

**ALLIANCE FOR HIGH QUALITY EDUCATION**  
**All Member Conference Call**  
**COVID-19 Committee**

**April 14, 2020**  
**10:00 A.M.**

**MEETING SUMMARY**

*In attendance on phone conference:* Jessica Voltolini, Tony Podojil, guests Kevin Miller (BASA), Craig Burford (OESCA), and member representatives from 41 school districts.

Tony Podojil convened the meeting by phone conference at 10:00 a.m.

**ODE Stakeholder Call- Update**

**A. Cares Act – ODE Funding Guidelines**

Federal CARES Act Funding

- \$105,212,000 goes to the Governor’s Fund for Education
- \$489,205,000 goes to a K-12 education fund and is distributed using the Title 1 formula allocation
- Recipients must continue to pay employees and contractors during the period of any disruptions or closures related to coronavirus, if possible.
- States receiving the Governor’s or K-12 funds must maintain funding for elementary and secondary and higher education programs at least at the average of the state’s funding in the last three years.

ODE has not yet issued guidance on how funds will be allocated. Paolo has suggested that there will be more details coming next week. We hope to hear more when we participate on the conference call on Monday.

**B. Current Budget Year and Planning for 20 – 21.**

Q. Is this money going to be the bridge to transition schools back to end this year or is this money going to fill in holes for next year's budget?

A. We don’t have an answer yet, but we have expressed the need to know soon because of the potential impacts on this and next year’s budgets. Districts would like to know if they are going to be spending the majority of funds on transition activities or are these funds going to be used to fill potential state reductions to the district’s foundation payments.

**C. School Calendars/ODE Guidelines**

Q. Will the Governor's office provide additional guidance in regard to school calendars?

A. Members should refer to the ODE FAQ information referenced below

**Should schools and districts consider shortening the school year or ending school early?**

No. When Governor DeWine ordered school buildings to close temporarily, it was with the expectation that a good faith effort would be made to continue providing education services to students through the end of the district’s school year as scheduled. This is the understanding under which the vast majority of school districts are operating. They are planning on observing their

originally adopted calendars and ending the school year (either virtually or in house depending on guidance from state and local departments of health) pursuant to their original timelines. Schools and districts should not be considering shortening the school year. The current ordered school-building closure extends through May 1, 2020, so the resumption of on-site learning remains a possibility.

Students benefit from efforts to provide continuity of learning knowing their teachers and school staff are connecting with them and supporting them through this challenging time. Staff also benefit from the continuity of purpose in their efforts and their abilities to connect professionally with colleagues to support the needs of the whole child. The ability for educators to continue to work until the end of the adopted calendar also can contribute to the development of plans for recovery efforts that might be necessary to ensure a strong start to the 2020-2021 school year. Although remote learning is not the same as in-school learning, and varies greatly across Ohio's diverse landscape, sustaining educational activities emphasizes the importance to students of acquiring and strengthening knowledge and skills as a regular part of daily life.

#### **D. Instructional Hours/Attendance**

Paolo has indicated that ODE will be providing more information on how to compute attendance and instructional hours as it relates to on-line learning versus actual attendance. They are working on the conversion of online learning hours equating to ADM but are not ready to release that yet.

Q. Have you heard anything in terms of a coming out of the stay-at-home order sequence or the plan that's going to be happening this week? Have you gotten anything back from that in terms of what we can expect for the remainder of the year in terms of social distancing guidelines, alternative graduations and all those sorts of things?

A. Based on the Governor's daily briefings, it would appear that they are strategically bringing certain types of businesses back first. Mass gathering restrictions and social distancing recommendations are going to be with us for the time being.

#### **E. Issuing Student Grades – OHSAA/NCAA**

The OHSAA will be issuing a directive on student athletic eligibility for the fall shortly. While they are not ready to release that at this point, all signs point to providing schools and students with as much flexibility as possible thereby ensuring students maintain eligibility for next fall's programs.

They are also trying to get NCAA to make a similar ruling. The NCAA rule related to using a pass/fail grade could be detrimental to a student's possibility of earning a scholarship. As soon as we receive confirmation on both the OHSAA and NCAA position we will forward that on to members.

#### **F. EMIS Reporting Deadlines – Department Review in Process**

Jessica shared that the department had just released this morning and updated related to EMIS reporting deadlines. An email was sent to all members for their review and use.

#### **Follow-up from last week's call**

##### **A. Reduction in Force/Furlough/Reduced Work Calendar**

Q. Can school districts actually furlough employees similar to what we're seeing from private businesses?

Jessica shared that the term furlough does not exist in the Ohio revised code with respect to schools. Districts need to look at options regarding their policy on collective bargaining provisions regarding layoffs. Districts should continue working with the school attorney to review their policy and their collective bargaining provisions with respect to layoff and assigning staff to work other areas within the scope of your bargaining agreement. We do not expect the Governor to grant districts additional authority in this area by executive order.

