go into a community shelter in place, are the "congregate feeding sites" people (our lunch preparation people) considered essential?

A: It is a local decision as to what is considered essential. Idaho State Department of Education has been informed of several CNP staff employees wanting to work, in addition to volunteers from the community.

Can we get the link for the webinar for child nutrition?

A: This is the attendee registration link:

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/8963601825344153867>

In the absence of a bid system for food service, URM is charging astronomical prices for food. Is there a plan to offer relief for districts?

A: All CNP programs should be working under a bid contract for purchasing. Check your contract for details. These are local contracts, not state contracts. The Child nutrition programs are reimbursed by a meals times rate formula. There is currently no other funding mechanism for the excessive cost of food.

Have you tried other vendors?

We've had patrons offering to donate funds to our food service program. How should we respond?

A: It is allowable to accept donations to the food service fund.

## **STUDENT ENGAGEMENT**

Question for Eric Studebaker: Could you also share resources for helping kids deal with suicide of a loved one? We already had a suicide in our school family.

A: Below are several resources to share with the parents of kids dealing with the loss of someone in their life to suicide. The first is a pdf from the American Association of Suicidology

providing resources for Survivors of Suicide. There is a specific section on supporting children in this situation.

<https://suicidology.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Resources-for-Survivors-of-Suicide.pdf>

Next is a link to the Department of Health and Welfare's Suicide Prevention Resources web page. On this page there are a variety of resources. The resources are well organized by topic and there is also information on identifying risk factors and supporting protective factors.

<https://healthandwelfare.idaho.gov/Families/SuicidePreventionProgram/Resources/tabid/1920/Default.aspx>

This final webpage is the Department of Health and Welfare's Children's Mental Health page. This page is a great resource on supporting the mental health of Idaho's kids. It has information on the Youth Empowerment Services, parent resources, youth resources, parent support groups, and a link to help find local mental health services.

<https://healthandwelfare.idaho.gov/Medical/MentalHealth/ChildrensMentalHealth/tabid/314/Default.aspx>

Two last resources that you may want to share are the Idaho Care Line which anyone can reach by dialing 211. The Idaho Care Line can put parents in contact with local resources and service providers. And finally, the Idaho Suicide Prevention Hotline, which provides on demand support and crisis intervention. The hotline number is (208) 398-HELP (4357). They also have a website with great resources, [idahosuicideprevention.org](http://idahosuicideprevention.org).

## **TECHNOLOGY**

**If you would like our May data as early as possible, will you open the May ISEE upload window earlier than normal?**

A: The Department is working on improved flexibility around ISEE reporting with the intent of postponing the March 20th ISEE deadline as it is believed that many LEAs may be unable to meet that deadline due to closures. Further information will be provided as soon as it is available. It is not currently anticipated that we will need May ISEE data early and no decisions have yet been made on those timelines. If you have any questions regarding ISEE, please continue to work with your ISEE coordinator.

The FCC has announced a waiver on E-rate gift rules which allows internet providers and other providers to gift increased capacity, hardware, etc. to better support remote learning, etc.

A: From the waiver:

For example, some providers have expressed interest in providing free network upgrades for hospitals that need more robust connections to treat patients via telemedicine and free connected devices and hotspots for students who will be taking classes at home. This waiver will enable them to do such things.

<https://docs.fcc.gov/public/attachments/DOC-363137A1.pdf>

## **EMPLOYEE COMPENSATION**

Is there a way to pay for staff self-quarantining because they have high risk family members at home, without them using their sick leave?

A: Since Idaho is a local control state, this is a decision that must be made by local school trustees. That said, the SDE encourages school districts and charter schools to provide their staff, students, and families with maximum flexibility, and to use every tool and resource at their disposal to protect the health and safety of staff and students.

Can teachers under quarantine use sick leave?

A: Since Idaho is a local control state, this is a decision that must be made by local school trustees. That said, we encourage school districts and charter schools to provide their staff, students, and families with maximum flexibility, and to use every tool and resource at their disposal to protect the health and safety of staff and students.

