



Seattle Education Association Frequently Asked Questions Regarding SPS School Closure - COVID-19 Response

This page will be updated with information regarding the impacts of the SPS school closure on our SEA members and larger school communities. Our goal is to provide our SEA members with up to date and accurate information. This page will be updated as new information becomes available.

This list isn't a comprehensive list of all the issues we are working on (there are many), but rather questions where we have clear answers to at this time.

NOTE: If you're not receiving emails from us, please send your updated contact information to phensley@washingtonea.org

If you have any other questions, please email sea@washingtonea.org.

Foundation for Working Families

Help union families suffering economic hardship amid the crisis.

Donate to Foundation for Working Families (<https://www.wslc.org/ffwf/>)

Your contribution can have a significant impact for our SEA members and other union members who need help during this time.

DONATE

Be a part of the SEA family.

<https://www.washingtonea.org/eJoin/>



April 6, 2020 – 10AM Update

Today's CARES Act Q&A: [1-time payment.](#)

Q: How did the Evergreen Freedom Foundation (EFF) get my home email address?

A: *EFF makes a Public Records Request under the Public Records Act. SEA does not provide email addresses.*

The Freedom Foundation will not stop in its attempts to weaken our union. Their recent email message to many of our members across the state is just one more in a line of failed attempts to chip away at our strength. This anti-union foundation uses every news hook it can to try and weaken our union. However, in just the past three weeks, our members have seen what we can do and what we can achieve when we act collectively to affect positive change in the work that we love doing.

Substitutes

Q: I am a substitute who qualified for pay under the MOA. Since I typically receive no pay during school out-of-session breaks, traditional holidays, winter break, Easter, Christmas, etc, can I take an outside job during those times?

A: *Yes, you can work during the breaks and holidays.*

Q: I am a sub and Under the MOA I am only paid for two days a week. Can I work another job during the week?

A: *Yes, but you can't work another job for the same hours you're getting paid by the district.*

Follow this link for more Sub FAQs: bit.ly/SubFAQs

Coronavirus and Older Adults: [Your Questions Answered](#)

Student and Family Contacts During COVID-19 Closure FAQ

Many members have asked about the use of personal devices (like phones and laptops) to contact students and families. SEA put together an FAQ and shared it with the district for input. The district's response was to send out a brief note on how to block your number from those you call. That effort by the district was insufficient and does not provide the information you need. Please read the following FAQs.

Q: Must I use my personal cell phone to call my students and families?

- *No, nor do you need to use your personal computer to make contacts.*
- *The problem is that most of our classified staff do not have access to district provided technology to work from home and so they feel using their own phones is the only option.*
- *Talk with your supervisor about what the district will provide you to accomplish the work you are asked to do.*

Q: Can I use my personal phone to call my students and their families?

- *SEA/WEA generally discourages use of personal phones for school business.*
 - *Using your personal cell phone creates a record under the Public Records Act.*
 - *Under the Public Records Act (PRA), school business emails and phone logs are subject to Public Records Request (PRR).*

- *This means your complete phone log may be examined by a public records officer.*
- *There are rules/laws about maintaining these records under the PRA that you must follow.*
- ***Before you use your personal phone, clarify with your principal exactly what the district will want you to retain for their records.***
- *Use of your personal computer or private email for conducting school business can make your computer and private email subject to PRA as well.*

Q: How do I maintain frequent contact with students and families during this COVID-19 crisis?

- *You can use your district provided laptop for contacts when your students have access to technology and the internet.*
- *You can communicate with students and families via Schoology and the other portals provided and maintained by the district.*
- *You can use district email to send and receive messages.*
- *Microsoft Teams is a team conferencing app that allows groups of people to meet and talk with video (if preferred) in a virtual meeting setting. You could set up a parent conference in the app and send a link to the parent, for example.*
- *Microsoft Team training is rolling out now. You should have received an email with dates of trainings.*
- *The district is ready to support Microsoft Teams (MT) and has license for MT. this program should already be available on your district provided laptop (for certs).*
- *The district will not support use of Zoom and Skype and prefers that employees do not use these programs for school business.*

Q: How can I help students and families get technology access?

- *Assess the level of access available to your students and their families.*
- *Do they have a computer or tablet? If they have a graduating senior and need equipment, tell them to contact their principal. These students have been prioritized for help.*
- *Do they have internet access? Local internet providers are offering free internet service to qualifying people during this crisis and families may be able to get internet access through one of these.*
- *Some families have nothing but phone access and even this is sometimes limited. There are programs that provide basic phones for very little or free. Here is site maintained by the City of Seattle with information on free or reduced cost phones: <https://www.seattle.gov/tech/services/free-and-discounted-devices/discount-smart-phones>*
- *In some cases, your school or the district may be able to provide temporary equipment to families based on need. Talk with your principal about these family needs. The site link above may have options as well.*

Q: How can I use my cell phone without getting into the PRA situation?

- *The short answer is you can't.*
- *The district has suggested to some employees that they use *67 to block their number from appearing to the receiver.*
 - *You are still subject to PRA (see FAQ above).*
 - *Using *67 to block your number also has the disadvantage of preventing the student and family from responding to your call.*
- *Google Voice and Talkatone are two apps/programs that allow you to make calls from your cell phone without revealing your number. These work by assigning a new phone number to your account that appears when you use the app.*
 - *Calls will come back to you, but the sender does not have your personal number.*

- *The app may have the means to provide a log of business use in the event an information request is made, but it must conform to the legal requirements of the PRA.*
- *The district does not support these alternative voice call programs and is not recommending their use, but the district does have to explain what it needs under the PRA if you use these apps.*

Q: What does district policy say about contacting students through means other than the portals provided by the district?

- *District policy speaks to the proper use of district systems, primarily in terms of network security, student safety, and ethics.*
- *There are policies about maintaining professional boundaries with student that will apply.*
- *District training in the use of Microsoft Teams includes some discussion on setting behavioral norms for students and adults while in MT meetings.*
- *Keep in mind that all professional standards and boundaries apply whenever you make contact with students and families.*

April 3, 2020 – 10AM Update

If you aren't receiving emails from us, please send your updated contact information to phensley@washingtonea.org

Collective action by SEA members effectively pushed back against the SPS directive to sign up to provide childcare during the COVID-19 pandemic.

