



NEWS!

June
2020

SUPERINTENDENT NOTES

Wow! What a hectic few months we have had since the outbreak of Covid-19. First, let me apologize for us not publishing a spring edition of E-News. About the time we were ready to go to print, our world changed and all of us have been dealing with unprecedented changes that we never thought we would have to face. In a blink of an eye and with very little warning, everything we knew as normal went out the window and now we are trying to find some sense of normalcy in our everyday lives. From the cancellation of in-person classes, NTL instruction, no spring sports and activities and the loss of year end activities such as Kindergarten Graduation, 5th and 8th grade promotion, senior trip, prom and graduation, our students have had to make a lot of sacrifices to keep their families and community safe.

I especially feel bad for the Class of 2020. All of us can remember our senior year and have fond memories of that time, but this group of young men and women have had those memories taken from them due to no fault of their own. Hopefully, they have seen the outpouring of support over the past few weeks. The Board of Education, ECHS staff and the entire community has come together to try to recognize your accomplishments. Within the last few days we have held a senior parade, and virtual graduation is taking place this weekend. The display of senior signs on the Central Office lawn was a beautiful site and there are all kinds of banners, yard signs and other displays throughout the community to honor your sacrifice.

We want you to know that we understand your frustration, we are here to help you and that we love each of you. The Class of 2020 is an awesome group and we are proud of you. Never forget, Once an Engineer, Always an Engineer!

ADULT EDUCATION

It is hard to believe we are at the beginning of June! This spring we have faced a pandemic that has been a source of caution and fractionation. In contrast, we have also witnessed a great deal of courage, generosity, kindness, and fortitude. Our community has made us proud by demonstrating adaptability, remaining flexible, and keeping a positive attitude. The faculty and staff have worked to ensure Estill County Skills U remains true to its mission. We call our center a family. In the context of this national crisis, our Skills U family has rallied and made the absolute best of a difficult situation. We admire your ability to recognize that with every setback, there is an opportunity.

To our students, good luck on your GED exams! We hope that you finish this goal strong! While you invest in your future through your studies, know that we support you and are doing everything we can to restore a sense of normalcy to our building. Our faculty and staff are second to none, and we know we will emerge from this crisis with a renewed appreciation for our comradery.

We have several information items to share with you that will impact you as students of Estill County Skills U.

- 1.) June 20th is the next GED Exam given in Estill County - - It's the LAST FREE exam! Vouchers can be received by calling 859-813-4008
- 2.) Zoom Classes offered EVERYDAY!

Amid these challenging times please do not forget your goal(s) that you sat for yourself when you first came to the Skill U Center. For some of you it was to earn your GED and for others it was to enroll into college. Remember, we are still here to help you achieve your goals! We understand the natural anxiety these challenges can cause, and we should all be mindful of our physical and mental health and well-being. We



NEWS!

June
2020
Page | 2

must take care of ourselves and each other. I assure you that we are always stronger together, and we will navigate through this to brighter days ahead.

Please stay healthy and well!

AREA TECHNOLOGY CENTER AND FACILITY CONSTRUCTION

The last few weeks have been very exciting as we are starting to see the first walls come up out of the ground as construction is in full swing on the New Estill County Area Technology Center. Codell Construction has done a fantastic job keeping the project on pace through some very difficult weather during the spring. We have a fantastic group of dedicated contractors on this project and we are thankful for their dedication and hard work. During the next few months this building will start to take shape and the Pedway to the high school is now under construction as well. This building will open August of 2021, and we are excited about the new opportunities our students will have in technical education.

The new Estill Transportation Center is also moving along rather nicely after a slow start due to adverse weather this winter. The project is around 25% complete at this time and the foundation have been poured and the building will soon be erected. This project is important to the safe transportation of our students and provides our transportation personnel with a first-class facility that they can be proud of. We expect final completion of this project sometime early this fall.

Lastly, we will be meeting with Ross Tarrant Architects on June 3 to discuss the final renovation of Estill County High School and our athletic facilities. Our community has been looking forward to this project and our Board desires to fulfill its promise to provide safety and energy upgrades to the high school, while also updating our athletic facilities that are in need of an update. These improvements include our football/soccer/track stadium, softball and baseball stadium upgrades, and new tennis courts. If all goes well we could begin construction by December 1 and be finished sometime in the spring of 2022. I will have a further update sometime this fall.

