

Superintendent's Warrior Report

Preparing Champions for LIFE!

Buildings are Closed but Learning Continues

Buildings are closed but the learning continues. This is the statement around the country during the current novel COVID-19 Pandemic school closures.

Idabel Public Schools has spent the last week leading the way in McCurtain County with our State mandated "distance learning" model. Teachers are continuing to instruct students while implementing online strategies. This is more challenging for some teachers but the technology team (David White, Chris Gammon, John Harjo and Michelle Hash) has worked hard to provide support through online



trainings and providing multiple resources.

The Warrior teachers are focusing on communicating with students through Google Classroom, Facebook contact, emails, text messaging and phone calls.

The district has provided approximately 40 mobile hotspots for students without Internet access at home. There are hotspots available if more families need them. Principals and their staff have issued Chromebooks and iPads to students with no at home device to complete online assignments.

The District grading policy is for teachers to take two grades a week. Teachers have continued taking two grades a week along with monitoring daily participation (attendance.) After the end of school administrators will look at the grade and attendance data to evaluate our online success and possible changes for the future.

SFE, the food service company we are currently contracted with has done a great job feeding students during the building closures. While meal participation started slow we are now serving close to 1600 meals a day including breakfasts.

The District is taking advantage of this time to run a free trial of GoGuardian, a web security monitoring service. This service will identify inappropriate uses of school devices and school owned accounts. This will help us keep our students safe while they are online. GoGuardian will layer on top of our BARK monitoring software and our District filters.

IPS has been preparing for this situation for several years and we were ready to answer the call!

Preparing Champions for Life!



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Idabel Public Schools

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Special points of interest:

- April 24th—IEA Day no school
- Last Day of School May 8th
- All Extra-Curricular Activities have been canceled
- All Concerts and Special Events are Canceled until further notice

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High School Choir Superior in 2020!

Since January, our #ihswarriors Choir students have been working on solos and ensembles for contest. They put in a lot of time to perfect each song in order to be ready to sing for the judges.

The Warriors brought home **68** Superior medals and **10** Excellent certificates at OSSAA District Solo and Ensemble contest in

Durant on February 25.

We have 40 students-21 soloists and all 5 of our ensembles who would have advanced to OSSAA State Solo and Ensemble Competition in Shawnee on April 23 and 24.

The judges we had really praised our kids on their vocal talent and technique. One judge thanked us

for being dressed so professionally (our suits and long black choir dresses) and told us we were the best she'd heard that day!

For comparison, last year we had 28 Superior medals and 13 Excellent certificates. Our kids really stepped up their game!

GO WARRIORS!

Middle School Choir Superior in 2020!

Idabel Middle School Choir recently competed at district solo contest in Durant. Every middle school choir student performed exceptionally!

Congratulations to the following students for earning superior scores: Mackenzie Manuel; Grace Gibson; Russia Smith; Kaydance McKinney; Whitney Wade; Alyssa Clouse; Jada Bell and Rebecca Cunningham.

We were thrilled to bring home straight superiors! These eight young ladies qualified to compete at the State level compete



tion in April. Unfortunately they will not be able to continue to strive for the coveted All-State honor due to the novel COVID-19 closure of all activities.

Middle School Choir Director, Karla Clay says these girls have worked very hard this school year and they all deserve to be competing at All-State. Eight vocalists competing is the largest number of middle school singers to qualify for the State honor in many, many years.

PREPARING CHAMPIONS FOR LIFE!

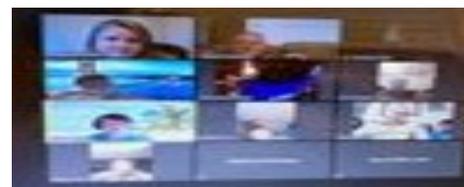
Special Education Continuing during Closures

#ipswarriors Special Education Services continues to provide student support through distance learning. All special education teachers and related service providers met virtually on March 30th to discuss how the needs of students with disabilities could be met while school buildings are closed. A district plan was developed that detailed how the needed supports will be provided to students who have special needs through a digital and distance learning platform. IDEA allows for distance education services for students with special needs as long as it is consistent with the same format provided to

all other students, and access to curriculum and services can be attained. Students are able to access assignments with modifications that meet their individual learning plan needs. The related service providers (Speech Pathology, Occupational Therapy, and Physical Therapy) planned activities that can also be accomplished by the students and their families while at home. Individualized packets for these services are sent home each week. Each special education teacher is maintaining contact with students through digital and phone communication devices. Additionally, support staff employees, along with the teachers, are making

phone contact at least two times per week with these students and their parents. The goal of Special Education Services is to make sure that not only are the educational needs of our students being met but the physical and emotional needs as well.

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IMS Program Spotlight-Quiz Bowl!

District wide teachers organized a Teacher Parade after spring break to kick off the new "Distance Learning" mandated by the Governor's declaration of a state of emergency.

Idabel teachers were disappointed school was not going to end they way they had planned. They missed their students and wanted to make an effort to show their love and support during these trying times.



So several teachers reached out to administration to schedule a parade through several neighborhoods. This was teacher initiated and teacher lead. They made it happen.