SEA members are dedicated to our students and the frontline workers in this public health crisis. We expect the Mayor and the District to identify more appropriate methods for staffing childcare centers.

SEA will continue to monitor the situation and keep all of you updated.

Please click [HERE](#) for more information.

Q. Is the District requiring SPS employees to staff childcare sites?

A: *No, the Superintendent sent out an email to all employees stating that SPS employees will not be staffing childcare sites.*

Q: Will Spring Break still be April 13-17?

A: *Yes. If you normally do NOT work during breaks then you will NOT work during Spring Break. Staff who normally work during breaks would need to work or take vacation days.*

Q. What are the expectations for certificated staff regarding Continuity of Learning?

A: *Based on the SPS document Educator Guidance and Expectations for Continuity of Learning, administrators can require weekly staff meetings. They also can require*

weekly PLC/grade level teams to coordinate tiered instruction and support for students, and to collaborate as departments/programs to develop a schedule.

The focus of those meetings should be on Continuity of Learning. The language your union contract (Collective Bargaining Agreement) is still in effect. Specifically, meetings can be found in The CBA for Certificated Non-Supervisory Employees Article IX Workday, Workload, Assignment and Scheduling of Employees, Section A., 6.

Staff have always been required to have lessons, but not detailed lesson plans like when you were student teaching.

Staff are to connect with their families and students. Assigning classes, levels and grades to one teacher should be based on who they normally work with.

There was a shift in expectations that happened as of March 30 with new guidance from OSPI (which is following guidance from the federal government). That guidance states that since we are now in a long-term closure, districts are expected to provide opportunities for remote learning. (This does NOT mean that teachers are expected to provide 6-7 hours of instruction and does not mean that you are all now meant to be expert online instructors!)

There is an OSPI communication that outlines a sample learning plan to give you an idea of the expectation [HERE](#).

OSPI Supt. Chris Reykdal also put out a Youtube video that does an awesome job of clarifying the expectations coming from the state. You can watch it [HERE](#).

Digital PD Opportunities

SPS created a site intended to be “a comprehensive resource for online professional development opportunities and incentives for Seattle Public Schools employees.” There are resources relevant to Certs, Paras, and SAEOPs.

Please start here: <https://eln.seattleschools.org/pdresources>

The following **FREE** digital Professional Development opportunities are most relevant to our classified SpEd and ELL staff and provide (at minimum) proof of participation for PD credit tracking, though some provide clock hours that can be applied toward CE credits or the WA State Paraeducator Certificate.

Other State resources: [Digital PD](#)

NEA Member Benefits

As part of our membership, NEA Member Benefits is working around the clock to help members with resources and information on how to make smart financial decisions. Check out their [COVID-19 Financial Relief resource page](#).

ESB providing additional guidance for preparation programs for educator candidates

Because of challenges from COVID-19, providers are creating plans, recruiting and admitting the next group of educator candidates. While candidates are required to take a basic skills assessment, they may choose to submit evidence of taking an alternative or equivalent basic skills test. Prep programs can offer a conditional acceptance to those who have not yet taken the basic skills test or full acceptance to those who have completed the requirement. Some candidates may be eligible for a one-year emergency certificate. Check the [WEST assessment website](#) for guidelines on test center closings and rescheduling procedures. There is also [new guidance](#) to support candidates for candidates and for prep programs that are being impacted by COVID-19. Find more information on dual [endorsement](#) questions/requirements and [emergency certificates](#). Most organizations that process fingerprints are not open. OSPI is providing [guidance](#) on how to handle the interim. Professional Educator Advisory Board meetings are continuing online during this time.

Resources for students preparing for Advanced Placement exams

[AP test preparation classes](#) are available online for students who are completing their AP courses. More AP information will be available by April 3.

Community Resources

Inspirus Credit Union has unsecured \$2500 loans to credit union members
<https://www.inspiruscu.org/community/emergency-relief>

BECU has unsecured \$1000 loans to credit union members
<https://www.becu.org/support/financial-relief>

April 1, 2020 – 10AM Update



[Assistance for Union Families in Need](#) — The Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO, is urging all organizations and individuals interested in helping union families suffering economic hardship amid the COVID-19 outbreak in Washington State to make contributions to the Foundation for Working Families, a nonprofit formed by the WSLC and its affiliated unions to assist union families in times of hardship or disaster. Click here to [make a contribution online](#) or mail a check to the Foundation for Working Families, 321 16th Ave S., Seattle, WA, 98144. The FFWF is a 501(c)(3) organization — federal tax ID 91-1702271 — and all donations are tax-deductible charitable contributions. **Your contribution can have a significant impact for our SEA members and other union members who need help during this time.**

Families can apply for FFWF assistance by [applying online](#) or downloading the [Hardship Assistance Form](#). Assistance is restricted to union members and their families. For more information about the FFWF, call Karen White at (360) 570-5169.

Online Professional Development continues

The WEA's Special Education Support Center and Inclusionary Practices Project are offering courses online, in real-time, via Zoom.

The schedule of courses and registration information for the week of March 30 is [attached](#). Clock hours will be provided and courses are free. Course capacity is limited to 300; registrants will receive the Zoom link at the completion of their registration.

The WEA will provide 5 more weeks of courses in this format, and will possibly extend, depending on the duration of the closures. Weekly schedules will be [available here](#).

Q: My principal is telling me to use Teams and Schoology. Where can I get more information?

A: *The District sent an email to staff titled, **Enhanced online teaching and learning**, that outlines the integration of Microsoft Teams (Teams) and Schoology. This is intended to assist with educator-student communication, monitoring student learning, sharing live lessons and staying connected during the extended closure in a secure way.*

The District has scheduled several live webinars to assist educators with using these tools. All SPS teaching staff are auto enrolled into a Schoology course that will host supporting materials and instruction. The course will be continuously updated to support staff learning and to provide relevant resources.

The District is recommending staff use only District tools, Schoology and Teams, in communicating with families/students for the protection of both staff and students.

