



Colleagues-

Thank you for the continuous dedication to our students and our members of the OEA. One thing that has been a constant over the last 6 months is CHANGE. It continues to happen whether we are prepared for it or not. Educators have the innate ability to make that change for the greater good. However, it does cost something to someone in our lives, a spouse, children, activities, celebrations and time for self. You unwillingly sacrifice those moments for the success of the students in your classroom. It doesn't go unnoticed; your students thank you and OEA thanks you!

I want to clarify a couple of things from the last message you received.

- "I'm quarantined, but I feel fine and can work remotely." If you are asked to quarantine, you are **NOT ALLOWED TO WORK REMOTELY** during that time. This would include attending requested meetings by your administrator, setting up a TEAMS meeting or putting together something that was previously required by the district. You are **NOT REQUIRED** to participate; you are on LEAVE.
- Friday afternoon OPS delivered another message to staff around time allotments for K-2. This does not impact 3-12 grades. There were comments, dialogue and questions around the length of time for students in grades K-2. OEA pointed out on several occasions that the district may want to look at the suggested times for these grades, as it was a bit excessive in terms of screen time. We were notified at 3:25 on Friday that a message was going out to staff around the adjustments on the K-2 allotments. As usual we began to receive phone calls, emails and texts around this issue. We have reached out to get additional answers from the district, they are italicized and *in red*.
 - How will the students who wish to participate in specials be acknowledged, since they are 'optional?' How will this impact their curriculum? *They will still follow their curriculum as they normally would and teach every class of K-2 students as scheduled. There just may be fewer students some days.*
 - Will specialists now be expected to use that time as 'office hours' to

- reach out to students? – *No, they will continue to have a full schedule with K-2 classes included.*
- Is this a requirement by CIS, meaning every K-2 classes must make the change? *Yes – the time allotment change is district wide.*
 - Does the instructional time have to be 1:1 or can it be for small groups as well? *The individualized Learning Time is one on one time. This is not small group work.*
 - Is the time adjusted for PreK students? *Yes – they will follow a similar schedule as well. We did not this yet because they do not have iPads at this time.*
 - Why were specialists not notified of this change before it went to parents and the press? *That was an oversight on our part – messaging was sent specifically to K-2 teachers but specialist were missed in the rush to get this out.*
 - Specialist are upset that the district stated that they were “optional.” It makes them appear that their jobs and curriculum are not valued or important. *We highly value elementary specials (as we do science and SS which are also listed as optional) and believe that most students will attend these each day as these are often a child’s favorite class. Specials are an important part of a child’s education journey and key to their development.*
- If you have not had an AR election for your building, please take care of that and let the OEA office know of the results. [CLICK HERE](#) for the form.
 - There is another AR training date scheduled for Tuesday, August 25th at 5:00-6:30, email becca.dingwell@nsea.org to participate. Please include your building and cell phone number in the email. Attending one of the AR trainings is a requirement to receive your incentive at the end of the year.
 - Membership- We are stronger together! If you have a new teacher in your building, ask them to join us in advocating to make public education the best it can be for the students, staff and the community. OEA was not able to meet with the new hires in person, we are relying on members to reach out to make that final ask to join. [CLICK HERE](#) to access a membership form. We have a way to go but making progress every day.

Every teacher and subject matter is essential in supporting the whole child. Don't let those around you make you feel less of a teacher because each of you play a pivotal role every day. Be the teacher you needed when you were in school. We are in a stressful time; we need to be there for each other and be a positive sounding board to those who need it most. Specialist teachers, we see you, we hear you and you ARE essential.

Continue to be great and make a difference to those who cross your paths. OEA continues to address the issues we all are facing, making a difference one day at a time.

Breathe and Be present!

Robert
OEA President

