

U.S.D. 466

Scott County Schools

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From: Jamie Rumford, Superintendent

Date: April 5, 2020

RE: Continuous Learning - Week 1 Reflection

After a week of implementing the Continuous Learning plan for the remainder of the school year, I would like to offer some reflections on how incredible the response in Scott City has been.

First Reflection: Staff - My appreciation for the staff of the Scott County School District has always been strong, but not like this. In a period of unknown, our staff has risen to the challenge and all roles within the district have stepped up to make the best out of this situation.

Our custodial and maintenance crews worked hard to clean and disinfect as much surface space as they could when the Coronavirus pandemic hit the news. Then they did it again after students came in to get their supplies. And then again after teachers accessed the building to prepare lessons. No complaints from these hard working folks. Just getting the job done.

The kitchen staff devised a creative plan to prepare and provide lunches and breakfasts for any student who needed it. Then they enhanced their plan to find a way to deliver lunches to some of our students who were home alone, even those outside of city limits. Adjustments had to be made, but only to assure all kids needing a meal receive one. They have taken no shortcuts. No easy way out. We average serving over 50% of our students. Over 500 meals per day. Incredible.

Teacher messages started coming to me during spring break. Some with concerns about the kids we serve, others about ideas they had been considering to keep our students learning. Our teaching staff, consisting of teachers, paras, and principals, started early on the morning of March 23rd to learn the Continuous Learning plan. They have worked tirelessly since, finding ways to connect with their students to ensure their growth will continue while respecting the levels of stress in the households. Again, no complaints. No frustration. Just people working hard to make a difference in the lives of our students.

Someone said to me in passing, "Well, it looks like the end of your school year just got easier." Quite the contrary... The work we are doing now is difficult. More difficult than it was before. We are not working regular hours. We meet and teach groups of kids in the morning, in the afternoon, and the evening. In between the student work, they are assessing their progress to determine whether they are on track for the next school year.

For those who need to know if we are really grading student work, the answer is YES. How could we not? Grading is part of our job and necessary to assure our students are ready for next year. It will not be the typical method of handing in work and getting the marked paper back. It will be more specific to each individual student and the effort they give.



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Second Reflection: Parents - Parents need recognition too. Continuous Learning from home has forced more family time and parental involvement, and your response has been fantastic. Parents are scheduling their students' day, helping them with projects, problem solving with them, performing the arts together, exercising with them, praying with and for them, and showing them the importance of their education. They are doing all of this while trying to work their own jobs, pay bills, and put food on their tables. This is difficult for them, yet I hope this process brings families a little closer. Hopefully your children will understand and appreciate all you provide for them.

Parents, we would like to put together a video to show some of the neat things going on with Continuous Learning in your families and households. If you get a chance and approve us using your photos, please send them to me at jrumford@usd466.org or send them to our district Facebook page.

Last Reflection: Students – The most important part of our job is our students. Just over 1,000 kids are enrolled in our district, and each student has been on the minds of our staff over and over again throughout this process.

I am proud of the work students are doing for teachers by connecting to virtual meetings and completing assignments and tasks from homes. The feeling our staff gets from watching the excitement from our students when they see each other on Zoom may be the most powerful part of this process.

We are sorry and saddened to miss out on spring activities, games and events. This is an incredible time of the year, and we want to be spending it with you. Understand we will try to make them up in some way.

By the way seniors, plans to celebrate and recognize your graduation are in the works. We will be subject to health guidelines, but we will do something. Once we know what is possible, we will let you know.

This work we are all doing makes me proud; proud of our community values, proud of our work ethic, proud of the small town culture, and proud of western Kansas life. Every action and reaction to this situation is a learning lessons for our youth. Keep a strong stance. Embellish the opportunities you get. We are becoming a better community because of this.

Proud to be a BEAVER! We are SC!

Yours in Education,

Jamie Rumford



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