Q. I'm a cert. What curriculum and materials should I be using?

A: *All teaching staff should have received an email from the district titled, **SPS Guidance and Expectations for Continuity of Learning**. The email outlines roles, expectations, methods and frequency for instruction. Your building should be holding discussions about what this will look like in practice.*

March 31, 2020 – 10AM Update

WEA COVID-19 update includes: Information about continuous learning, using technology, a third federal aid package passed, and more...check out the latest info at: <https://www.washingtonea.org/covid-19/>

SUBSTITUTES

Q: Is there a way for us to donate sick time hours to our subs?

A: Under current Washington State rules, sick leave sharing can only occur when an employee is sick and needs additional leave. If you are able, please consider contributing to the Washington State Labor Council's Foundation for Working Families to support union members during this crisis. Donate online at <https://www.wslc.org/ffwf/>

Q: I am a sub. What has been agreed to regarding sub pay?

A: You either have to be in a current 45+ day position; or, have qualified for SEBB by having worked 630+ hours each of the last 2 school years and having worked 200+ hours during the current school year.

Subs who will be compensated by the district were notified by district email last Thursday afternoon. If you didn't receive an email from SPS and you think you meet the criteria, please let us know.

SPS has agreed to compensate about 200 subs. We are continuing to fight for the remaining subs to make them economically whole. Access to unemployment benefits has expanded and the rules have changed a few times recently so please check this page frequently: <https://esd.wa.gov/newsroom/covid-19>

To stay informed, make sure you are receiving Seattle Substitute Association emails and sign up for our Facebook page - Seattle Substitute Association. If you are not signed up as an SEA member, this is a good time to join – click the link at the top of this FAQ.

EVALUATIONS

Q: I saw that a previous Q&A addressed certs regarding comprehensive evals. What if a cert is on a focused cycle like myself?

A: Classroom teachers in the focus cycle of evaluation that based on the evidence gathered to date were "distinguished" or "proficient" even if the observations have not been completed the evaluation will be complete.

If the assessment based on observations and evidence collected points to "unsatisfactory" or "basic" then every effort will be made to complete the evaluation. Evaluators should move the employee to the comprehensive cycle for 2020-21.

You can find the full language in the MOA accessible [HERE](#)

Q: If we are not on comprehensive supervision evaluation, and we have had an observation by our supervisor earlier this year, is there anything more we have to do? What about next year's contracts? They are supposed to come out in May. Will we be getting them at that time?

A: For Non-Classroom Certificated employees, on either focus or comprehensive cycle of evaluation, if the rating prior to closure was "distinguished" or "proficient" then that is the rating you will receive when your evaluator completes your evaluation.

If you were "Basic" or "Unsatisfactory" your evaluator shall complete your evaluation. If the evaluator has not completed the number of observations required before the deadline for evaluations, June 10, then no summative evaluation score will be documented for the 2019-20 school year. Full available in the MOA accessible [HERE](#)

Since your evaluator did not complete the two required observations, unless they do by June 10, then the above will apply. You could also upload evidence into eVal. We are assuming contracts will come out on May 30, but things are very fluid.

SEBB supplemental long-term disability insurance enrollment moved to fall 2020

The one-time enrollment opportunity for supplemental long-term disability (LTD) insurance has been moved from May 2020 to the fall 2020 annual open enrollment due to the current COVID-19 situation and its effect on school employees.

During the 2020 LTD enrollment opportunity only, school employees who had prior continuous LTD coverage that ended on Dec. 31, 2019, will receive credit towards SEBB's 12-month pre-existing condition exclusion period. This incentive is only for the 2020 annual open enrollment. Employees who did not have prior LTD coverage will have their 12-month pre-existing condition exclusion period begin on the effective date of their supplemental LTD coverage.

Supplemental LTD coverage elected during the 2020 annual open enrollment will be effective Jan. 1, 2021.

Employees can enroll online using SEBB My Account. Evidence of insurability (proof of good health) is not required during the 2020 plan year when enrolling for the first time in SEBB LTD coverage.

State considers flexibility for graduating seniors

The State Board of Education is considering emergency rules that will give districts additional flexibility to waive certain state credit requirements for high school graduation. To get the waiver, districts will need to complete a simple application and demonstrate a good faith effort to address core course requirements and credit deficiencies. Districts that receive the waiver will have the authority to waive credits on an individual basis for seniors who were on track to graduate this school year. The rules would not excuse students from completing a High School and Beyond Plan or local graduation requirements.

The board expects to adopt program rules at its special meeting on April 8 and hopes to launch the application for districts by the middle of April.

March 30, 2020 – 10AM Update

Memorandum of Agreement (MOA)

To address the many impacts of the school closure, SEA governance and staff negotiated a Memorandum of Agreement with SPS that sets a foundation for economic and employment security and addresses the health and safety concerns of our members. SEA took the member input from the Thought Exchange in reaching this agreement. We heard that the biggest concerns from members were around safety and economic security during this period of uncertainty.

Some highlights:

- *We secured compensation for subs who are currently 'staffed' in temporary positions over 45 days, as well as subs who worked 630 hours (half-time) for both the 2017-18 and 2018-19 school years, and who also worked at least 200 hours this year.*
- *Certificated and Classified FTE employees currently in a paid status will continue to receive contracted pay.*
- *Any employee in a high-risk category as defined by Public Health and has a doctor's note stating they should remain at home, will be allowed to work remotely **with no impact to leave.***

You can access the final MOA [HERE](#).

RESOURCES:

WEA COVID -19

Washington Schools & Coronavirus: What You Should Know

<https://www.washingtonea.org/covid-19/>

Office Depot/OfficeMax Discount Program

NEA Member Benefits website: <https://www.neamb.com/products/nea-office-depot-officemax-discount-program>

SUBSTITUTES:

Q: I'm a sub who isn't covered by the MOA. What should I know about unemployment insurance?

A: *The situation is changing each day. Check the COVID-19 page on the Employment Services Dept. (ESD) website: <https://esd.wa.gov/newsroom/covid-19>*

Benefit levels are increasing and part-timers may be covered, due to the federal stimulus package. Apply and continue to file weekly claims, even if your claim was denied. Under anticipated rule changes, ESD will go back and re-determine eligibility and weekly benefit amounts. Work search requirements are on hold, and you should

request 'standby' status. Sign up for alerts to get the latest information from ESD by clicking [HERE](#).

