

Wednesday, August 5, 2020

- Oklahoma is better off than some other states, but currently has an “alarmingly high” number of positive COVID-19 cases. There are now 40,564 confirmed cases – 1,100 more than yesterday. There have been 583 deaths, and 645 people are currently hospitalized.
- Today OSDE released an updated [Return to Learn Oklahoma](#) document with new and updated information. Some of the new/updated information:
 - Contact tracing, p. 17. Be prepared to have one staff member work with local health officials to assist in contact tracing. The tracing should begin ASAP after a positive case has been confirmed. Consider having staff members enroll in the [Johns Hopkins free course](#).
 - Quarantine time after exposure. Clarification of quarantine time when there’s exposure. Certainly, consult with local and state officials about potential closures. These are different scenarios and the recommendations you’re likely to get in response:
 - There’s a positive case among elementary students in a cohort all day. The likely recommendation will be to isolate the entire class at home for 14 days from the last exposure.
 - Secondary students. Encourage students to stay in the same seats to make contact tracing easier. Only those in close proximity (less than 6 feet for at least 10 minutes) would need to isolate at home for 14 days from last exposure.
 - Multiple positive cases in classes in a section of a school. May need to close the entire section and have everyone from that section isolate at home.
 - Multiple positive cases in entire school building. May need to close entire school building and isolate at home.
 - Emergency drills. OSDE worked with OSSI to make recommendations for safe and practical drills and exercises, which are included in the updated [Return to Learn Oklahoma](#) at pp. 24-25. Evaluate these considerations with local stakeholders. Determine what guidelines to apply. Invite emergency responders to observe or participate.
 - Suggestions for conducting fine arts and PE classes safely are also included at pp. 27-31.
- Governor is using \$10 million for PPE. \$1.6 m for washable cloth masks – two per student, staff member and teacher. 42,000 clear face shields. \$1.2 m for disposable gloves and \$1.2 m for disposable gowns – covering one pair of gloves and one gown per day for the first semester for those who may have a heightened potential for exposure, such as custodians, school nurses, special education teachers working with students with the most significant disabilities. OSDE is working on a formula to determine what each district will

receive. There is no firm information about when this will be available. Face masks are expected to be delivered on August 14. OSDE expects the items to be available for districts to pick up after that. The items are being shipped to each local emergency management office for pick up there. RAOs should have already communicated with districts about their designated contacts to pick up these items.

- OSDE-SES has put out a new [guidance document for special education and related services](#) for the 2020-21 school year, covering LRE, inclusive services, using data to determine services, transportation, secondary transition and compensatory education, among other topics.
- OSDE's Network of Learning program. This provides specific guidance for 40 participating districts developing or seeking to improve their blended learning programs. OSDE is partnering with area experts, including CCOSA. Find more information at <https://sde.ok.gov/sites/default/files/documents/files/plans%20and%20network%20of%20learning.pptx>.
- Oklahoma Teacher of the Year applications are due by 8/31. Some districts don't select a local teacher of the year, so OSDE decided to broaden the competition. Teachers are also encouraged to apply at <https://www.sde.ok.gov>.
- At the TeleEDGE session on Thursday, August 6 at 3:30 p.m., Dr. Steve Constantino, author of Engage Every Family, will be on.

Questions & Answers

- As to the updated recommendations concerning emergency drills, what is the guidance for schools that will be beginning the school with all virtual or distance learning? If students aren't at school, the school isn't required to conduct drills.
- What additional information does OSDE have about the virtual content – Learn Anywhere – that the Governor purchased with CARE funds? No one on the call had additional information. There's a [website](#).
- There's an increase in online schools trying to hire teachers from brick and mortar schools. What is the law on this? Brad Clark in the chat: "If upon written complaint by the board of education in a district any teacher is reported to have failed to obey the terms of the contract previously made and to have entered into a contract with another board of education without having been released from the former contract except as provided in Section 5-106A of this title, the teacher, upon being found guilty of such charge at a hearing held before the State Board of Education, shall have such teacher's certificate suspended for the remainder of the term for which the contract was made." The district to which the teacher has already entered into a contract can notify SBE to start this process.

How does this legal process cover a teacher who's been on a temporary contract but hasn't signed a new contract yet? Brad Clark: Not sure the law covers that situation.

- School liability concerns. Board members are concerned about the risk of liability with staff coming back to school. They're worried that since SBE made recommendations instead of a mandate, schools will have greater liability. Brad Clark: Don't know that SBE's decision puts more liability on schools for decisionmaking. OSDE believes that [SB1946](#) covers schools. If a district is following SB1946, then it will have a good argument in response to a liability claim.

SB1946 provides: A person or agent of the person who conducts business in this state shall not be liable in a civil action claiming an injury from exposure or potential exposure to COVID-19 if the act or omission alleged to violate a duty of care of the person or agent was in compliance or consistent with federal or state regulations, a Presidential or Gubernatorial Executive Order, or guidance applicable at the time of the alleged exposure. If two or more sources of guidance are applicable to the conduct or risk at the time of the alleged exposure, the person or agent shall not be liable if the conduct is consistent with any applicable guidance.

Under SB1946 the term "guidance" means written guidelines related to COVID-19 issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Occupational Safety and Health Administration of the United States Department of Labor, Oklahoma State Department of Health, the Oklahoma Department of Commerce, or any other state agency, board or commission.

- Did CDC change guidelines regarding isolation timeline? No. It's still ten days, 24 hours fever free and improvement in symptoms.
- How will college students' positive cases affect the OSDH color-coded state alert system, especially regarding counties with lots of college students? Example – OU students. If they list Norman as their residence, they'll be factored into the Norman numbers. OSDH doesn't think this distorts its numbers because they will reflect community spread.
- Is the reported number of students shifting to virtual charters real? How will this affect midterm adjustment? Might weighted ADM go down? Superintendent Hofmeister: Don't see how it doesn't have an effect. Monty Guthrie: There's a buffer there, but it's highly likely there could be a decrease at midterm.
- What are the differences between the OSDH and Harvard maps? (Harvard Map: <https://www.cnet.com/health/track-covid-19-risk-in-your-county-with-harvards-assessment-map/>.) Which should schools look to? Both have valuable info. OSDH map was selected due to creation by OSDH and tie to state data. OSDH map has a weekly update so there's some lag in data. The Harvard map is measured in a similar way, but is updated daily so can see more recent days in that map. If using one, also look at the other. Districts not likely to be making shifts on a day to day basis. Info from both maps is an element in a collective set of data. Another difference is where some cuts are. Cuts could be modified as scientific info evolves. Also consider the White House Coronavirus task force information – daily % positive is also an important thing to consider.

Not going to find something uniform from all information sources – Harvard and OSDH. Lots of value in looking at a daily updated tool, but hope you're looking at trends over time, too. A key is to be talking to local and county health departments. They can answer more questions to help you make decisions. Will be looking at what recommendations come out of other states headed back to school. You're in difficult positions making these decisions. If you feel the need, OSDE is willing to take some questions to trusted officials to help districts.

- Distance learning plans. When are these due to OSDE under the new rule? Within 10 days after having been adopted at the local level.
- Federal funds in the future? There's a promising outlook. Seems there's a great desire to aid common education. Looks promising. Be aware that under some plans being negotiated, there could be a swift turnaround in schools spending the money. Think about what you'd use it for. Will provide info when it's available.

Closing Remarks

- So impressed with your tireless work. Lots of pressure when not making folks happy. We want to be part of the same team.