



Skaneateles Central School District

Nationally Recognized for Excellence

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April 7, 2020

To: All Skaneateles Faculty, Staff and Community Members,

I hope this letter finds everyone in good health and free from illness. We all hope we are moving closer to the day when state and local leaders can make the decision to allow everyone to return to work and to school, without the fear of COVID-19 in our lives.

I wanted to reach out to everyone to provide an update on some important information associated with our district's Regents Exams, School Closure, Playgrounds and Turf/Track Fields, the Budget Vote / Board Elections, and Budget Development.

REGENTS EXAMS

On Monday, April 6, the Board of Regents officially cancelled the Regents exams for June 2020. The Board of Regents has published follow up information associated with the cancellation of the Regents. The administration and guidance departments of both the Middle School and High School are reviewing that information. They will be posting any updated information in the coming days.

SCHOOL CLOSURES

On Monday, Governor Cuomo announced the extension of closure to all schools in New York State until April 29th. He will assess the status of COVID-19 at that time and make a determination of any further extension of closure or reopen schools on April 29th.

DISTRICT PLAYGROUNDS/TRACK AND TURF FIELDS

The playgrounds, track and turf fields, and the buildings of the school district, are closed. I realize this may be a hardship to many, but we are looking for everyone to do the right thing in support of reducing the chances of COVID-19 transmission. There are postings and tape around the fields indicating closure. I am asking everyone to honor the closure until all restrictions are lifted by our county and state leaders.

BUDGET VOTE AND BOARD ELECTIONS

Governor Cuomo's Executive Order 202.13 postpones our scheduled May 19th Budget Vote and Board of Education elections until at least June 1st. We will communicate any updates on a new date when it becomes available from Governor Cuomo's office.

2020-2021 BUDGET

The current budget situation all school districts in New York State find themselves in is one filled with many questions and concerns, as we are all attempting to build a budget for the 2020-2021 school year. We should know by now what our expenditures are projected to be for the 2020-2021 school year, how much foundation aid (state aid) we should be receiving, and the Board of Education should have established a local tax levy in support of the K-12 academic programs.

However, this year, the normal budgetary process has been totally changed, due to the COVID-19 health crisis. In January, we received our preliminary state aid projections from Governor Cuomo's office. The state aid for Skaneateles was projected to increase by \$12,728 for the 2020-2021 school year. When we received our April state aid numbers, the \$12,728 was eliminated and our state aid was frozen at the 2019-2020 level. Governor Cuomo has also developed a new format for the distribution of state aid, due to limited revenue coming into the state. The new process involves looking at the state's revenue at (4) times during the year. They are April 1-April 30, May 1-June 30, July 1-December 31, and January 1-March 31. Depending on the financial health of the state after each of those assessment periods, the governor and the budget director would determine the distribution of aid across the state. Not knowing this critical information puts all districts who will be voting on their school budgets at a significant disadvantage.

We have been told by Governor Cuomo that there will be reductions to our state aid because the state is broke. We just do not know how much of a reduction we will be facing. We will not know what our reduction will be until the conclusion of the first financial assessment on April 30th. Therefore, we have started to build our budget around this missing information. The Administrative Cabinet has been meeting to begin exploring ways of reducing our expenditures for the 2020-2021 budget, inclusive of reductions to personnel. Around May 1st, we hope to receive our first snapshot of the state's fiscal health by Governor Cuomo and his budget director. Governor Cuomo has stated that New York State has a \$10-15 billion deficit and that reductions will be necessary. We have taken the Governor's words and started to apply them to our budgetary process. The Administrative Cabinet continues to work hard at planning and preparing to find reductions, while still maintaining programs and services for our students.

OTHER INFORMATION

Please find additional information from building Principals and Mrs. Emily Cullen, our School Lunch Director, on the district's web site. Please refer to the website, should you have any questions. There are names, numbers and email addresses connecting you to various individuals in the district.

I want to thank everyone for your continued support during these very troubling times. We will get through this together.

All the best,

Dr. Jeffrey K. Bryant
Interim Superintendent of Schools