Q: I'm a sub. Under the MOA, is my pay retroactive? What about the 1 week of unemployment benefits I already received?

A: *If a sub qualifies to be paid during the closure based on the provisions of the MOA, they will be paid retroactively from the date of the closure. If anyone has received payments from unemployment benefits, they may need to repay any amount received.*

EVALUATIONS:

Q: How does the closure impact my evaluation?

A: *The Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) that SEA and SPS agreed to has a section on Evaluations for both certificated and classified staff. Access the MOA at <https://www.seattlewea.org/>. If you have questions about the MOA, send an email to SEA at sea@washingtonea.org.*

March 27, 2020 – 9AM Update

Learning Focus During the Closure

Following guidance from OSPI, and facing an extended school closure, we know that learning for our students must continue. SEA is continuing to meet with the District to partner on how this is implemented and the impact to members. We also know that members have already been communicating with families, providing learning opportunities for students, and finding innovative ways to support our Seattle community since the closure.

OSPI clearly stated in their March 23 update: *“Further guidance will be grounded in compassion, communication, and common sense; rather than the traditional compliance measures we are all familiar with in our education community.”*

If you haven't already, please take a look at the linked OSPI bulletin [here](#). It includes a sample plan that Districts can create in partnership with labor unions and stakeholders moving forward. We hope that focusing on this will allow us to provide the clarity, flexibility, and focus on equity our community needs in this challenging time.

For our paraeducator members, here are two pieces of news we think will interest you.

1. The Professional Educators Standards Board (PESB) has issued emergency rules surrounding the paraeducator Fundamental Course of Study (FCS). If SPS did not complete paraeducator training this year, it has until June 20, 2021 to provide the full four courses of training.

2. PESB is offering a webinar at 10 a.m. on Tuesday, March 31, to share updates and answer questions about the paraeducator certificate program. [Register here](#). If you can't attend, the webinar will be recorded and posted to the [PESB YouTube page](#).

Q: As a substitute, would my pay under the MOA be retroactive? Will I get my sick leave back? What do I do about the 1 week of unemployment I collected?

A: If a sub qualifies to be paid during the closure based on the provisions of the MOA, then they will be paid retroactively from the date of the closure. If anyone has received payments from unemployment benefits, they should contact the Employment Services Department to determine if they need to repay any amount received.

Q: If a sub is being paid, will these hours count towards retirement credits, sick leave accrual and SEBB eligibility?

A: Yes, these hours will count in the same way their regular hours with the district would have counted.

Q: Is there any possibility the hours worked rules will be loosened to allow part-time employees to collect unemployment? How will the federal unemployment insurance enhancements work?

A: The pending federal legislation would expand unemployment eligibility for many workers, including part-time workers, if signed into law. The Washington State Employment Security Department is updating as new information becomes available. Check out their webpage at <https://esd.wa.gov/newsroom/covid-19> for the latest information and/or sign up for their automatic alerts by clicking [HERE](#).

Q: As a cert that's on the comprehensive eval, does this mean I will not be getting observed anymore this year and that what I received on my first observation will be my final score?

A: If you are on comprehensive evaluation, and your performance to date is "distinguished" or "proficient," that is the rating you will receive and your evaluation will be considered complete even if the required observations have not been completed. Observations are not considered the whole body of evidence and you could still upload evidence into eVal for consideration.

Q: What are expectations for completing report cards?

A: SPS will be sending communication to all principals regarding reports cards with due dates and expectations. 2nd trimester grades will still need to be completed utilizing data collected up until the date of the closure, March 11. If there are barriers to anyone being able to complete report cards, please work with your administrator to troubleshoot.

Q: Will I be able to access my building to retrieve materials for planning?

A: SPS is developing appropriate protocols in accordance with public health recommendations for educators to enter buildings to retrieve necessary materials for planning.

Q: Why is a doctor's note required?

A: *No member in a high-risk category will be required to work on site with a doctor's note. This is required so that the District can maintain basic levels of staffing to meet essential District needs. Most doctors will be able to send a note electronically without requiring a visit.*

Q. **When will minimum standards for distance learning be issued by OSPI and what will be required for reporting?**

A. *We don't anticipate that new guidance will be released until the week of March 30.*

Informational Webinar: Answers about Unemployment and COVID-19

Monday, March 30 at Noon
Unemployment Law Project
<https://zoom.us/j/417798647>

Mental Health/Stress Supports

There are many stressors as we are adjusting to the new, current, normal during a time of uncertainty and change. Here are a few resources that may be helpful:

- Seattle Public School resource: [Washington State Employee Assistance Program \(Login required\)](#) More resources available on the general "WA State EAS" page
- National Alliance on Mental Illness: [NAMI COVID-19 Information and Resources](#)
- American Psychiatric Association: [APA Coronavirus Resources](#)
- Disaster Distress Helpline: Call 1-800-985-5990 or text TalkWithUs to 66746
- Crisis Textline: text TALK to 741741

March 25, 2020 – 6pm

SEA/SPS MOA SUMMARY

SEA and SPS have been meeting to address the impacts to working conditions due to the closure. SEA took the input from members from the Thought Exchange in reaching this agreement. We heard that the biggest concerns from members were around safety and economic security during this period of uncertainty. This MOA addresses many of our most pressing issues, and we will continue to meet with the district during this dynamic situation to address issues around the closure as they may arise.

[Click HERE to view the MOA Summary](#)

- **SEA Thought Exchange Report**

Thank you to all the members who took the time to provide input on the Thought Exchange survey around remote work options. The link below will take you to the

interactive summary report where you can view the major themes, read the highest rated thoughts, and learn more about fellow union members' thoughts as we transition into this longer-term closure.

<https://my.thoughtexchange.com/report/6faba849ca720627a50408d54dad80d6>

Washington Schools & Coronavirus: What You Should Know Latest news and FAQs from WEA Members

<https://www.washingtonea.org/covid-19/>

- **Freedom Foundation's new campaign**

While WEA members are rising to the challenge and working to support our students and communities, the anti-public education Freedom Foundation is spamming them with anti-union propaganda. It's an incredibly insensitive and cynical move, even for the [Freedom Foundation and its wealthy, anti-union corporate funders](#). Targeting WEA members' personal email and home addresses, the Freedom Foundation is misrepresenting student health curriculum legislation that recently passed the Legislature. If you receive any mailings, spam, or calls, please let us know.

