



April 2, 2020

This is a challenging time. Our planet, country, state, and education system are facing unprecedented challenges. New information and guidance are being shared daily- sometimes hourly- and we are all working diligently to do what is best for our staff, students and communities.

The COVID-19 health crisis has brought unforeseen challenges, and as I reflect on the past few weeks, I'm encouraged by the collaboration that has occurred within NCW school districts.

The NCESD is guided by four key principles:

- Communication
- Advocacy
- Leadership
- Relationships

The current health crisis has challenged each of these principles, and I believe that the NCESD team and the districts we serve have all risen to this challenge. The NCESD has been working with every district in the region in the following ways:

Communication

We have developed a list of resources on our website. Districts are encouraged to use and share this information as appropriate.

The NCESD has built a repository of shared communication tools and messaging so that districts throughout NCW can share language to best communicate with priority audiences.

The NCESD has convened a daily Zoom conference for all Superintendents throughout NCW. We have been using the online meeting format to share information, ideas, and best practices as we develop both a local and regional response. Our Teaching and Learning team has engaged with district staff in a similar manner.

Advocacy

As the COVID-19 health crisis has unfolded, there have been dozens of policy and protocol questions for OSPI. The NCESD has advocated on behalf of our districts to both OSPI and the Governor's office to ensure our voice is heard and questions are answered.

Leadership

Our team has launched the Employee Assistance Program six months earlier than anticipated. This program provides support and resources for employees of participating districts.

Our team is engaged with health districts in Chelan-Douglas, Grant, and Okanogan Counties, OSPI, AESD (the nine ESDs), Washington Association of School Administrators (WASA), Association of School Principals (AWSP), and Washington Association of School Boards (WSSDA) so that we can learn and understand the changing dynamics of the virus and proclamations in order to provide guidance, information, and resources to NCW districts.

Relationships

The relationships between NCW districts are strong. This spirit of collaboration has provided a trusted framework for idea and concern sharing amongst districts. It is inspiring to watch Superintendents and staff help each other through this difficult time by sharing ideas and encouragement.

Every district throughout our region has shifted operations in significant and meaningful ways. I am amazed by the creativity and responsiveness demonstrated to keep students, staff and communities safe and healthy.

Thank you for the continued leadership within your district. If there is additional support that the NCESD can provide, please don't hesitate to let us know. Our team will continue to lead and serve through this challenging time.

In gratitude,



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