

Superintendent Report for May 2020

Dr. Pam Vogel

Our staff continue to do such good work! As administrators, we touch base with each other twice a week during our virtual meetings and share what is happening during this time.

Distance Learning

We are continuing to focus on our students, but are hearing that teachers are seeing some students who are tiring of virtual learning, as now we have had about seven weeks of time out of school. And now we know that we are not reopening schools, so all principals have been asked to let teachers know to not be concerned as much about the amount of work given, but more focus will be on keeping positive relationships with students and families. We want to do all we can to make learning interesting and engaging. We all understand how students are missing their friends and the routines of school.

We have some students and families who are "non-responsive". When principals were asked what percentage of their students they estimate this to be, elementary principals said about 5%. The high school estimated 20%. We are encouraging further contact with these families. If we have some families who refuse to participate in school, we may need to involve DCF, but our first choice is to continue to reach out to the students and families. Students who are not participating will be expected to attend summer school.

Meals

Our numbers continue to be high. The meals that come from the school are prepared on Mondays (breakfast and lunch for two days), Wednesdays (breakfast and lunch for two days), and Fridays ((breakfast and lunch for one day). Meals continue to be delivered to homes by All Star buses and some of our support staff. We have not yet received any information regarding summer meals. Schools are asked to track all expenses related to COVID 19, as related expenses are to be reimbursable.

Salisbury Central: In March, there were 66-70 meals per day. There was a steady rise for a period of time; now it has leveled off and has remained around 106-108 per day since the break. Between April 20-May 1, there were served 2,100 meals (210 meals/day) making the total since March 18th to be 5,435 meals over 28 days.

Lee Kellogg: White Hart provides only lunch. **Each of the 31 students receives 5 lunches per week, 155 total meals per week from White Hart.** The High School is preparing breakfast and lunch for 32 students (and siblings) who attend the HS, list, or 320 more meals to children in Falls Village per week. **Total meals to Kellogg students per week: 375**

North Canaan:

April 27, 2020 (Monday)	290 Breakfasts	290 Lunches
April 29, 2020 (Wednesday)	292 Breakfasts	292 Lunches
May 1, 2020 (Friday)	143 Breakfasts	143 Lunches

HVRHS: 140 meals per day- 700 meals a week

Sharon Center: 68 meals per day- 340 meals a week

Cornwall: The meals for CCS, outside of those prepared by the High School for students and siblings who are from Cornwall, are being organized by Heather Dineen and Cornwall Social Services.

Kent Center: 720 meals a week

Reading Program- "Two Books, Six Schools" Summer Program

We began this discussion a year ago for K-8 students and had good participation. We will continue to do the program this summer. "Hidden Figures" is the book selected. There will be a picture book for students in grades K-3 and a "young readers" version for students in grades 4-8. Michelle Mott and Stephanie Magyar are working with Eve Davis (North Canaan teacher) to prepare a packet for students and all will work on communication to families. We need to consider a safe way to distribute the books to families.

Teacher Appreciation Week was May 3-7 and principals were reminded to recognize our teachers, for all they do every day, in the lives of students. All of our schools had some way to give a tribute to those who have been striving to see that our students learn and grow and are connected to school during this challenging time.

Strategic Plans

The 2020-2023 Strategic Plans will be a major focus for us in the next month. Lisa and I are meeting virtually, with each principal, to discuss what their staffs said during the April PD day, when teachers and principals were to discuss the "Current Reality" and the "Desired State" for education in their school and in our region. From this information, we will develop a Regional Plan that will then go to each school for the school to develop their building plan. Boards will receive the Regional Plan at the June meeting and each school will share the building plan with their board at the September meeting.

Graduation

We have had several discussions about graduation. The High School is working with students and staff to collect information on how HVRHS will proceed for the seniors.

Our current plans for the 8th grade students are the following:

Recognition

- We will include all of the 8th grade and 12th grade students in the regional June Newsletter. Students' photos will be sent to Nancy Martin, who formats the newsletter by May 15.
- While the newsletter has been primarily circulated electronically, we will have enough copies printed so that each graduate will have a copy.
- Each school will order signs to place in student or school yards. The Principal and Leadership Team will make the decision as to how many signs and the placement.

Graduation Ceremony

1. It will be a "drive-through" and cars may be decorated, keeping safety in mind
2. There are to be no more than two cars per family
3. We will develop a number order for car line up in accordance with the student's last name
4. We will request assistance from Board or Local Troop to help with this to ensure order and see that people remain in cars at all times

5. Each school will select designated areas for the diplomas to be on tables, in order of last name (Consider decorations- tablecloths, flowers, banners, etc.)
6. Principal, and Lisa or Pam, and Board Chair will stand behind the table
7. The cars for the student will drive up to the table area, the student will step out of car and receive the diploma
8. The student will move to an adjacent area (decorated with flowers, etc., for optimal photography) just beyond the table for student to stand and have professional photos taken
9. Staff can attend the ceremony and be on the grounds, but must adhere to spacing protocols
10. Videos will be made prior to the graduation. These will be made available to all graduating students and members of the school community. Links to the video are shared so that families/friends may watch these when they return home, after receiving their diplomas and having their photos taken. These should consist of comments/speeches from the Principal and Board Chair, along with any comments additional board members and teachers wish to make. The content/composition of the video is at the discretion of the Principal. Principals are to request whatever technical support they need from your IT person or others. (Extra pay for time is likely to be needed.)
11. The Protocol/Procedures will be communicated to families and the school community by each Principal

For Rain Dates, we are planning a “reverse” rain date. If rain is predicted for the date planned, the ceremony will be the day before.

The Principals will be speaking about this at their May Board meeting and will address any questions. These plans could change, based on information from the local Department of Health.

Communication to Parents

Information went out in early May to families on the following:

- Encouraging every family to take the Connectivity Survey
- Information about Berkshire Taconic Foundation to let families know more assistance is available

Op-Ed Article about Education Funding

This appeared in The Connecticut Mirror on Friday, as well as several other media publications. CAPSS worked on this together with the other organizations listed.

From Fran Rabinowitz, Executive Director at CAPSS: “We know how difficult this budget season is for all of you and we want to support you in any way possible. Please feel free to share this or any of the ideas with your constituents. Please also know that CAPSS is always searching for better ways to support you through this difficult time. Please e-mail me with concerns and /or recommendations. Thanks very much for all that you are doing.”

<https://ctmirror.org/category/ct-viewpoints/education-funding-is-essential-to-connecticuts-future/>