

Superintendent Report
Region One Schools
September 2020

Starting the School Year

Administrators have been working with their leadership teams, teachers and support staff to prepare for the start of the school year. The following activities have been taking place in each building:

- Facilities managers and custodians have been organizing classrooms and outfitting them with plexiglass where necessary to meet physical distancing needs. They are also putting up signs and laying down floor markings to communicate information and manage traffic flow in the buildings. Finally, they have organized sanitizing and disinfecting schedules for all areas in each building.
- Principals have been working with their leadership teams, teachers and paras to organize and implement building-specific routines, protocols and professional learning to ensure that they are prepared to receive students on September 8.
- Support staff teams are busy ensuring that all teachers have supplies, onboarding new students and attending to the many other tasks that need to be completed before the students arrive.
- Food service staff are organizing in-school and out-of-school meal service. Students who are in school will follow safety protocols and will either eat in classrooms or in reduced numbers in the cafeteria. Meals for students who are not in school will be organized for pick-up throughout the week.

All preparation is being completed in alignment with the Region One and school reopening plan guidelines.

New Students in the Region

The table below indicates the student count for each of the schools in Region One. The elementary school enrollment numbers include pre-k and kindergarten students who would have been new in any year and are not all COVID-19 related additions.

School	Total Students 2020-2021 (as of 8/31/20)	New Students
Cornwall	103	19
HVRHS	323	18 +3 AFS students (if allowed to travel)
Kellogg	68	6
Kent	212	34
North Canaan	247	21
Salisbury	316	46
Sharon	109	29

Faculty Association Memorandum of Agreement

August was filled with discussion regarding the impact of COVID-19 on working conditions for teachers. The MOA originated with the teachers under the guidance of CEA. Region One teachers and administrators collaborated with faculty association presidents to produce a final agreement that broadly outlines guidelines for all aspects of school operations impacted by provisions for COVID-19. The August hurricane challenged the negotiations process by delaying parent presentations and the ensuing data collection that was the driver for the distance learning program, an important component of the MOA. As a result, teachers and parents have learned about the details for distance learning later than what had been planned. However, administrators have worked to ensure that all teachers and parents are prepared for distance learning at the start of the school year. Per the agreement with the teachers, distance learning will roll out gradually over the first two weeks of school. Students who are distance learning will be introduced to classroom routines and lessons on social emotional awareness. They will be fully engaged with classroom instruction by September 21. Faculty Association representatives will meet with administrators and the Superintendent by October 5 to discuss any additional planning support required to prepare for the instruction of students who are learning from home.

Staff Leave and Accommodation Requests

I have worked with administrators, Michelle Curtis and Sam Herrick to review leave and accommodations requests due to illness or underlying conditions due to COVID-19. All decisions have been made with guidance from Shipman & Goodwin to ensure compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Families First CoronaVirus Act and the Family Medical Leave Act.

Additional Funding for Schools

The CSDE has released allocations to schools from the CoronaVirus Relief Fund (not to be confused with the CARES Act funds). However, due to some questions with regard to the determination of the allocated amounts, it is likely that there will be a delay before those funds are dispersed. CARES Act/ESSER funds have been approved for each district in Region One and we are awaiting their receipt.

Professional Learning

Jill and Scott have prepared a robust week of professional learning that includes sessions on health and hygiene, digital platforms, distance learning, social emotional awareness for students and staff, and curriculum and instruction. They rose to the challenge by modeling a combination of synchronous and asynchronous experiences for teachers to keep them engaged while holding a majority of the sessions online.

Policy Updates

CABE has recommended several policies relating to COVID-19 to be added in 2020-2021 as follows:

- #4118.237/4218.237/5141.8 - Face Masks/Coverings
- #6172.61 - Distance Education
- #9321.2 - Electronic BOE meetings
- #0523 - Equity and Diversity

The Region One Board of Education will be conducting a first read of these policies in early September. As soon as they are approved, they will then be shared with the policy committees in all of the elementary schools.

Title IX Update

Martha Schwaikert and I have reviewed the new title IX requirements and are in the process of implementing all of the public notices in compliance with CSDE expectations.

CIAC Update

The Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference has published a fall schedule that includes a six-event high school schedule for football and a twelve-event high school schedule for each of the other fall sports. The athletic events are expected to take place regionally. No-contact non-sport-specific conditioning has taken place since mid-August. Practices are allowed to begin on September 21 if Connecticut COVID-19 numbers remain low. Games will begin on October 1. All conditioning and practice sessions must follow a strict protocol that specifies a health screening procedure, the length of practice and activities that are allowed during practices.