COMMUNITY EDUCATION

With schools closed many children and young people are spending all their time at home. Much of that time may be online, and often they will spend more time online than usual. Being able to connect online provides valuable opportunities to learn, play and socialize with friends and peers and access information and support and is therefore extremely important for children and young people. However, spending time online, what some call 'screen time', comes with risks.

Social networking sites, chat rooms, virtual worlds, and blogs are how teens and tweens socialize online; it's important to help your child learn how to navigate these spaces safely. Among the pitfalls that come with online socializing are sharing too much information or posting comments, photos, or videos that can damage a reputation or hurt someone's feelings.

Applying real-world judgment can help minimize those risks.

- Remind Kids That Online Actions Have Consequences
- Tell Kids to Limit What They Share
- Encourage Online Manners
- Limit Access to Your Kids' Profiles
- Talk to Kids About What They're Doing Online

Remind your children that online actions have consequences. The words kids write and the images they post have consequences offline. Kids should post only what they're comfortable with others seeing. Some of your child's profile may be seen by a broader audience than you – or they – are comfortable with, even if



NEWS!

June
2020
Page | 3

privacy settings are high. Encourage your child to think about the language they use online, and to think before posting pictures and videos, or altering photos posted by someone else. Employers, college admissions officers, coaches, teachers, and the police may view your child's posts. Remind your children that once they post it, they can't take it back. Even if you delete the information from a site, you have little control over older versions that may exist on other people's computers and may circulate online. Tell your children not to impersonate someone else. Let your kids know that it's wrong to create sites, pages, or posts that seem to come from someone else, like a teacher, a classmate, or someone they made up. Tell your kids why it's important to keep some things – about themselves, family members, and friends – to themselves. Information like their Social Security number, street address, phone number, and family financial information – say, bank account or credit card numbers – is private and should stay that way.

Limit Access to Your Kids' Profiles by using privacy settings. Many social networking sites and chat rooms have adjustable privacy settings, so you can restrict who has access to your kids' profiles. Talk to your kids about the importance of these settings, and your expectations for who should be allowed to view their profile. Get to know the social networking sites your kids use so you understand their activities. If you're concerned about risky online behavior, you may want to search the social sites they use to see what information they're posting. Are they pretending to be someone else? Try searching by their name, nickname, school, hobbies, grade, or community. Ask your kids who they're in touch with online.

Just as you want to know who your kids' friends are offline, it's a good idea to know who they're talking to online. Encourage your kids to trust their guts if they have suspicions.

Encourage them to tell you if they feel threatened by someone or uncomfortable because of something online. You can then help them report concerns to the police and to the social networking site. Most of these sites have links for users to report abusive, suspicious, or inappropriate behavior.

This information is provided by the FTC Consumer Information Site at <https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0012-kids-and-socializing-online>

For additional resources about internet safety for students contact Teresa Dawes at (606)723-2181

COUNSELING SERVICES

The Month of May was Mental Health Awareness Month. The district's mental health team worked throughout the month providing valuable mental health information to our students and families via various social media and virtual learning platforms. During these difficult times, it is important to not only take care of our physical health, but our mental and emotional well-being as well.

Looking ahead to next school year, the district's mental health team is already collaborating and developing a plan for addressing the mental health needs of our students upon re-entry to school. In addition, the district has renewed contracts with New Vista and Mountain Comprehensive Care allowing the continuation of mental health therapists from these agencies to work in the schools to address student mental health needs.

We recognize the importance of continued counseling services during this time of pandemic and social distancing. As a result, our Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor, Sonya Miller, is offering telehealth therapy for students. Telehealth services can be used on any device with a camera and microphone. If you would like more information about this for your child/teen, please contact Sonya Miller at sonya.miller@estill.kyschools.us or at (606) 723-2181.

There are several free resources available for parents to use with their children to enhance their social and emotional well-being. Second Steps is a program that offers social-emotional learning (SEL) resources for



NEWS!

June
2020
Page | 4

not only educators, but also families and the larger community. If you are interested in resources for your child/teen, you can find the information at <https://www.secondstep.org/covid19support>. They offer resources from preschool ("Early Learning") through teens ("ParenTeen Connect").

FINANCE

How Can Budgeting Help Me?

A budget is just a plan of how you are going to spend your money. Budgeting can help you reach your goals, whether that is, purchasing a big-ticket item, taking a trip, or just making sure you have enough to cover basic expenses.