- **What is a public records request?**

The [Public Records Act](#) provides the people with broad rights of access to public records. The purpose of the act is to allow people to be informed about governmental decisions and therefore help keep the government accountable ([WAC 44-14-01003](#)). The act declares that it must be "liberally construed" to promote the public policy of open government ([RCW 42.56.030](#)).

- **Parents are requesting that I use Zoom to allow students to see one another online. Are there any legal issues with doing this? Some teachers (around the United States) are saying that their administration said not to use Zoom with students.**

The We are working on an answer about these systems and issues with using them. Please continue to communicate with families in a manner in which you are familiar. (Please review the memo from SPS dated 3/18/2020 for more information.)

- **Can Subs use more than 10 days of sick leave during the closure given that the sub office stated we can only use 10 days a year?**

There is no 10-day limit.

- **Will these days so far be counted as paid non working days for those who are already on leave? Since no one is working at this time will those who are on FMLA have to use their sick time while no one else is?**

As each member's leave situation is unique, each instance will need to be looked at on a case-by-case basis.

- **Who do I call with questions about medical insurance?**

Please visit the Health Care Authority website for the latest, official info on SEBB. <https://www.hca.wa.gov/about-hca/school-employees-benefits-board-sebb-program>

- **What about my grievance timeline?**

All timelines and decisions are frozen until further notice.

March 24, 2020 – 6pm

- **I received a mailing from the Health Care Authority concerning my rights to COBRA coverage. What does it mean?**

This mailing is informational only and required by law as part of the transition to SEBB. This does not mean that anyone is losing SEBB coverage.

Reminder: WEA was able to secure a change to ensure that those who had coverage on Feb. 29 will continue to have SEBB employer benefits through the shutdowns and disruptions.

- **Is there an expectation that we call families on our own private phones? What if I use my personal device for work related purposes? Updated from 3/20**

Best practice is to not check personal email on district computers and to avoid using your personal devices for work related purposes. If you do use your personal device, any records that are created are subject to the Public Records Act.

It is not expected that you use your personal devices or personal contact information to communicate with students and/or families. However, if you are no longer able to use a previously used method, such as district phone calls, and you're not able to or comfortable with using a personal device, then it is encouraged for educators to use one of the other district provided tools such as Schoology.

We know that these may not work effectively for all forms of communications. Please let us know if there are specific needs regarding communicating with families that cannot be met with the district provided tools.

- **Paraeducator Fundamental Course of Study Updated**

We'll start with good news on the required four days of professional development for the Paraeducator Fundamental Course of Study (FCS). The Professional Educator Standards Board released new guidance today for the state's Paraeducator Certificate program. The update gives details for next year's requirements, but specifically clarifies issues around this year's school closures. The PESB announcement says that all "school districts affected by the required closures have until the end of next school year to provide all four days of training on the FCS."

Districts that chose to offer the complete FCS training this year will be reimbursed for the additional training days at a rate of \$218 per completed day of training per paraeducator. More details about PESB's COVID-19 guidance can be found [here](#).

- **OSPI says 'education must continue' during coronavirus school closures. What does this mean for SEA members?**

There is information in the OSPI guidance that needs clarification. SEA and WEA governance are in contact with OSPI to get more details. We will update SEA members as soon as we know.

- **In addition to the links found here (<https://www.seattlewea.org/coronavirus-covid-19-info/>), what other support is available?**

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*The **Foundation for Working Families** is a non-profit organization established by the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO and its affiliates to assist union families in Washington state in times of hardship or disaster. It has given cash assistance to hundreds of families who have suffered during flooding, wildfires, and other extraordinary circumstances. Get more info here:*

<https://www.wslc.org/ffwf/>

March 20, 2020 - 5pm

- **Our admin has scheduled an online Zoom/Microsoft Team all-staff meeting. I don't have access to WIFI or a device. What should I do?**

There is a Zoom app that members can access utilizing their smartphones. If that isn't an option, please have the members contact the principal to share the lack of access. Members should not utilize leave in these cases. We can work with

the district to ensure members have the appropriate materials to do their jobs during the closure.

- **Can the whole staff agree to waive the 2/3 vote - in order to come to a consensus for the budget vote?**

Contract language states consensus or at least a 2/3 vote. There is no need to waive the vote if they truly have consensus.

- **The second data point for WA-AIM deadline is approaching for uploading scores. Will the deadline be extended?**

OSPI has cancelled all state testing for 2019-2020, including WA-AIM.

- **Is there an expectation that we call families on our own private phones?**

It is not expected that you use your personal devices or personal contact information to communicate with students and/or families. However, if you are no longer able to use a previously used method, such as district phone calls, and you're not able to or comfortable with using a personal device, then it is encouraged for educators to use one of the other district provided tools such as Schoology.

We know that these may not work effectively for all forms of communications. Please let us know if there are specific needs regarding communicating with families that cannot be met with the district provided tools.

- **Where can I send timesheets?**

*Please correct the address for sending in substitute timesheets.
Correct address is printed on the timesheet:*

*Seattle Public Schools
Payroll MS 33-344
PO Box 34165
Seattle, WA 98124-1165*

Also, timesheets for school closures can be photographed or scanned and emailed to payroll@seattleschools.org

- **My unemployment claim has been denied. What can I do?**

On the ESD page is this notice:

<https://www.esd.wa.gov/standby-auto-denial-letters>



ALERT: Standby auto-denial letters

Updated: March 19, 2020

If you apply for standby status, you may receive an automated notice indicating your request is denied. Do not worry, that notice does not reflect the emergency rules. We are in the process of updating our computer system. You do not need to call the claims center. We are manually going through these denials on a case-by-case basis and will notify you if your claim has been accepted.

[\(back to ESD Alert center\)](#)

ALERTA

Actualización 19 de marzo de 2020

Si solicitó estar bajo el programa Listo y en Espera [Standby] es posible que reciba un aviso automatizado indicando que se le niega ese programa. No se preocupe, ese aviso no refleja los reglamentos de emergencia nuevos. Estamos actualizando nuestro sistema de computadora y esperamos se arregle eso, este fin de semana. No necesita llamar al centro de reclamos. Estamos revisando una por una esas denegaciones, caso por caso y le enviaremos una carta notificándole el estatus de su reclamo.

