

March 27, 2020

LPS Employees,

First, let me say that I hope you are all well and are able to deal with the tremendous stress created by the situation we all find ourselves experiencing. The purpose of this letter is to clear up questions you may have about your pay status for the remainder of the year. My goal is to remove pay from your list of reasons to be stressed.

Yesterday, you received a document from our Human Resources Executive Director Jean Hastings. I realize this document may be very confusing to you because it is very complicated. The complications arise from LPS having many different types of employee contracts and the fact that the federal government has passed legislation that grants employees new types of COVID-19 related leave.

Since the inception of the School Cessation order issued by the State Board, it has been the intention of the LPS Board and Administration to honor our contracted pay commitments. Late yesterday, we received legal advice from the OSSBA that we can take local Board action to resolve the pay issues that we have been waiting on the legislature to address. To accomplish this, we are scheduling a Special Board meeting for April 1, 2020 to pass a resolution to **“direct the Superintendent of Lawton Public Schools to grant any support staff, teachers, administrators and professional technical employees paid Emergency Administrative Leave necessary to allow such employees to be paid throughout the duration of their original 2019-2020 employment contracts.”**

In plain language this means:

- 1) Contracted certified staff (teachers, counselors, administrators, etc.) will be paid through the end of their contract year to include extra duty pay. Given the fact that we will be required to deliver “continued learning” opportunities, you will be assigned “work-from-home tasks” associated with the work to be done after April 6th.
- 2) Benefitted full-time contracted support staff (hourly) will be paid through the end of their contract year. ***Please note that this is dependent on the Board passing the resolution on April 1st. At this time, I have no reason to believe this will not happen.*** Given the fact that we will be required to deliver “continued learning” opportunities and other “essential services,” you may be assigned “work-from-home tasks” or called into work as “essential employees.” It will only be for the minimum amount of time required to perform “essential duties” associated with the work. We will work hard to minimize these tasks.

Please know that your health and safety are our highest priority as we work our way through this unprecedented situation.

I would also like to thank all those employees now performing essential duties to ensure our district remains operational and our students continue to be fed. I know that delivering on the promise of continued learning will be challenging, but you will be provided with many options and resources to accomplish this.

I realize there are many unknowns at this time, but I hope this communication alleviates your fears about continued pay...many in our community are not as fortunate as public school employees at this time with regard to pay.

Please stay safe and stay at home as much as possible.

Sincerely,



Dr. Tom Thomas
LPS Superintendent