The current health crisis has revamped how we operate as a public school system serving students across the state. As students are kept at the forefront of our response efforts, we want to ensure employees are informed. We strive to provide helpful resources for professional and personal well-being along with highlighting bright spots and accomplishments along the way. Please keep an eye out for this weekly digital update.

What we accomplished this week

» After much consideration and discussion, it was determined that traditional commencement ceremonies at public and charter schools will be replaced with alternative celebrations for the class of 2020 due to safety concerns and social distancing guidance. Schools will still honor their seniors through different models of celebrations, which will be announced next week. View video message from Superintendent Dr. Christina Kishimoto here.

» HIDOE, in partnership with HSTA, hosted a special education update via Webex for educators on April 13. More than 1,660 participants joined the session, which provided an overview of what special education may look like at this time, new insights on special education timelines, and resources to support teachers and students. There was also a live Q&A portion to address questions and concerns. A recording is available to employees here.

» HIDOE’s Leadership Institute has been busy finding innovative ways to support our educators as we adapt to new ways of teaching and learning. An example of this is the Peer-to-Peer Power Sessions. Learn from teachers about proven distance learning strategies and the impact they are seeing on students. The next Power Session is today at 3 p.m. with Niu Valley Middle teacher Zachary Morita, register here.
What's in the works

» Tune in to Gov. David Ige’s press conference scheduled for 2:30 p.m. this afternoon, when Superintendent Kishimoto is expected to make an announcement about the remainder of the 2019-20 school year.

» As announced at the end of last year, HIDOE is in the process of modernizing its Financial Management System (FMS), a platform vital to the operations of the Department. While planning and design work on this major effort has been ongoing, an official project kick-off and update for employees will be announced in the coming weeks, with training scheduled to begin in Fall 2020. For additional information click here.

» We’re starting a new #MindfulMonday series to provide some at-home resources and activities for families focused on meditation and movement during this time. Look out for our posts on the HIDOE social media channels and follow us!

» May 1 is just around the corner. While we can’t host our traditional May Day celebrations we can still share some virtual aloha with our communities through song and dance. Let’s see your May Day spirit! Get creative and send us a video of how you’re celebrating May Day (no inappropriate dancing or music) and we’ll string together a compilation Virtual May Day video to share out on May 1.

Important updates and reminders from HIDOE offices

**OCID**

Nationally recognized literacy expert Dr. Anita Archer is featured in a series of webinars focused on elementary literacy and explicit instruction as part of our Comprehensive Literacy State Development (CLSD) grant support. Educators are invited to join the live sessions or access the recorded sessions with resources on the CLSD website.

Join the #808Reads Spring Into Reading challenge! Encourage your students and staff to log their reading minutes and complete these fun at-home activities in the month of April. Get started here.

**OSIP**

HIDOE has submitted a request for waivers under the CARES Act, which will allow for additional time to obligate ESSA federal program funds to address educational needs during this unprecedented crisis. Public comments on these waiver requests can be made until April 29 here.

The deadline to submit School Community Council waiver/exception requests for SY2020-21 has been extended to April 24. For more information, see the April 9, 2020 memo.
**OFO**

Grab-and-go breakfast and lunch sites continue to expand with 67 schools currently serving meals. Six more are planned by April 27, including our first non-school sites at two housing complexes in Waianae. Since the start of the program in late March through Wednesday, 119,997 breakfasts and 241,750 lunches have been served to keiki across the islands!

**OSSS**

Since COVID-19 has drastically altered the lives and routines of our students, OSSS is partnering with the University of Hawaii to offer telehealth training for SBBH professionals. This training will provide SBBH professionals guidance as they navigate the world of telehealth services. For more information regarding this training, please contact Ayada.Bonilla@k12.hi.us.

**OFS**

Given the economic forecast, every school and office must minimize discretionary general fund spending to maximize the level of planned carryover into next fiscal year. It is critical that we anticipate operating with significantly less resources. Please refer to April 15 memo COVID-19 Fiscal Management Guidelines #2 for further information.

All payroll questions should first be addressed with your SASA, secretary or timekeeper. The Hawaii Information Portal (HIP) Employee Self Service (ESS) website may answer your questions by providing access to pay statements, tax withholdings, W-2s and setting up or modifying direct deposit. If not, please submit a ServiceNow ticket.

**OTM**

The Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) provides employees with paid sick leave and expanded family and medical leave for specified reasons related to COVID-19. Read the Department-issued memo here for additional details on how to make the request. Paid leave form can be accessed here.

Casual hires (part-time, non-salaried employees) have the option to file for unemployment insurance (UI). You may contact the UI office directly or visit the Hawaii Department of Labor website to apply directly for UI and for more information.

**OITS**

Employees are reminded to check your enterprise G-Suite (employeeID@k12.hi.us) for all official notices and correspondence. For assistance in resetting your password or accessing your G-Suite account, contact the IT Help Desk weekdays from 7:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at 564-6000. Neighbor islands, please use the HATS line at 8-1-808-692-7250.
FAQs answered by Dr. K.

**Q:** Will the governor’s recent proposal to cut public workers’ salaries affect HIDOE employees?

**A:** The Department is awaiting guidance from the state’s Budget and Finance office on how to proceed in this environment with regard to budget implications for the 2020-21 fiscal year. I am putting together a fiscal strategy team to advise me and help develop a plan and course of action as we await further guidance.

In the meantime, we continue to closely monitor and control our expenditures while remaining focused on providing quality distance learning instruction statewide for all haumana.

**Q:** Instead of replacing graduations with alternative ceremonies, why can’t graduations just be postponed until later in the summer?

**A:** Graduation is a major milestone in any academic journey. In Hawaii these celebrations are uniquely special because of our long-standing traditions where families come together to celebrate, give lei, and enjoy each other’s company — something we are all missing during this time.

The Department has faced tough decisions throughout this unprecedented situation, especially around commencement ceremonies. We did consider delaying commencement for several months. We consulted with health officials and state leaders but there is not enough clarity about the impact of COVID-19 on continued closures.

Ultimately, we must prioritize the health and safety of our students, staff, families and the broader community. Rather than simply cancel graduations, we’ve been working closely with school leaders to come up with innovative solutions to support and celebrate our seniors who deserve this special recognition.

While there are strict safety parameters that schools need to work within, we have empowered schools to design a celebration that can best reflect the traditions of their communities. Each high school will announce their celebration date, which will be held in the month of May, and their unique approach with their graduates beginning next week.
Stay healthy! A roundup of well-being tips, resources and shoutouts

- Teaching techniques for online learning (Hawaii Public Radio, Bytemarks Cafe, featuring HSTE’s Shane Asselstine of Pearl City-Waipahu Complex Area and CC Chung of Kaimiloa Elementary).
- 7 tips to manage your mental health and well-being (Nature).
- Curated guidance and insights on equity and access, digital citizenship and remote learning (ISTE).
- Webex tips and tricks, getting started and more information for teachers, students and parents.

Social media highlights

Amid this crisis the HIDOE ‘ohana has been using social media to connect, inspire, educate and uplift one another and the broader community. Please continue sharing your stories, tips and humor using #HI4PublicEd and #PublicSchoolProud.

A note to students from Kapalama Elementary teachers and staff

A note to students from Barbers Point Elementary teachers

Catch up on Ho‘oha‘aheo – inspiring stories from our schools, districts and offices, profiling the students, staff and leaders who are building success and strong school communities, and the community members and organizations that help them do it.