

Community Update, September 18

2 messages

Superintendent Tom Flanagan <superintendent@bsdvt.org>

Fri, Sep 18, 2020 at 5:10 PM

Reply-To: superintendent@bsdvt.org

To: superintendent@bsdvt.org



Sept 18, 2020

Hello BSD Community,

We are just over two weeks into the new school year! In many ways, we had a wonderful start to the school year. Unfortunately, we also had a significant challenge with the [BHS/BTC campus](#). We are working hard to shift to remote learning at the high school and also working with our partners to better understand needed next steps with the building. We will be exploring many options to get our high school students back to school in-person. I explained in my letter earlier this week that we are going to be in remote learning until Semester 2 starts in January. However, we are also looking aggressively for alternative locations and in the event we find space(s) that can house our high school programs, we could be back sooner. The School Board and the Mayor and local partners are supporting this effort, and we will keep you updated as this progresses.

I'm excited to announce that I will be kicking off three advisory councils. Those applications are due September 25th so please consider applying if you are interested (more information below).

Thank you all for your engagement in the first two weeks of school. We have appreciated your partnership in our arrival and departure procedures, your open communication, and your overall support.

Tom



District Updates

Parent/Teacher/Student Advisory Groups - As part of my 100 Day Entry Plan focus on equity, deep learning, and engagement, I am forming three advisory groups with whom I wish to meet monthly to give feedback to me and the District around what is happening around the district and what is being planned. I want to engage families, students, and teachers as true partners in the educational process, to make sure that the needs of a broad range of people are included as decisions are made in the district. All of you play an important and integral role in promoting the social, emotional, and academic success of all students, and I want to hear from you. [Please consider applying to be on the Parent, Teacher, or Student advisory group.](#)

Safety Task Force - We've extended the deadline a few days to apply to join our School Safety Task Force - [applications are now due SUNDAY](#). BSD invites members of the community to participate in a School Safety Task Force as requested in the Board of School Commissioners' [resolution passed on June 25, 2020](#). The resolution charges the School Safety Task Force with reviewing the role of School Resource Officers (SROs) and presenting recommendations to further the district's policy goals of implementing all elements of Restorative Practices (RP) as part of the district priorities of equitable and safe inclusive schools.

Black Lives Matter Flags - Earlier this year, BSD signed-on to the City of Burlington's [declaration that racism is a public health emergency](#). As part of that work, we committed to taking a number of actions to help fight against racism in our schools. One of those actions was to raise the Black Lives Matter Flag at each of our schools. I am pleased to say that on Tuesday night our Board of School Commissioners voted unanimously to direct me to fly the Black Lives Matter flag at each of our schools and programs until further notice, and to ask our partner locations to do the same. This is a great opportunity for us to continue our work to create safe and inclusive spaces and I am grateful the board is leading on this initiative. During the meeting, Commissioner Laroque-Gulick, who co-sponsored the resolution, said that "The hope is that this resolution isn't an end, but that its the beginning of more equity and inclusion work." I agree wholeheartedly with this sentiment and I look forward to meeting the rest of our action steps and continuing equity and inclusion work.

Online Health Screenings - In response to the August 11th update to the AOE's A Strong and Healthy Start guidance, we have created a tool in the [BSD PowerSchool portal](#) that will allow families to complete student health screenings at home each morning before leaving for school. Please find [step-by-step directions here](#) or watch the step-by-step [screencast on our YouTube page](#).

REMEMBER: It will be important to complete the screening before 7:30 AM each morning, if possible, because at 7:30 each morning, staff will download a report to see who has completed the screening. Those who did not complete the screening prior to 7:30 AM will have to complete the screening on-site prior to building entry. Once students arrive, staff will verify which students still need to be screened and confirm students are fever-free.

Free Meal Kits - BSD's Burlington School Food Project is now providing FREE "Family Meal Kits" for all children under 19 years old! Kits are available Wednesdays and Fridays and contain kitchen staples, produce, drinks, heat and eat meals, and snacks. ALL FAMILIES ARE WELCOME with no eligibility requirements. Please find pick-up locations and schedules [on our website](#) and [on this flier](#).

Jessie Cope Memorial - There will be a local memorial for our friend and colleague Jessie Cope on Saturday, September 19th from 4-5pm. While only family members will be able to attend in-person, RETN will live-stream the memorial to [Retn.org](#) and to the [BSD Facebook page](#).

ASU - If you haven't yet completed the Annual Student Update, we need you to do so as soon as possible. This must be completed all students, hybrid or remote. Please find [login to your PowerSchool Account](#) account to complete this as soon as possible or contact your school directly for help.

Free Programs in the Parks - From September 14 to October 16, join the City of Burlington and the [Greater Burlington YMCA for Free Programs in the Park!](#) Designed for grades K through 5. Adult caregivers do not need to stay. We will have a check-in station and do basic health screening. Masks must be worn by participants.

Census - Don't forget to complete your 2020 Census questionnaire. Filling out the questionnaire allows you to influence the amount of money that comes to Vermont for many essential programs that benefit our health and safety, and pay for our schools, roads, local government, hospitals, and so much more. You can complete the Census by going to [my2020census.gov](#) or by calling toll free: 844-330-2020

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BSD Superintendent <superintendent@bsdvt.org> Fri, Sep 18, 2020 at 5:16 PM
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