



# **IDEA Public Schools New Orleans, Inc.**

Executive Director Report  
May 14, 2020

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Executive Director

# General

Continued focus on 5 major activities

1. Taking actions to flatten the curve and keep staff and families safe
2. Feeding our community
3. Continuing to educate our students
4. Supporting our staff
5. Preparing for 2020-21 school year

# Health and Safety

Continued emphasis on self-care and well-being

All staff report healthy. We had 2 positive cases total within region, and both have recovered

Buildings will remain closed, but we will allow opportunities (under phase 1 social distancing guidelines) for students to turn in technology, teachers to clean out classrooms, etc.

# Supporting Our Staff

All staff has continued to get paid during school closure, but a number of staff members (primarily operations) will go “off contract” for the summer. Since we are not envisioning a need to layoff staff, it is our hope that they all return to us at the start of next year’s contract period.

# Feeding Our Community

- Since school closure we've prepared and served more than 32,000 meals at Oscar Dunn
- Planning to offer “gratitude” bonuses for first-line workers who have been involved in community feeding
- FRL families eligible for one-time Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer (P-EBT) of \$285 per student on an EBT card. This is designed to provide extra help buying groceries for the families who normally receive free and reduced-price meals at school. This doesn't affect our community feeding program in any way. We have notified families of timeline and state communication is forthcoming

# Continuing to Educate Our Students

Last day of school is 5/15 for students and 5/22 for teachers. The last week is considered “ramp-up” week where our teachers and leaders will focus on planning and preparing for next year

Despite some inconsistencies in the quality of instruction, I feel like our teachers and leaders did a strong job during distance education. However, challenges remain:

- Participation rates were not as strong as we would have liked, and students with the least amount of participation are also the students who are most behind
- We’ve started and will continue diagnostic testing of all students to get more precise assessments of where we have to start learning next year
- Intervention/remediation will be critical next school year

# 1-to-1 Computers

- NOLA Public Schools is driving toward a goal of having one computer for every student in the district. This is consistent with the direction we are taking at IDEA across our organization and we have begun to fundraise nationally to meet the goal.
- The NOLA Technology Access Fund has been set up to take donations that the district will use to continue to provide devices to schools and/or to pay for connectivity for households.
- I believe going to a 1-to-1 program is essential, but I'm concerned about the pace of implementation and cost implications. I've advocated for an approach that would have us phase this in over perhaps 3 years

# CARES Act Funding

We have gotten initial allocations for CARES Act funding in the amount of \$112,000.

There is still some uncertainty about final amounts, as USDOE guidance suggests that a larger share of the funding should have been directed to private schools

# Oscar Dunn Enrollment

We still have a lot of work to do to meet our enrollment targets for next year, but our team continues to do a strong job of recruiting students

- ❑ Projected enrollment = 480
- ❑ Budgeted enrollment = 454
- ❑ OPSB projected match as of 5/1/20 = 311 (vs.125 last year)

Will increase social media advertising and do at least one mail drop in the next 30 days

# Charter Compliance Update

## Noncompliance Notices

- Noncompliance notice for website rescinded
- Noncompliance notice for school bus inspection certificates expected to be resolved next week, when the inspection office re-opens
- Noncompliance notice for facility is a moving target that we continue to work to resolve

## Action on second New Orleans school

- When our charter application was approved, it was approved for two schools in the city. Since we are not opening a second site, we have to act to either 1) forego the second site and reapply or 2) request an extension

# Charter Compliance Update

We have a lot of compliance/policy/assurance items that are due to NOLA Public Schools in August. So we will begin the process of reviewing and discussing these items later this month for approval at the June meeting

- Policy assurances approval
- Crisis plan
- Student handbook
- Parent/guardian grievance process
- Pupil progression plan
- Board Governance Verification Forms
- Board Governance Assurance Forms
- List of officers
- 2020-21 Board Meeting Calendar
- Proof of Insurance and Certificate of Public Necessity and Convenience Permit Documentation

# Leadership Update

**Janet Crenshaw**, who has served as our Baton Rouge based VP of Schools will be moving on to a leadership coaching role with IDEA in Florida this summer.

**Mr. Edwin Strickland** from Springdale, Arkansas, has been selected for our new VP of Schools. Mr. Strickland brings significant experience in school leadership and coaching, and we're excited about him joining our team on June 1<sup>st</sup>.

# 2020-21 School Year

No determination about how we will return to school, but the expectation is that we'll likely return to buildings in August but with some social distancing requirements and that we'll still be offering a significant amount of distance learning

OPSB working to provide a common plan for returning to school so that there is consistency between schools across the city

# Upcoming Events/Important Dates New Orleans

May 15	Last day of school for students
May 21	Board Meeting (first budget presentation)
May 22	Last contract day for teachers
May 28	Finance Committee Meeting
June 4	Board Meeting
June 25	Finance Committee Meeting