



March 29, 2020

COVID-19 Southern Lehigh School District Employee Information Update

First and foremost, we hope this communication finds you and your loved ones well. As you know, PA schools are closed through April 6, 2020. At the present time, school staff are anticipated to return to work on April 7th. Of course, this may again change. So please check your email frequently.

Stay at Home - A Stay-at-Home order was issued for Lehigh County on March 24th. This order restricts resident's movement to only essential matters. An **Allowable Essential Travel Letter** was shared by email with District staff in order to provide evidentiary proof of employment for SLSD employees needing to report to work. Please understand that this permission to travel is for the exclusive purpose of **receiving materials for distance learning, for receiving meals, or for other related services necessary for the operation of the district. Unless expressly called in to work or needing to travel for the above purpose**, please stay home.

COVID-19 PA Response Bill - Governor Wolf signed several COVID-19 Response bills last week. Among them, Senate Bill 751 adds special provisions to the PA School Code that waives the requirement for schools to be in session at least 180 days, provides for continuity of education plans, ensures school employees are paid during the closure, and provides the Secretary of Education with authority to waive student teacher and standardized assessments. It further ensures that all contributions, payments and service credits will continue unaffected in the Pennsylvania State Retirement System (PSERS).

Employee Group Work Expectations:

- All SLSD employees not on leave and scheduled to work are directed to continue working from home, or report to work as called in by supervisors.
- Teachers, Instructional Assistants and Behavior Support professionals should refer to the guidance sent on March 25, 2020 and begin Distance Learning on Tuesday, March 31. Distance Learning Orientation activities for students and parents begin on Monday, March 30.
- Certified School Nurses, Licensed Nurses, Personal Care Assistants and Health Paraprofessional staff have discussed departmental work and should focus on agreed upon tasks.
- School Counselors and School Psychologists should do the same, and plan as necessary for virtual meetings and conferences. Your supportive check-ins with students and families are also appreciated.
- Essential employees or those directly involved in ensuring the continuity of education and life sustaining services such as: Administration, Payroll, Custodial/Maintenance staff and Food Services will be called in to work as needed by supervisors to ensure ongoing operations and delivery of the Grab-n-Go lunch program.
- Administrative support employees including Secretaries and Systems Technicians will work on daily tasks that can be accomplished remotely, and any assignments given by supervisors, which may include special project work. If you are in need of a device to work from home, please contact Erik Malmberg at malmberge@slsd.org.

No Clocking In/Out - Suspended Use of Kiosk and Web Clocks - All SLSD regular school employees will continue to be paid their normal weekly wages during the closure of schools. Normal weekly hours and hours reported by supervisors will be directly processed at the payroll level. **Hourly employees should not clock in or out using kiosks or web clocks.**

Time off Requests - All SLSD employees *not on leave* are considered to be working and are expected to remain available for work during normal workday hours. Should a day off be desired, please know that normal leave time rules apply. Submit your absence request directly to your supervisor (**do not enter it in Frontline Absence Management**). Include the reason for your absence and indicate the leave type you are requesting (personal, sick/family sick, vacation, emergency day etc.). Remember to email **Mary Farris** should an emergency event occur. Supervisors will approve or deny requests, and forward approvals directly to **Kate Conroy** and **Deneen Carreras** for payroll and benefits processing.

COVID-19 Concerns - Any employee, or member of an employee's immediate family, who experiences a direct concern related to COVID-19 should contact Mary Farris so that appropriate provisions afforded through the federal Families First Coronavirus Response Act are applied, as necessary, and other supportive measures can be extended.

Continuing Education Plan - A plan for Continuing Education in the Southern Lehigh School District was generated by the Administration in collaboration with SLEA Leadership. On March 26, 27 and 30th all teachers, non-teaching certified professionals (NTPE), and instructional assistants began work from home planning for Distance Learning.

Grab-'n-Go Lunch Program - The District's Grab-'n-Go lunch program will continue while schools remain closed. Lunches will be distributed on Mondays and Thursdays at Liberty Bell, Hopewell, and the High School between 11:00am - 1:00pm.

Finally, while apart we're truly all in this together. These are challenging times. We ask that you stay connected, that you care for and help each other, and that you find inspiration in one another. Thank you, Southern Lehigh School District employees, for your herculean efforts, continued patience, and unwavering dedication to our students.

Please be well. *Mary*