



Monday, May 4, 2020  
Vol. 2, No. 16

## *Just So You Know*

This is me, standing in a virtual hallway of any of our 10 schools offering humility and applause as a teacher walks by. This is me in awe as our teachers simply figure out how to make complicated things work for kids in an unfamiliar educational world. This is me, confident that our children are being offered the next best education we can offer. And this is me, hat in hand, saying “Thank You Teachers. You are the best America has to offer.”

Teachers have been deemed “essential” in these dark days but should also be deemed as such in days of light too. They are not simply a convenience, though they make themselves available; a babysitter, though they care for their students like they were their own children; or a miracle worker, though they do miraculous things on a daily basis. The darkness weighs heavily on even the strongest on our planet, but especially on the most vulnerable, including our children. Part of this Yellow-Brick-Road journey for these school-aged kiddos is knowing someone from their school still cares enough about them to challenge, push, encourage, redirect, and praise. Teachers have mastered the art of the cyber high five.

Considering the rapid pace of the challenge and the ebb and flow of hope and despair, it is clear that much of the trickle down has landed on the backs of our teachers. Within a day of soft closure, teachers entered a hard opening of the new reality which has necessitated “Cliff Notes” professional development, impromptu collaborative team strategizing, reassessment of priority standards, and personalizing their kind body language on a small device to students on small devices of their own. This work-in-progress is being perfected every day in a success, failure, reassess, fix and move on method that will extend into the summer and likely beyond as teachers truly focus on no child left in the rearview mirror.

There is light, however, breaking through the din. We see it in clear blue skies, less traffic, lower fuel prices, more time with family and in the growing hope that the worst of it is over. And we see it in our teachers and their will to rise from the gloom to continue instruction, challenging students with well-designed lessons and assignments. And we see it in the communication and virtual experiences they provide to their students that make kids smile and believe in their own future.

This is me again, standing in twisted cyber reality, inspired by people who care enough to make education happen from scratch. They are in Hell’s Kitchen, and right there with them are their principals, secretaries, counselors, social workers, specialists, teacher aides, lunch and breakfast workers, bus drivers, custodians, maintenance staff, technology staff, and district support personnel. And while in this social-distance fantasy, I like to think that all kids are there too, doing their very best, with support from parents and significant others.

Such big things like the one we are going through now tend to lean on the motto, “We’re all in this together.” I like that and believe in that, but I also know that being “in this” means different degrees of being. For the role of our teachers, being in this is at a very high level. I respect that, just like I do in normal educational circumstances.

*Superintendent Davis*

### **Vision Statement:**

*“Education is a collaborative effort of home, community, and school. Students experience success on a daily basis and excel in performance through applying knowledge to real life situations. Schools are student-centered, guided by educators who possess excellent leadership and educational skills. Education expands beyond the classroom walls through the use of technology, and the curriculum meets the highest standards of an ever-changing world. Graduates are prepared to enter the workforce or continue their formal education at an advanced technical institution or a college or university. The Emery County School District believes that learning today provides leadership for tomorrow.”*

# Social distancing gets a little crazy



**THANK YOU TEACHERS!** From the district office staff (top left, then clockwise) Yvonne Jensen and Jackie Allred, JR Jones, Ryan Maughan and Jared Black, Kerri Allred and Korie Bouldin, Larry Davis, Doug Johnson, and Jeneane Warren.





# UTAH STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Mark Huntsman, Chair     Brittney Cummins, Vice Chair

Laura Belnap	Jennifer Graviet	Mark R. Marsh
Michelle Boulter	Scott L. Hansen	Scott B. Neilson
Janet A. Cannon	Mike Haynes	Shawn E. Newell
Cindy Davis	Carol Barlow Lear	Laurieann Thorpe
Jennie Earl		

Sydnee Dickson, State Superintendent of Public Instruction  
Lorraine Austin, Secretary to the Board

April 27, 2020

Larry Davis, Superintendent  
Emery School District (9)

Superintendent Davis:

The Financial Operations section of the Utah State Board of Education (USBE) has completed its annual review of your LEA's fiscal year 2019 comprehensive annual financial report (CAFR), annual program report (APR), audited financial statements, single audit (if applicable), and management letter.