## **SCHOOL CLOSURES**

If we close, are staff able to come back to the building to work or collaborate with their department at the school building.

A: Those are local decisions for district and school leadership.

What guidance from the SDE should districts expect regarding how and when to reopen schools?

A: Like closing schools, how and when to reopen schools is a local decision, made in consultation with your local health district officials. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has published guidance for cleaning and disinfecting schools.

## **INSTRUCTIONAL HOURS**

Will the state waive / suspend the requirements for minimum instructional hours?

A: Waiver requests may be submitted to the State Board of Education (via Public School Finance), per section 33-512(h), Idaho Code.

How many hours of online learning per day is necessary to count a full day of attendance?

A: Per IDAPA 08.02.01.250, 4 hours. Average daily attendance that is impacted will be adjusted per section 33-1003A, Idaho Code, upon receipt of the information outlined in the statute.

We have many students that do not have internet access. In the event our school must close, staff will provide homework packets to students and hold office hours by appointment to help students. Will this count towards meeting the state's requirements for instructional hours?

A: Thanks for planning to be flexible in meeting the needs of students and families! The answer is yes, as Idaho Code 33-512 contains provisions for Superintendent Ybarra or the State Board of Education to waive instructional hour requirements. Learn more at <https://coronavirus.idaho.gov/resources-for-schools/>.

What statutes allow for waivers to be granted to protect schools from funding cuts if they must close or cannot meet state instructional hour requirements if many students are absent due to illness, or fear of illness?

A: As provided by Idaho Code 33-1003A, Superintendent Ybarra has a streamlined system in place to issue Average Daily Attendance waivers that ensure schools remain fully funded in the event of a closure. If many students are out ill, or if their parents keep them home for fear of becoming ill, Idaho Code 33-512 allows Superintendent Ybarra or the State Board of Education



to issue schools waivers from meeting statutory instructional hour requirements. In any event, we're committed to being flexible because there is nothing more important than the health and safety of students, school staff and their families. Learn more at

<https://coronavirus.idaho.gov/resources-for-schools/>

### Can we count individual attendance for individual students who stay home and receive instruction online?

A: Yes.

### Can the legislature or Governor waive statutes related to Average Daily Attendance and instructional hour requirements, making a waiver process unnecessary?

A: The Idaho Legislature certainly can change the law related to Average Daily Attendance or instructional hour requirements. Because we have instated a streamlined, flexible waiver process which will make it easy for school districts and charter schools to apply for and receive waivers, we do not believe changing the law is necessary.

### What flexibility do schools have if they offer classes completely online in grades k-12? Can online education count towards meeting state instructional hour requirements?

A: Superintendent Ybarra is committed to providing schools maximum flexibility in addressing coronavirus in their communities. Yes, online instruction can count toward meeting the state requirements. There is also a waiver available per Idaho Code 33-512 for schools that cannot meet statutory instructional hour requirements.

### What Idaho law governs homebound students under the instruction of a certified teacher?

A: Idaho Code 33-1001 defines a homebound student as "any student who would normally and regularly attend school, but is confined to home or hospital because of an illness or accident for a period of ten (10) or more consecutive days." Idaho Code 33-1003A allows a school district or charter school to "include homebound students in its total attendance, provided that academic instruction has been given by appropriate certified professional staff employed by the district." IDAPA 08.02.01 also contains provisions governing homebound students.

### What if we can already educate our students online? Do we have to go through IDLA to meet state instructional hour requirements?

A: It is great that your school is prepared! While Idaho Digital Learning Alliance has graciously offered to support schools facing coronavirus-related closures, school districts and charter schools are not required to use IDLA's services. For schools who are not prepared to implement online learning during a closure, we highly encourage you to contact IDLA.

### Idaho Digital Learning Alliance curriculum is just for 7-12 grades?

A: Yes, that is true. However, IDLA is prepared to offer tools and insight into how schools can deliver online education to students in any grade.