Budgeting Tips

1. Zero based budgeting - This doesn't mean that you don't have any money. It simply means that you will designate a plan for all of your income. Your income minus your expenses equals zero. But remember, expenses can be actual savings account deposits.
2. Do the budget together—if you have a significant other, both of you need to be involved in a spending plan.
3. Every month is different—don't forget to plan for routine car maintenance and holidays, like birthdays and Christmas. Don't let special occasions sneak up on you. You should create a category for totally unexpected expenses - savings.
4. Begin with the most important items first - Once your basic needs are covered, food, shelter, clothes, and transportation, you can see how much you have available for other needs and wants. You may want to pay down debt that you have.
5. Trim the budget - Figure out where you can adjust items to cover the things that are a necessity. Maybe you have to spend a few dollars less on an item to be able to cover something else.
6. Stick to your budget - Realize that if you overspend your budget for one item, you will have to make adjustments in other areas.
7. Cash or credit card - If you realize that you are constantly always overspending in certain categories, you may want to use cash for those categories. Each category would have an envelope. When the envelope is empty, there is no more to spend on that category. Credit cards can be helpful in some situations, but you should strive to pay them off each month. Interest on credit cards is typically high.
8. Review and adjust - It usually takes about three months to be able to see a trend in your spending habits. Sit down with your significant other and decide where you need to make changes.

Most banks, including Citizens Guaranty Bank, offer free savings accounts very economically. You can deposit money into the savings account and only draw money out when you have to. This way, the money is not in your checking account, and you won't be tempted to spend it.

FOOD SERVICE

The Estill County Food Service is still offering breakfast and lunch to all students 18 and under. Meals are served on Monday, Wednesday, and Fridays. Each pickup day, the child will receive two meals. The locations are South Irvine Early Learning Center from 10:30-1:00. Our satellite locations are Hargett Fire Department, Mt. Crest, Mt. Carmel Christian Church, Thomas Baptist Church, Beech Grove Baptist Church, Ravenna Park, Roxie's Grocery on Barnes Mountain from 11:30-12:30. If you have any questions, please call Belinda Puckett at 726-3060.



NEWS!

June
2020
Page | 5

HEALTH SERVICES

Usually the first of June finds many looking forward to finally getting that break from school and focusing on vacation time; this school year has definitely been a different experience. As we move into summer, please continue to remember to keep you and your family safe from this coronavirus known as Covid-19. As restrictions are lifted and some activities resume, it is still imperative that we take the guidelines to heart and follow them, not only ourselves, but for everyone in our community as well.

As we continue to plan for the next school year, we want to remind everyone to continue to follow up and meet the school health requirements for the upcoming year. All Kindergarten students are required to have a current immunization certificate, school physical, eye exam and a dental exam. All incoming 6th grade students are required to have a school physical and immunization booster required for this age. These will need to be documented on a current immunization certificate as well. Also, all students who will be turning 16 are required to have a meningitis booster and the updated immunization certificate will be required for school in the fall.

Please have a wonderful and safe summer!

MAINTENANCE

With the different times we have had lately, we in the maintenance department have changed things a bit but are still doing work in our district. We have been updating the Central Office concession stand, patching walls in areas of the Central Office. The roofing project was finished and that took care of all the leaks we have had over the years. New carpet is being installed in several offices by the carpet contractors and the gym has now been painted from top to bottom by the painting contractors. With summer in full swing every day that it doesn't rain, we are mowing campus grounds along with trimming all areas that cannot be accessed with the mowers. We are continually doing repairs preventive maintenance and summer upkeep on our buildings to ensure when students and staff return everything will be running normally and efficiently.

PUPIL PERSONNEL

The Estill County School District would like to congratulate Dickie Arthur on his retirement. Dickie's served as the district DPP for 6 years. With Dickie's retirement, Tonya Isaacs will assume the role of DPP. Congratulations Dickie...We wish you well!

We will have additional news after July 1 concerning the 2020-2021 school start date.





NEWS!

June
2020
Page | 6

TEACHING & LEARNING

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and under the guidance of Governor Beshear and the Kentucky Department of Education all schools transitioned to Non-Traditional Instruction. The Estill County Schools began a system of virtual instruction so students would be able to continue learning. Teachers created virtual and traditional lessons for students. Teachers met with students via Zoom and Google Hangouts. Students and teachers adapted very quickly to this new way of learning.