[\(volver a la sección de Alertas de ESD\)](#)

If you apply for standby status, you may receive an automated notice indicating your request is denied. Do not worry, that notice does not reflect the emergency rules. We are in the process of updating our computer system. You do not need to call the claims center. We are manually going through these denials on a case-by-case basis and will notify you if your claim has been accepted.

If you need additional support, you can contact:

- [Unemployment Law Project](#)

- **WEA Q&A: Coronavirus and our Schools**

[FAQ](#) information includes information about state assessments and unemployment insurance eligibility for guest educators/substitutes, including retirees.

March 19, 2020 - 5pm

- **My building still hasn't passed our budget. What should we do? updated from 3/18**

SPS sent communication to all members and principals today (3/18) around accessing digital resources to facilitate the budget process. Budget arenas are being delayed until extended until April 3rd in order to provide additional time for the budget process.

BLT bylaws dictating budget protocols should, to the extent possible, be adapted to accommodate digital feedback from all stakeholder groups.

BLT's should continue to solicit input from stakeholder groups according to BLT bylaws and make every effort possible to reach out to staff who may not have

access to digital resources (e.g. phone/text). SEA will provide AR's updates members lists with email/phone #s.

BLT's will make accommodations for online voting utilizing email or other digital methods agreed upon. Recording of the votes must still be compiled by SEA represented staff. Budgets still need 2/3 approval to pass.

- **Update: Paraeducator Fundamental Course of Study**

The Professional Educator Standards Board released new guidance today for the state's Paraeducator Certificate program. The update gives details for next year's requirements, but specifically clarifies issues around this year's school closures. The PESB announcement says that all "school districts affected by the required closures have until the end of next school year to provide all four days of training on the FCS."

Districts that chose to offer the complete FCS training this year will be reimbursed for the additional training days at a rate of \$218 per completed day of training per paraeducator. More details about PESB's COVID-19 guidance can be found [here](#).

- **John Stanford Center is closed again next week, where can turn in my time sheets and get paid?**

*Mail Time Sheets to:
Seattle Public Schools
Attention Monica Menchaca Mail-Stop 33-157
PO Box 34165 Seattle, Wa 98124*

- **How is the school closure going to impact my retirement?**

Contact the Department of Retirement Systems link [here](#).

The Department of Retirement Systems has closed for in-person visits and services, though they continue to process retirement applications and benefit payments as normal. DRS encourages people to use its online services for customer account access, webinars, information resources and tools to apply for retirement online. Email and telephone services will continue during regular business hours. Expect longer wait time for calls and use email to contact them if possible.

- **How is the school closure going to impact my retirement?**

The Health Care Authority has also closed its lobby to visitors, and will not offer in-person customer services for SEBB, PEBB or Apple Health clients. HCA encourages people to use [online and phone options](#).

- **I left my laptop/ important materials in my school. Will I be able to pick up items?**

Please contact your building administrator.

March 18, 2020 – 5pm

- **What are my work expectations?**

SPS sent communication today in regards to work expectations. In summary, all certificated classroom staff are expected to continue communication with students/families through methods that you would usually use to check in at least twice a week. This may include correspondence regarding work sent home last week, friendly check-ins, or communication around your school community. At this time, it is not required that you provide new content, lessons, or work.

It is expected to reasonably check and respond to email with your school/program communities including correspondence from your supervisor.

Employees should also access online professional development:

<https://eln.seattleschools.org/pdresources/#/>

<https://www.washingtonea.org/home/events/>

<http://specialeducationsupportcenter.org/news/online-courses-about-inclusionary-practices/>

SEA currently is working with SPS to determine appropriate work expectations for our other staff.

Please review the memo [here](#) for more information.

- **My building still hasn't passed our budget. What should we do? updated from 3/17**

SPS sent communication to all members and principals today (3/18) around accessing digital resources to facilitate the budget process. Budget arenas are being delayed until April 3rd in order to provide additional time for the budget process.

BLT bylaws dictating budget protocols should, to the extent possible, be adapted to accommodate digital feedback from all stakeholder groups.

BLT's should continue to solicit input from stakeholder groups according to BLT bylaws and make every effort possible to reach out to staff who may not have access to digital resources (e.g. phone/text). SEA will provide AR's updates members lists with email/phone #s.

BLT's will make accommodations for online voting utilizing email or other digital methods agreed upon. Recording of the votes must still be compiled by SEA represented staff. Budgets still need 2/3 approval to pass.

- **Are there updates to SEBB Eligibility?**

The Health Care Authority has released guidance on maintaining SEBB eligibility during COVID-19 closures based on SB 6189, which was signed by Gov. Inslee today.

During the COVID-19 state of emergency, school employees who were eligible for SEBB at the beginning of the emergency (Feb. 29) will maintain their SEBB eligibility. During any closures or disruptions of school operations:

- *If quarantined for self or if needed to care for quarantined family member by public health or health care provider, or*
- *To take care of a child when their school or daycare is closed.*

When regular school operations resume, SEBB eligibility will remain if the employee returns to the same schedule or if their new schedule would have resulted in 630 hours had it been in effect for the entire year.

HCA has noted that if school employees access unemployment benefits after being put on standby by their district, that act alone will not end their benefit eligibility. In other words, usage of unemployment benefits will not be considered a termination of employment. We are not expecting many school employees to be placed on standby, but this clarification may be useful for substitutes or other intermittent workers.

- **How can I access unemployment benefits?**

Employment Security is posting Q&As about accessing unemployment benefits. Here is a summary of two relevant questions related to school employees:

Q. The school I work at is closed due to the Governor's order to close. Am I eligible for unemployment benefits?

A. If you are being paid by the school while your school is closed, you can apply for benefits, but you may be considered fully employed and not eligible. If your school is not paying you while it is closed, you may be eligible for benefits. You will have to be able, available and actively seeking work during each week you claim, unless you are approved for standby. Eligibility decisions are made on a case-by-case basis.

Q. I am a substitute teacher who is no longer able to secure work with a school because of the closures. Am I eligible for unemployment benefits?

