17-Apr-2020

The Hawaii State Department of Education announced today the continuation of enrichment and distance learning through May 28, the last day of the 2019-20 school year. All HIDOE employees continue to work remotely with the exception of those who are considered essential and must perform their duties at a campus or office.

The Hawaii State Department of Education (HIDOE) announced today the continuation of enrichment and distance learning through May 28, the last day of the 2019-20 school year. The decision was made based on the latest guidance and information from health officials and elected leaders.

"This pandemic has undoubtedly changed the way that education will be delivered at all levels and especially how our Department will operate moving forward," Superintendent Dr. Christina Kishimoto said. "We have pushed our boundaries and created new ways of delivering on our mission, including expanding distance learning opportunities, establishing an equity of access approach to devices and the internet, and exploring work from home approaches that can help us rethink our real estate footprint for non-instructional staff. I want to acknowledge the resiliency of the HIDOE workforce and thank them for rising to the challenge of looking for innovative ways to move our work forward through this unprecedented time."

On April 2, the Board of Education unanimously approved the Department's request to modify high school graduation and commencement requirements for the graduating class of 2020. This approval in part helped finalize plans to utilize grades from the third quarter to determine the final grade for student courses. In addition, an announcement was made earlier this week that traditional commencement ceremonies would be replaced with alternative celebrations due to safety concerns and social distancing guidance. Celebrations will occur in the later half of May.

The Department's focus will shift in the coming weeks toward a rollout of summer school, which will largely occur using distance learning, as well as creating a plan for school year 2020-21 given the changing parameters of social distancing and opening of businesses and services. In addition, the Department will initiate a health triage hotline and telehealth service by the end of the month through the Hawaii Keiki program, a partnership between HIDOE and the University of Hawaii at Manoa School of Nursing and Dental Hygiene. The service will provide parents access to a phone line answered by a registered nurse (RN) who can assess physical and mental health needs, connect public school students to services, and follow up with the family to ensure services were received.

School facilities have been closed to students since March 19, but the school system remains open. All HIDOE employees continue to work remotely with the exception of those who are considered essential and must perform their duties at a campus or office.

Schools have launched distance learning opportunities and learning packets are distributed via email, school websites and some in-person. The Department has also stood up a resource for parents available at bit.ly/HIDOEVirtualLearningParentResource.

HIDOE COVID-19 updates will continue to be posted on the Department's website at hawaiipublicschools.org.

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