While the weather did not cooperate the parade of 67 cars took place and students lined up along the route and teachers and students waved and smiled, honked and hollered for each other. It was really kind of emotional. *Preparing Champions for Life!*

Idabel Central Trash Off Poster Winners

Several thousand students statewide enter the annual Statewide Trash Poster Contest (TPC) annually, including Idabel students. This makes poster judging very competitive and certainly very interesting! In addition to other prizes, 12 chosen state winning posters will be featured in 35,000 printed calendars this year. One additional state winning poster is also selected and will be reproduced in large dynamic color poster format for display as the TPC "Promotional Poster of the Year".

The Trash Poster Contest is organized by State Beautification Coordinator Melody

Johnson – OK Department of Transportation (ODOT), and is coordinated in partnership with the following agency or organization: OK Department of Environmental Quality (ODEQ), OK Turnpike Authority (OTA), OGE Energy Corporation (OG&E), OK's Credit Union (OKCU), OK Tourism & Recreation Department – State Parks (OTRD-SP), Keep OK Beautiful (KOB), OK City Beautiful (OKCB), OK State Department of Education (OSDE), OK Department of Public Safety/OK Highway Patrol (DPS/OHP), and OK Highway Safety Office (OHSO).



LizaBeth Bundy-2nd place, Tayson Hall-5th place, Sadielynn Bundy-1st place and placed at state level, but hasn't been told the place yet, Tiger Snipes-3rd place, Haley Bee-5th place . GO WARRIORS!

Governor Secures State Budget Through April

The Governor signed the following two bills, an action that he says would fully fund the state budgets (including education) through the month of April.

SB617, allows the Office of Management and Enterprise Services to withdraw up to half of the balance of the Revenue Stabilization Fund to distribute to agencies to avoid cuts owing to the revenue failure.

SB1053, appropriates \$201,559,654 from the Rainy Day Fund to the Revenue Stabilization Fund, as allowed by the governor's emergency declaration. The emergency declaration allowed access to 1/4 of the Rainy Day Fund.

"We had a deal with the Legislature to fully fund state government for April, May and June," Stitt said. "House leadership wanted to use this time to play Washington D.C. politics to sneak in some last-minute changes while Oklahomans are hurting."

House Speaker Charles McCall (R-Atoka) said, "The state's reserves, which exist for emergencies just like this, are sufficient for services to continue uninterrupted."

Each day brings new information, reflecting the very fluid nature of details during this time period.

GO WARRIORS



Bond Projects Update



The sale of the Idabel Bonds have been delayed due to the novel COVID-19 pandemic. Stephen McDonald is advising we hold on the sale for at least a couple of weeks. Stating this will hopefully get the financial markets in a better position to provide the necessary capital to fully fund our projects.

Superintendent Brown has met with the Construction Manager and discussed the bid process. Bids are only good for 30

days so the requests will be published 30 days prior to funds becoming available. This will be sometime during mid-May if we are able to move forward with bond sales.

The District will be looking for volunteers and donors to help with beginning dirt work to help save on construction costs. Administrators, coaches, and band directors have all had input on final plans.

GO WARRIORS!

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“Look for Helpers”

Several Idabel Warrior Teachers and support staff volunteered their time during the school closures to help feed the students of #ipswarriors Public Schools. Staff passed out Grab & Go breakfast and lunch daily and library books once a week for free to every student that came to the drop off sites.

GO WARRIORS!



Board Update

While the Capitol is closed and the legislature stands in recess, the current-year budget and the FY 21 budget are among their top concerns. OSSBA has a strong reason to believe OK can survive the economic storm with little to no impact on this year's and next year's education budgets.

State officials are expected to meet soon and declare a revenue failure for the current fiscal year. The projected revenue failure is in part because the OK Tax Commission delayed the April 15 deadline for taxpayers to file and pay their taxes until July 15. That effectively moves a significant amount of state revenue from the FY20 fiscal year to the FY21 fiscal year. Of course, business closures and declining gas prices also will affect state revenue. With plans to hold next year's budget flat, a revenue failure also is expected next fiscal year.

However, reasons for hope are three-fold: the state has a record amount of money in its savings accounts, a significant amount of federal stimulus

money is headed to the state and to schools, and legislative leaders have publicly affirmed their desire to protect the last two years of education investment.

Senate Appropriations and Budget Committee Chair Sen. Roger Thompson: “Now is not a time to be cutting budgets or cutting services. ... We need to make sure that all the needs are met not only for the current crisis we are in, but also that we stabilize the budget going forward for the next fiscal year. “

House Appropriations and Budget Committee Chair Rep. Kevin Wallace: “With over \$1.1 billion in savings, we are definitely in pretty good shape to weather the storm, but we need to be looking at 2022 as well. “

OSSBA Executive Director Shawn Hime: “Financially, school board members and administrators should develop a flat budget plan for next school year, along with contingency plans for modest and more severe cuts. “

Governor Stitt announced "the State of Oklahoma is expected to experience a revenue failure of approximately \$416 million for the remainder of fiscal year 2020 which ends June 30."

It goes on to say, "under normal circumstances, this revenue failure would automatically result in 6.2% budget cuts to all state agencies. However, Gov. Stitt has called for a special virtual meeting of the Board of Equalization at 1 p.m. Monday to begin the formal procedures necessary for the state legislature to tap into the state's savings account."

We must be prepared to plan with a conservative approach for the rest of this year and next year. Legislative leaders and the Governor's office have indicated that they will try to hold state agencies and schools harmless for FY20 by accessing monies in the Rainy Day Fund and Stabilization Fund. As we plan for FY21, which is upon us, and long-term for FY22, we should proceed with caution.

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