A. You may be eligible for unemployment. You will have to be able, available and actively seeking other suitable work during each week you claim. Eligibility decisions are made on a case-by-case basis.

WEA is continuing conversations with the state's Employment Security Department to better understand how they determine eligibility on a case-by-case basis.

- **What happens to my PESB Certificate?**

PESB will issue emergency certificates for aspiring educators to meet assessment requirements

The Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB) has filed emergency rules allowing teachers to be eligible for an emergency certificate while they work to complete their assessment requirements.

OSPI will issue the emergency certificate upon recommendation from a candidate's educator preparation program. Programs may recommend candidates for an emergency certificate if the candidate has completed all program requirements, including coursework and clinical practice, with the exception of one or more of the assessment requirements.

This emergency teacher certificate is valid for one year, and may be reissued for one additional year upon program recommendation. A teacher could practice with this certificate anywhere in Washington State as it is not district specific.

Once a candidate has completed all assessment requirements, their preparation program can then recommend them for residency certification. More information is available [here](#).

March 17, 2020 – 5pm

- **My building still hasn't passed our budget. What should we do?**

BLT bylaws dictating budget protocols should, to the extent possible, be adapted to accommodate digital feedback from all stakeholder groups.

BLT's should continue to solicit input from stakeholder groups according to BLT bylaws and make every effort possible to reach out to staff who may not have access to digital resources (e.g. phone/text). SEA will provide AR's updates members lists with email/phone #s.

BLT's will make accommodations for online voting utilizing email or other digital methods agreed upon. Recording of the votes must still be compiled by SEA represented staff. Budgets still need 2/3 approval to pass.

- **What are my work expectations right now? Updated from 3/16**

All SEA members have been sent a link for members to participate in a [Thought Exchange survey](#). We are seeking feedback from our members as to what they are able to do to support student learning and to the extent possible continue their individual work. Survey will be open until Thursday 3/19.

As SPS work to determine how employees work under these extreme circumstances, SEA is committed to ensuring that educators shape what that may look like.

In the meantime, employees can continue:

- Safe Schools Training - <http://seattle.wa.safeschools.com>
- Tech Time Modules, Digital Learning Schoology Resources

UPDATED 3/17 -

- SEA members engage in additional online PD for clock hours
 - <https://www.washingtonea.org/home/events/>
 - [Inclusionary Practices - Offered by Evergreen State College](#)

- **Am I required to complete report cards at this time?**

At this time, teachers are not required to do any work on report cards.

- **Can I access school buildings during the closure?**

At this time, SEA members will not have access to their school buildings nor shall be required to do so.

- **How will the closure impact my certificate renewal?**

Certificate renewal will be extended until June 30, 2021. [Here is the link to PESB announcement.](#)

- **I am a paraprofessional and cannot complete the Foundational Course of Study.**

FCS can be rescheduled for next year. Folks can still complete the 7 online portions.

March 16, 2020 – 4pm

- **Will I continue to get paid for the duration of the school closure?**

*****Classified and Certificated FTE employees and long-term substitutes will continue to receive their regular paychecks during the closure.*****

All stipends will continue to be paid.

Employees who submit time sheets for regular paychecks will continue to do so.

- **What are my work expectations during the closure?**

All SEA members will be sent out a link for members to participate in a [Thought Exchange survey](#). We are seeking feedback from our members as to what they are able to do to support student learning and to the extent possible continue their individual work.

As SPS work to determine how employees work under these extreme circumstances, SEA is committed to ensuring that educators shape what that may look like.

In the meantime, employees can continue:

- Safe Schools Training - <http://seattle.wa.safeschools.com>
- Tech Time Modules, Digital Learning Schoology Resources

- **I am a daily sub. How can I access unemployment benefits?**

Visit esd.wa.gov. There is currently a one-week waiting period, so apply ASAP.

- **How can substitutes who are not staffed receive pay?**

Substitutes who are not in staffed positions can use their accrued sick leave while schools are closed. To do this, fill in your regular timesheet to claim sick time and write 'school closure' for the reason. SEA is working on finding a solution for substitutes who use up their accrued sick leave.

- **What happens now that PD is canceled for those who need clock hours / FCS for certification?**

WEA has made a request for an emergency rule change to extend the deadline for certification requirements.

SEA members should still complete and online safe schools training and Schoology teach time resources (cert)

March 13, 2020 – 5pm

- **I am a SEA represented employee working out of the JSCEE. What are my work requirements?**

As of today, staff essential to school district operations will continue to work.

- Enrollment
- Security
- Accounting/Payroll
- Customer Service

SPS will make every effort to mitigate contact with others and maximize social distancing (i.e. enrollment services will engage with families enrolling their students via phone/email).

Non-essential staff may telecommute if possible. Understanding that work expectations for SEA members in our schools is currently under development, we advise SEA represented staff members to broadly follow the telecommuting guideline outlined by SPS.

At this time, there should be no requirement to submit documentation of work, formal clock in/clock out protocols, or updating of workplans.

These are our recommendations until there is formal agreement between SEA and SPS on consistent telecommuting guidelines for all members.

- **Where can I get the latest information on COVID-19? updated from 3/12**
 - [SEA Website](#): Continue to check our webpage, we will update regularly as new information becomes available.
 - [WEA Website](#): Updates on how WEA continues to advocate with and for you and your students. We are working on a list of questions to address testing, certification and graduation
 - [National Education Association \(NEA\) Coronavirus Resources](#)
 - [Seattle Public Schools](#)
 - [OSPI Guidance and Resources](#)
 - [Seattle - King County Public Health](#)
 - [Washington State Department of Health](#)
 - Washington State [COVID-19 Scenarios & Benefits Chart](#)
 - [Washington State Employment and Security Division](#) COVID-19 Resources
 - [AFL-CIO COVID-19 Outbreak Resources](#)

- **Staff at my school has asked about Spring Break. Is that being considered for make up time? Should they be changing any travel plans?**

The governor announced all schools in Washington State closed until April 24 the week after SPS Spring Break.