Q. Can we simply reduce the school calendar by X number of days and by doing that correspondingly reduce someone's pay calendar?

For example: If I furlough everybody by a day, take a day off the calendar as a non-workday, can I correspondingly reduce everybody's pay by that amount and then save 1-185th of a school calendar payment as part of my reduction?

A. There's no terminology that allows you to do that in the law, but you can bargain the reduction in school calendar days with your employee groups.

Q. Is any district thinking of possible reductions and how to roll those out?

A. Most of the districts responding on the call indicated that they have not considered this as a budget reduction option.

Q. Is there anyone out there that has a plan to do any reductions in the month of May with your bus drivers or classified staff that may not be in a union like aids so on and so forth?

A. Most of the districts responding on the call indicated that they are not doing reductions in May.

### **SLO Evaluations**

Q. I am trying to be sure that I understand the difference between completing an evaluation without the SLO data and reporting that we did not complete the evaluation as a result of COVID-19. It seems that completing without the student growth measures triggers a full evaluation in 2020-2021 and reporting the evaluation incomplete as a result of COVID-19 sends the teacher to the same status as in 19-20. Am I reading that correctly?

A. Yes, that is correct per a response from ODE.

### **Limited Contracts**

Q. Has are districts dealing with a teacher in the last year of a limited contract if they are not completing the evaluation process and entering the COVID-19 code? What do you do with the teacher in the last year of a three-year limited contract? Responses from members below:

A. Legal counsel from some districts are recommending that if you can't complete your contractually obligated evaluations you are required to grant another one-year contract. You would be precluded from non-renewing contracts unless you complete the evaluations process.

A. We have a verbal agreement that if we didn't complete the evaluation, we would grant a one-year traditional limited contract to be completed the following year.

A. A district is working on an MOU that would change the language in their CBA related to classroom visitations. If an observation cannot be completed, a review of artifacts of the lesson would be used in its place. During the preconference, the teacher would walk through a lesson with their evaluator, providing artifacts aligned to the rubric. The principal would then complete the rubric and have a post conference. We are moving forward with all of our evaluations and going to ask staff to provide lesson plans for the remote learning activity and give them either informal feedback or attend in a Google hangout or a zoom

meeting that can also count as an informal observation. We are going to try to complete all observations and evaluations by the May 22nd deadline.

A. Grandview is going to evaluate all our staff. Fortunately, we do most completed.

A. Bexley is concerned with SLO's and what happens if that component isn't completed. We feel confident that we can complete the remaining components. I want to ensure that every high school staff member can receive a full evaluation.

A. Chardon shared that they are proposing to use shared attribution for teachers that can't get their SLO completed. Brecksville is using a similar approach.

## **Graduation**

What are people thinking about in terms of how your district will handle graduations? Are you canceling them, pushing them off to the summer, other ideas? Are you taking into account social distancing?

Districts are considering using social distancing guidelines that would limit the number of people that can attend, blocking off rows, having assigned seats, and hold multiple sessions in a day or two.

- Some districts have backup dates for their graduations in June or July.
- Some have open air plans for their district.
- Some are looking at doing a drive-in movie type idea.
- Some are using an outdoor stadium for the venue
- Some are looking at online platforms
- Some are thinking about doing a senior parade for graduation
- Some will be doing an early graduation before the backup date for the kids leaving for basic training

## **Returning to School**

Q. If school buildings are reopened in May, would be the parent's choice if their child(ren) would return, is that an option?

A. I think that generally the concern if schools reopen in May is whether or not parents will be reluctant or actually decline to send their children. We have not heard anything specific from legislators on this issue but that did come up in our conversation with the state superintendent yesterday. The legislature will not be back after May 1st so there's not going to be legislative activity around this issue for a while.

We need to begin a discussion about not only what happens over the summer, but what could possibly happen in the first 9 weeks or the first half of next year. The question is going to be what actual impact this move to remote learning have on learning for these last nine weeks how long it will take us to recover from it.

## **Concerns for returning to School**

Districts are concerned that students are going to need help beyond the summer transition time. Kirk Hamilton with BASA shared that we may not see something for kindergartners until two to three years from now when we take the third-grade reading assessment. What impact will missing that last quarter have on reading achievement levels for our students because they're not all going to catch up evenly, so there's a lot of questions besides starting the year again. What was the impact and what do we need to do? There is a concern that decisions based on district achievement scores will be based on the above conditions.

## **Fallon Survey**

Recently, we shared a survey conducted by Fallon on the impact of moving to on-line learning. While the timing may be a bit early, it does provide some real time responses from parents regarding the remote learning experience.

***Next Conference Call:***

The next call will be **April 21, 2020, at 10 AM by phone conference.**

The meeting adjourned at 10:55 a.m.