These annual reviews are conducted as part of USBE's responsibility to verify audits of financial records in accordance with Utah Code Annotated (U.C.A.) § 53E-3-603 and compliance with minimum standards for financial reporting in accordance with U.C.A. § 53E-3-501. These reviews were also conducted in accordance with the OMB Uniform Guidance Audit Act and are part of the USBE's responsibility for sub-recipient monitoring of federal grant funds. 2 CFR part 200.521 requires USBE to issue a management decision for audit findings that relate to federal awards made to our sub-recipients. This communication serves that purpose.

Based on our review of your LEA's financial statements, single audit (if applicable), and management letter, there were no material weaknesses, significant deficiencies, or other significant findings that require follow-up from your fiscal year 2019 audit. We congratulate you and your staff on this accomplishment.

If you have any questions pertaining to school finance, your audit, or federal requirements, please feel free to contact us at the phone numbers below or at [schoolfinance@schools.utah.gov](mailto:schoolfinance@schools.utah.gov).

Sincerely,

Scott Jones  
Deputy Superintendent of  
Operations  
Utah State Board of Education  
(801) 538-7615

Patrick Lee  
School Finance Director  
Utah State Board of Education  
Financial Operations  
(801) 538-7667

Brett Baltazar  
Auditor  
Utah State Board of Education  
Financial Operations  
(801) 538-7802

**Cc: Jared Black, Business Administrator**

## District summer meal program announced

Jeneane Warren, supervisor of Emery School Food Services, has announced the schedule for summer meals, June 1-July 17.

According to an email to school and district administrators, all elementary schools will host curbside pickup of breakfast and lunch. The public may go to any elementary school at the time of meal service, 10:30 to 11:30 am. Supervisor Warren noted that bussing will not be participating in this program as it has been during the soft closure of schools.

In addition to pick-up at school sites, the district is offering five add-on sites as follows:

Emery Town Post Office, 10:30-10:40 am

Clawson Town 4-way stop at Center and Main, 11:10-11:30 am

Castle Dale, County Fairgrounds, 10:30-10:50 am

Lawrence, 4-way stop on Lawrence Road, 10:15-10:30 am

Elmo, LDS Church, 10:50-11:10 am

These meals are free to anyone 18 and younger. Parents may pick up for their children unable to do so in person.

According to Supervisor Warren, "School Food Services are funded by the meals we serve. Please plan to come and participate. If you will be away, please let the staff know so we can control waste. Remember to practice social distancing. Stay in your family groups and wait your turn at pickup sites. Thanks to everyone for making this program a success."

## Key end-of-year programs get the go-ahead

Under normal circumstances, this time of the school year would be dotted with field trips, promotion programs, and traditional commencement ceremonies. In the current normal, however, such programs and rites of passage have fallen under greater scrutiny, and while many of the programs may be held, they will certainly be much different than we have become accustomed to.

The Emery District Administrative Team recently approved protocol for getting permission to hold year-end programs that includes: 1) Develop the plan/proposal on the school level; 2) get school principal approval for the plan/proposal; 3) get South-

east Utah Health Department approval; 4) get district-level supervisor approval; and 5) get superintendent approval.

As of the publication of this newsletter, the following plans have received approval at every level:

Emery High Commencement Program, May 21, South Parking Lot

Green River High School Commencement Program, May 21, East Parking Lot

Green River High School Award Ceremony and Student Celebration, May 18, mobile distribution

Cleveland Elementary Faculty Field Trip and Student Virtual Field Trip, May 1, San Rafael

Swell

Castle Dale Elementary 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Promotion, May 18, Car Parade

Cottonwood Elementary 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Promotion, May 19, Car Parade

With respect to each of these approved programs, those involved will practice social distancing and take other precautions as required by state directive. In approving the plans, the Southeast Utah Health Department director, Bradon Bradford, noted that schools may proceed with their programs as presented "with the understanding that conditions in Emery County may dictate a change as the dates grow closer."

## Utah enters “Orange”

# What does that mean for public education?

Superintendents:

Happy May! For most of you next week will be week seven of suspended in-person learning. I am so appreciative of the creativity, social/emotional support, quick adjustments, and dedicated approach to ensuring students have access to continued learning from our educators. I acknowledge our support staff and their amazing willingness to do whatever it takes to make sure our students are fed, have digital tools, packets of learning materials, and additional hearts and hands of care. It has not gone unnoticed. The work of your school leaders, mental health workers and school counselors, and all other leaders has been tremendous in supporting educators, parents, students, and communities. Most of all, you as leaders set the tone and the expectations for how all of this happens. I take pride in declaring that while this has been far from easy, you leapt into action immediately and have kept learning going to the best of our ability in these trying times. You are my heroes and I commend you for leaning in extraordinary ways.

