

Dear WCSD Family,

Your dedication and hard work on behalf of all students and families in our District is deeply appreciated. I know our community recognizes the enormous amount of effort everyone in the District is putting in daily to support our students and their needs. As a continued message, it is crucial to remain **vigilant in our efforts to mitigate the spread of COVID-19**. We heard an important message from Governor Sisolak regarding safety measures last week and I urge everyone to do their part.

As of this morning, **14 of our schools are currently on full distance learning plans**. In many of these incidents, the schools are moved to distance learning out of an abundance of caution for the safety of our students and staff. In some of the instances, the move allows the Washoe County Health District to complete a contact tracing investigation and in others, because of the number of staff exclusions, the school moves to Distance Learning. This week our district will be standing up a COVID-19 Strikeforce Team that will provide streamlined communication to the various levels of stakeholders including school sites and departments to help with communication around exclusions. Rick Harris will be the lead on this Team. If you would like to view the schools on Distance Learning, please review our school by school COVID-19 status report [here](#).

- We continue to value the voices of our WCSD students. As we are encountering unique and challenging times, it is more important than ever that our students are provided opportunities to gather and engage in discussions around topics that feel most relevant to them. In partnership with our district's Student Advisory Council and Office of Accountability, we are excited to announce our upcoming **Student-led Virtual Town Hall** where students from around the District will discuss the challenges and successes of virtual learning! This will be the first in a series of three events. The other two events will discuss Equity and Inclusion and Students' Mental and Emotional Well-being. Please help us in recruiting students who may be interested in participating. Students and staff can find the dates, times, topics, and registration for these events by visiting <http://www.wcsddata.net/studentvoice/>.
- Our District will be hosting **Virtual Passport to High School Success Family Nights on November 17, November 19, and November 23 for eighth grade students and their families, providing them** with information about the Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs and Signature Academies. These virtual events will offer an overview of the different high school opportunities, including how to apply. Learn more about the programs available and sign up for the [Family Nights here](#).
- Also I would like to let you know that **Irene Payne, Chief Communications and Community Engagement Officer**, is leaving the District and we wish her well. This is an important leadership position that we will be looking to fill as quickly as possible.
- Don't forget about the **10th Annual WCSD Holiday Card Design Competition!** Submissions may be an original painting, drawing, digital artwork, or photograph and must have a non-religious holiday theme. All entries must be received in

the Office of Communications and Community Engagement by November 24 at 4 p.m. Along with the winner's beautiful artwork being shared with our community, the top three overall winners will receive prizes and recognition at the December 8 Board of Trustees meeting! I encourage you to rally your students and participate in this annual competition. [Click here](#) for details on the submission requirements.

- The county and regional partners have issued a **public survey that will help create the foundation for effective recovery planning for our region**. The survey seeks to understand financial, educational, social and emotional impacts on the community, as well as employment and economic losses. Residents should [take this survey](#), which focuses on the personal, financial, and social impacts of the pandemic. It gauges residents' comfort level with activities such as grocery shopping, dining out, attending events, and playing sports, and asks for feedback on concerns related to healthcare, social distancing, travel, and possible exposure to the virus. Additionally, it's not too late to take the **School Reopening Family Survey**, if you have a child in our school district, which asks about the practices that are working well at your child's school and areas of challenge parents and students might be facing. [This survey](#), which closes on Wednesday, Nov. 25, will be used by District leadership and the Board of Trustees to address concerns and identify successes that can be replicated District-wide.

Thank you again for sending some of the **great news happening** in our District every day. Please send submissions to [goodnews@washoeschools.net](mailto:goodnews@washoeschools.net). Below are a few other highlights I have received.

- Join our very own **WCSD Mail Services and Print Shop** who donated 60 brand new winter coats for kids in need and challenge you to help! **Education Alliance of Washoe County is partnering with Big Reno Coat Drive** to collect new winter coats for students in need in Washoe County through Monday, November 30. I just had to accept their challenge with a donation of 10 new coats to keep our students cozy in our open-windowed buses and during their mask breaks outside! Visit [www.bigrenocoatdrive.org](http://www.bigrenocoatdrive.org) for a full list of drop-off locations throughout Reno and Sparks, including one in the lobby of WCSD Admin building.
- I received this message from **Laura Pincolini, consulting teacher**. "I along with my seven other colleagues we are doing our best to support all our first-year novice teachers. I reached out to my friend Ryan Dolan at **Dolan Auto Group** last year around this time and he donated Hydroflask coffee mugs to all our new teachers. He bought 200 of them. I reached out again this year and he is making the same generous donation. Consulting teachers are always looking for ways that we can make the lives of our novices better and brighter. We just wanted to let you know that reaching out to our community has paid off and we are beyond excited to bring these gifts again to our deserving teachers." I thank Dolan Auto Group and their continuous support of our schools and teachers and our consulting teachers for the important mentoring work they do!

- The **Washoe County School District Safe Routes to Schools** worked alongside City of Reno, City of Sparks, Washoe County, and Renown Health to identify six intersections near some District schools to install Rapid Response Flashing Beacons. The beacons work to catch drivers' attention to warn them of pedestrians in the crosswalk. The initiative was kickstarted by three AACT students who studied student pedestrians safety near the school and presented information to the Reno City Council. [Click here](#) to learn where the beacons will be installed.

Take care,

Kristen