March 12, 2020 – 4pm

*****All schools will be closed until April 24th.*****

- **Where can I get the latest information on COVID-19? *updated from 3/11**
 - [SEA Website](#): Continue to check our webpage, we will update regularly as new information becomes available.
 - * [National Education Association \(NEA\) Coronavirus Resources](#) *
 - [Seattle Public Schools](#)
 - [OSPI Guidance and Resources](#)
 - [Seattle - King County Public Health](#)
 - [Washington State Department of Health](#)
 - Washington State [COVID-19 Scenarios & Benefits Chart](#)
 - [AFL-CIO COVID-19 Outbreak Resources](#)

- **Am I required to complete lesson plans during the closure? Will we be expected to work from home during the shutdown? *updated from 3/11**

At this time lesson plans are not required for the initial 2-week closure. With the closure extended until April 24th, there will be discussions with SPS around work expectations for all bargaining units.

- **What is the impact on federal programs like Headstart?**

Washington State is currently in discussion with the Federal Government to determine impacts.

- **What is the impact on city funding for preschool programs?**

Too early to determine.

- **If I receive paper checks and payroll services is impacted, will I still get paid.**

In the event of an emergency that requires the John Stanford Center for Educational Excellence to be shut down for any length of time, Payroll may not be able to print physical paychecks until the building is re-opened. Our records show that you are not enrolled in direct deposit and are receiving your pay from Seattle Public Schools in the form of a live check. In order to guarantee timely payment in case of building shutdown, Payroll would like to strongly encourage you to consider direct deposit. If you have access to Employee Self-Service, you

can sign up by following [this linked QRD](#). If you do not have access to Employee Self-Service, please follow the instructions on the direct deposit form found on the [Payroll website](#) and return it to Payroll Services as soon as possible. If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to payroll by emailing us at payroll@seattleschools.org

- **What supports are available for daily substitutes with regards to salary and benefits? Are daily substitutes eligible for unemployment?**

Because substitutes are considered at-will employees and do not have guaranteed protected rights to being assigned every day, in the past they have not qualified for unemployment. Although there have been some modifications to unemployment rules during the COVID-19 state of emergency, the Economic Securities Department has not made that adjustment. WEA staff continue to advocate and lobby for the ESD to address this and provide relief and safety net supports for our daily substitutes. It is not yet available.

Daily substitutes should have been able to earn and bank sick leave time per Washington state Law. This leave should be available for Substitutes to use during these emergency closures. In addition, should a substitute become ill with COVID-19 or some other major illness during the closure, the substitutes may qualify for PFML if they have worked at least 820 hours in all of their combined jobs and should apply to the ESD for potential relief.

Lastly, if a Substitute had qualified for SEBB benefits prior to February 29, 2020 those benefits will remain in place through the closure and as long as the substitute continues to have an employer/employee relationship with the Seattle Public Schools they will retain benefits once school resumes.

- **What will happen to state testing?**

Per OSPI all state testing has been suspended.

- **SPS stated that families will receive meal assistance. Where can I find that information?**

Starting Monday, March 16, these school sites will provide lunches for all Seattle Public Schools students Monday through Friday from 11 a.m. until 1 p.m. [Follow this link for locations.](#)

March 11, 2020, 4pm

- **Where can I get the latest information on COVID-19?**
 - [SEA Website](#): Continue to check our webpage, we will update regularly as new information becomes available.
 - [Seattle Public Schools](#)
 - [OSPI Guidance and Resources](#)
 - [Seattle - King County Public Health](#)
 - [Washington State Department of Health](#)

- [AFL-CIO COVID-19 Outbreak Resources](#)

- **With this two-week shutdown, will regular paychecks be affected? Will classified staff get paid?**

Classified and Certificated FTE employees and long-term substitutes will continue to receive their regular paychecks during the shutdown.

- **What will happen to my health insurance?**

WEA lobbyists have worked with legislators to pass legislation that will protect people's benefits during a closure. This legislation SB 6189 has passed both houses and is on the way to the Governor's desk. The legislation will require that individuals who qualified for benefits as of February 29, 2020 (the date of the Governor declaring a state of emergency) would maintain their benefits.

In addition, when the employee returns to work or school is reopened, eligibility would remain if the employee's schedule is the same as before the closure or if there is a change in schedule, if that change in schedule would have reached the 630 hour eligibility standard had it been worked during the absence/closure.

- **How will school closures impact apportionment for districts that close for COVID-19 and are not able to make up the 180 days or the 1020 hours (District wide average) before the end of the school year?**

Through OSPI Bulletin No 013-20 and No. 016-20, OSPI has stated that they will work to review and amend rules as needed in order to make sure that allocations are not reduced due to short- and long-term closure due COVID-19: "...OSPI expects districts to make every effort possible to make-up any days and instructional hours lost due to the COVID-19 outbreak, including extending the school year to June 19 if necessary. OSPI will file an emergency rule to allow the agency to waive the days and instructional hours that districts won't be able to make up after June 19. This rule will be in effect for the 2019–20 school year only. Districts should wait until they know the extent of their closures before submitting an application for a waiver. OSPI will provide more information about the submittal process within the next two months."

- **Will I have to make up the days?**

Per [OSPI](#): OSPI expects districts to make every effort possible to make-up any days and instructional hours lost due to the COVID-19 outbreak, including extending the school year to June 19 if necessary.

- **Are we adding days to the calendar?**

Per [OSPI](#): OSPI expects districts to make every effort possible to make-up any days and instructional hours lost due to the COVID-19 outbreak, including extending the school year to June 19 if necessary. OSPI will file an emergency rule to allow the agency to waive the days and instructional hours that districts won't be able to make up after June 19. This rule will be in effect for the 2019–20

school year only. Districts should wait until they know the extent of their closures before submitting an application for a waiver. OSPI will provide more information about the submittal process within the next two months.

- **I don't have enough sick leave for the duration of the closure. Will I be penalized?**

No member will be required to utilize their own leave for the duration of the closure.

- **Am I required to complete lesson plans during the closure?**

Teachers are not required to complete lesson plans or student material at this time.

- **What happens to field trips?**

All Field trips are cancelled/postponed until further notice.

- **What will happen to high school sports?**

High School Sports are governed by WIAA. The district will receive direction from them.

- **Are staff able to work at schools during the closure?**

No, for the safety of staff and the community, schools will be locked and closed at this time.

- **Will there be food distribution for students?**

Food distribution will resume Monday March 16th. Details TBA by SPS.