Many of you have reached out to ask about what the Utah’ Moderate Risk Phase (orange) <https://coronavirus.utah.gov/utahs-moderate-risk-phase/> now means for schools. I know that many of you have been working directly with your local health authorities to determine what this looks like in your county. I had the opportunity to speak with the Local Health Directors last week and we have determined that it is now possible to allow a few students into the school with safety protocols in place. See the conditions below and continue to work directly with your local health director. They have been tremendous partners and we appreciate their collaboration for the safety of our students, educators, and communities.

**Who should be coming in?**

- No more than several students

at a time (small group or one on one tutoring)

- Lower grade students with focus on literacy and mathematics
- Seniors needing credit recovery for graduation
- Students with disabilities needing accommodations and specialized services
- Students enrolled in CTE courses that require on-site work with equipment to pass industry exams or certifications
- Students who have been non-engaged but may be willing to come to the building
- Students learning English who need additional language support to access content

**What safety precautions need to be in place?**

- Social distancing of at least 6 feet between individuals including teacher
- All adults wearing masks
- Sanitize surfaces after each student or small group leaves
- Use a single entry point of coming and going from building, keep all other doors locked
- Teachers/aides stay in room and avoid mingling together
- Any student or adult with illness should not be admitted to the building

**What about fall?**

We are working feverishly to help you determine the way forward for bridging summer slide and returning to school in the fall. We will be working with a variety of stakeholders to lay out possible plans that can be nimble and flexible. It is critical that we are able to seamlessly move stages of high, moderate, low, and normal risk as we return in the fall. Our goal is to have a draft of ideas to you within a couple of weeks. Your input will be critical as

we develop guidance.

Utah students and families are fortunate in that as a state we developed and invested in a robust digital teaching and learning initiative. It has been clear that those of you who took the opportunity to engage in both digital tools and professional learning for educators made a huge difference in this transition. Whether using print or digital materials, having teachers be able to connect with students via technology has been critical to learning and well-being. Issues of equity in access to digital tools will remain a personal and agency focus.

We have compiled and analyzed the survey results indicating how you intend to spend your allocation from the CARES Act funding. Our application will be turned in on Monday with an expectation of quick turnaround to receive the funding. Our Financial Operations staff will work directly with your business administrators on how to access reimbursement once the funds become available. Your LEA will receive updated estimates soon. In addition, we will be looking at the survey results to assess LEA and statewide needs for the SEA 10% set aside. The Governor’s office has been very proactive and collaborative; using the same data to determine how to best use the GEERS funding allocated to the Governor for K-16 education. We appreciate their great support of you and collaboration with USBE.

I look forward to virtually meeting with you soon to go over this information in more detail and discussing the way forward. You have a lot on your plates and we are here to serve. Don’t hesitate to reach out. Stay safe and engage in self-care as you care for others!

With appreciation,

**Sydnee Dickson, Ed.D.**  
State Superintendent of Public Instruction

# Miscellaneous Emery District Updates

## **Administrative Team Meeting, Friday, May 1:**

Attending the meeting were Superintendent Davis, Business Administrator Black, and Supervisors JR Jones and Yvonne Jensen. Supervisor of Student Services Ryan Maughan was excused.

The team offered updates on closing programs, noting that Commencement Exercises at Green River High School and Emery High have been approved. Green River High School has also received approval for a mobile awards program. Also, 5th grade promotional programs have been approved for Cottonwood and Castle Dale Elementaries.

Regarding the advancement of student educational programs, each of the district's 10 schools is working toward closing down new instruction and related assignments on May 8. Students who have passing grades (A,B,P) at that point will be done with course work but may continue to work on non-graded projects or graded assignments previously assigned to bring up their final grade. Students who do not have a passing grade and have an incomplete grade (I) on the May 8 deadline will have the next two works to bring that grade up to passing by the end of the regular school year. Teachers will continue to work with their students with a focus on those working toward a passing grade.

Schools are now developing their summer "catch-up" programs," and the Administrative Team approved a funding program to create and activate each plan for each school. The funding has been made available to the Emery School District from the Federal CARES ACT which allocated \$68 million to the state for disbursement to school districts.

