Summary Debrief of TEA COVID-19 Superintendents Calls
As Of: April 3, 2020

Next steps for districts and charters:
1. Bookmark TEA’s coronavirus website tea.texas.gov/coronavirus for the most up-to-date guidance
2. Help amplify the Stay Well, Texas public health campaign at tea.texas.gov/staywell
3. Please continue to submit questions to disasterinfo@tea.texas.gov

Reminders:
- Governor Abbott’s closure order was extended to May 4, 2020. Please do not send updates on districts closings to disasterinfo@tea.texas.gov.
- TEA hosted an Instructional Continuity Informational Webinar Series every day this past week. You can find recordings on our Instructional Continuity website.
- Starting next week, the TEA COVID-19 Superintendent Call moves to Tuesday and Thursday at 3:00pm. Call-in information will remain the same.

Current status of facts:
- DSHS maintains a real-time dashboard of confirmed cases.

Recap of topics covered:
- All schools have been ordered closed up to, but excluding, May 4.
  - The Guidance on Educator and Staff Issues provides additional information on the closure order as well as clarifies who is considered essential personnel.
  - A template was created for staff authorizing their ability to commute to school while the shelter-in-place order is in place.
  - Parents are allowed to travel to schools to pick up meals, instructional packets, laptops or other devices, etc.
  - Sample communications examples have been provided to help in the event you need to communicate with staff/students about an infected staff or student.
- Public health communications campaign – Stay Well, Texas
  - TEA, in collaboration with DSHS, has created several resources for us to collectively execute a public health campaign, including a campaign document, English and Spanish templates for social media posts and text messages for districts to send to their communities. Please help us by participating in the campaign.
- Health Care System Coordination
  - Child Care licensing waivers are coming soon. Information on current child care licensing requirements can be found here. Thank you for those districts that have launched child care sites for first responders and essential personnel.
- Food Service
- TXschools.gov is now hosting MealFinder to help families locate where to find breakfast and lunch for children. Thank you for your support in getting the word out.
  - TDA is rapidly updating guidance on supporting meal service. Additional flexibility has been provided by USDA and TDA has implemented that flexibility. See the Child Nutrition section of the TEA coronavirus page.
  - Rural districts can take advantage of a TDA meal delivery service. More information is at mealstoyou.org.

- School Finance While Closed
  - School finance provisions will apply the rest of this school year as long as districts are providing instruction to students. See the Waivers & Funding section of the coronavirus website, for information on:
    - School finance adjustments being made during Coronavirus
    - Waiver / attestation application processes
    - FIRST ratings FAQ
    - Grant funding guidance
  - Be sure to document every new cost you have related to COVID-19! Without documentation, reimbursement is far less likely.

- School Boards
  - Additional guidance on required trainings and deadline extensions were included in the updated School Board FAQs.

- SPED
  - Several new SPED resources have been added on the new Special Education and Special Populations Coronavirus webpage. Additional resources include information related to ARD committees, Section 504, and evaluation and FERPA considerations.
  - Thank you to districts serving on the SPED Task Force!

- Certain Student Populations
  - Several new resources have been added on the new Special Education and Special Populations Coronavirus webpage. Guidance related to foster care and military connected students, in addition to information for students experiencing homelessness has been posted.
  - Updated English Learner FAQs posted on Thursday, including guidance on the TELPAS and TELPAS Alternate assessment.

- Teacher Certification & Educator Preparation
  - Several requirements for teacher certification have been waived adjusted. Details are posted here.

- Teacher and Employee Issues
  - Guidance regarding educator evaluation and non-renewals was updated, including guidance on student and teacher interactions while in a virtual environment.
  - Remember to seek a waiver if desired related to educator appraisals.

- Assessment
  - Assessment guidance is updated every few days. Please check the coronavirus website’s assessment section for the most-up-to-date information.
- **Guidance** related to grading and graduation requirements posted on March 30.
  - FitnessGram requirements have been **waived** for this year.
- **Accountability**
  - An **Accountability FAQ** was posted on April 2.
    - For August 2020 accountability ratings, formal ratings for all districts will be “not-rated.”
  - A **School Improvement FAQ** on changes to intervention requirements also posted on April 2.
  - Included is an initial announcement of a new grant for “Targeted Improvement” campuses to support instructional continuity (question #7 in the FAQ).
    - This Instructional Continuity Grant will be released on April 6.
- **Instructional Continuity**
  - Our Instructional Continuity **website** is updated daily with an FAQ, LOTS of resources, recording webinars, and much more.  All optional.
  - Some updates this week included information on FERPA, early childhood, guidance on grading and graduation, and introducing a website highlighting the COVID-19 resources by ESC Region.
  - Thank you to the superintendents of Wylie, Garland, Sinton, Hawkins, and Weimar ISDs for highlighting their district’s approaches to instructional continuity!
  - On next Tuesday’s call, we will be doing a deep dive on optional at-home instructional resources being made available for all school systems in Texas. We previewed a first look at this resource on Wednesday’s call.
- **April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month**
  - The **Guidance on Educator and Staff Issues** provides information regarding assessing and reporting child abuse and neglect.
- **Discipline Data Deadline Extended**
  - The 2019 Discipline Data Validation compliance review deadline has been **extended** past April 3. A new deadline will be announced soon.
- **FEMA FAQs**
  - FAQs on FEMA-related issues was posted, including guidance for school boards on developing policies to support reimbursement processes.
- **U.S. Congress 2020 CARES Act**
  - Texas is estimated to receive between 1 to 1.5 billion in funding. The exact amount is unknown at this time.
  - At this time, we do not know how these funds will be distributed.