In other discussion, the team agreed that the regularly calendared end-of-term PLC and Collaborative Team Day should be held in small groups or online and with respect for social distancing. The PLC Day is scheduled for Friday, May 22. The team believes that Collaborative Teams will have opportunity to discuss the soft-closure made at each elementary grade and secondary discipline level while also identify gaps in student learning and ways of closing those gaps through summer catch-up programs. The agendas and meeting formats will be set by principals and team leaders, and a summary report will be provided to district supervisors and the superintendent.

The team meeting also included discussion about staffing for the 2020-21 school year which has been in limbo since the soft-closure order in March. However, the school district has re-

ceived funding guidelines for the next school year which essentially fund the school district at the same level of funding the district received for the current school year. This negates the 6 percent addition to the WPU approved in the 2020 Legislative Session although the Legislature continues to meet in special session which could alter these funding guidelines.

The team has agreed on staffing priorities based on the funding limitations as well as a pathway to move forward while avoiding any layoffs and meeting school staffing needs. The team plan will be discussed with the Board in the May meeting.

The final agenda item involved a review of other legislation coming out of the 2020 session that have varying degrees of impact on the Emery District. Team members will present on several of these bills in the May Administrative Council Meeting.

**Emery School District Facilities Committee Meeting, May 1:** The committee met via Webex with Business Administrator Jared Black conducting.

The committee received an update from the Communications/Bond Brochure Subcommittee which has been working on PR involving the proposed bond. Superintendent Davis reported that articles outlining priority needs at Emery High, Huntington and Ferron Elementaries, and the district office have been published. The subcommittee is also working on a bond-information brochure for future distribution. Megan Durrant has created a brochure design, and Superintendent Davis offered a draft narrative to be added to the brochure. Janet Tuttle will be working on getting the final language on the document.

The committee also reviewed site maps of several school campuses and surrounding property owned by the school district. This was part of a discussion on options for new construction for priority schools. A separate discussion took place regarding the Green River schools and their needs for capital improvements.

Turning to the "scope of the bond," Chair Black said the district's bonding capacity is around \$80-90 million but advised the committee that initially seeking less than capacity would be more prudent. It was the consensus of committee members that deciding on the extent of the bond should come following presentations from architects and financial advisors. That information will come in the next meeting to be held in June.

Emery School District  
Mission Statement:

*“The mission of the Emery County School District is to provide a comprehensive education that will prepare students to take a proactive and responsible role in an ever-changing world.”*

## District Calendar

Monday, May 4: USSA Meeting, 9 am, online

Wednesday, May 6: Emery School District Board Meeting, 7 pm, online. The meeting will include a public hearing on new fee and fundraiser policies.

Tuesday, May 12: Administrative Council Meeting, 8:30 am, online. The meeting will include the final Book Club presentation on Michael Fullen's *Nuance*.

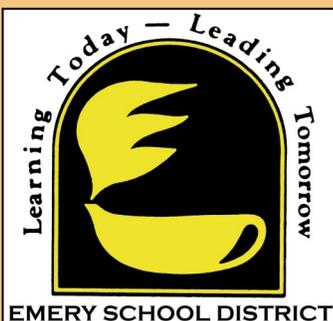


Emery County School  
District

PO Box 120  
120 N. Main Street  
Huntington, Utah  
84528

Phone: 435-687-9846  
Fax: 435-687-9849

Website: [emeryschools.org](http://emeryschools.org)



## STICKY NOTES:



### District Office Personnel and Work

**Schedules:** During school soft closure, hours for district office personnel will fluctuate and include some work hours from home. Regular office hours will be from 10 am to 2 pm Monday through Friday. These changes are in line with social distancing practices as well as safety for vulnerable populations (65+, pre-existing conditions, pregnancy, etc.) The public is encouraged to take care of business with the district by phone where possible rather than coming in person to the office. Someone will be in the office during regular business hours to answer the phone.

### District Office Closure for Sanitation and Deep Cleaning:

The district office will be closed for cleaning beginning on Tuesday, May 26 and continuing through Monday, June 1. Office calls will be answered remotely and directed to the appropriate district employee. The public is encouraged to use email correspondence for matters that are not time-sensitive. The cleaning is necessary as part of the state's COVID-19 prevention program.