We would also like to congratulate Margaret Snowden on her retirement. Margaret has served as Special Education director for 20 years. The role of Special Education Director will now be assumed by Amanda Bryant. Amanda will be transitioning from Estill County Middle School as a special education teacher. Congratulations Margaret...enjoy your retirement!



TECHNOLOGY

WOW...what a year! The technology department has ordered 600 HP G8 EE chromebooks for grades 6-8, and hope to start setting those up in July/August to distribute to all middle school students. We will be disseminating the returned chromebooks (from graduating seniors) in 2 class sets for Estill Springs and 2 Class sets for West Irvine. This will strengthen the technology skills at the elementary level of incoming middle school students.

KDE is ramping up online registration for Infinite Campus. Hopefully this will allow for a more fluid registration and data upkeep for IC. They are also rolling out the Infinite Campus Learning Management System, to help with NTI days and remote learning.

With NTI this year, we're happy to report that tech issues were minor. Still having trouble with HP keyboards needing to be repaired, but thankfully that is an HP issue and doesn't cost the district anything.

For the coming 2020-2021 school year, NTI should be pretty fluid with 6-12 having chromebooks, provided teachers take advantage of the Google Classroom learning management system for assignments. We will be utilizing Little Sis again this year to automate Google Classroom creation and enrollment.

Finally, the school district is finalizing the backend configuration of our online employment application program, from PowerSchool. With this new system, we'll be able to control the job application process online, all the way from posting the position, to the applicant filling out the application, to interviewing, recommendations, to collection of required documents, and timelining the hiring process. It will greatly streamline the hiring process and we're excited to get it instituted.



NEWS!

June
2020
Page | 7

TRANSPORTATION

The school district will be receiving three new 72 passenger school buses later this month, one of which is being funded by an EPA grant awarded to the district this past January. These new arrivals help to make sure our bus fleet continues to be updated and ensures that our pool of sub buses is reliable.

Work on the new bus garage continues to progress. The assembly phase of the steel structure will begin very soon. The road to the new facility is now in place and we hope to be on track to occupancy by late summer /early fall. This will be a facility that the transportation department can be proud of and will serve a great purpose.

The transportation department continues to work to make sure summer meal deliveries occur three days per week. 18-20 people from the department are traveling to six locations within the county to help get meals to school age children. I want to personally thank each of these employees for making sure this task gets carried out each week. Food service will continue for the next few weeks.

Finally, congratulations go out to Tim Burkhart on his retirement. Tim has served as Director of Transportation for 3 years, and principal of Estill County Middle school, before that. Congratulations Tim...we hope you "See the USA...in your Chevrolet!"



Note: The board is seeking applications for a new Director of Transportation.

ESTILL COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL

It has been a very busy end to the school year at ECHS. We wrapped up NTI work in May, and now report cards have been mailed out for all students. Thank you to all of our students and parents for working with us during this transition.

Our celebration for our graduating seniors in May was capped off by the virtual graduation ceremony. Our staff worked hard to plan the event and prepare the auditorium stage for our seniors. We are thrilled that our 168 seniors graduated and increased our transition readiness rates for the school this year. In a year cut short for them, our seniors persevered and made it to the finish line! We also want to thank our entire community for supporting our Class of 2020. From our community coming out for the parade to banners being put in business windows to donations from businesses, the people of Estill County showed these students how much they mean to our school and community.

Summer school for students who need to recover credits will be conducted online through Edgenuity this year or students can complete NTI work from the third trimester to recover those credits. The program begins this week and runs through Friday, June 19th. Our assistant principal, Ms. Wilson will be in charge of this program, and you can contact her at laura.wilson@estill.kyschools.us if you have any questions. She will be available via email between 9:00 and 3:00, Monday-Friday through June 19th.



NEWS!

June
2020
Page | 8

As we go into the summer months, please make sure to watch our Facebook page and Twitter feed for updates about sports and back to school events. We will be updating that with new information as it becomes available. Thanks again to our entire community for their support over the past few months!



ESTILL COUNTY MIDDLE SCHOOL

What a wild end to the 2019-2020 school year. We missed seeing our students each and every day but we are so proud of the hard work of our students and parents/guardians to complete NTI work. Please check our social media pages and one calls during the summer as we are planning some activities for our students throughout the summer. We cannot wait to see you all soon and are excited to meet our new sixth graders. Best of luck to our eighth graders as you move to the high school, you will do great things.

WEST IRVINE INTERMEDIATE

Learning has continued at West Irvine! Staff and students met the challenge of NTI! Teachers made thousands of phone calls to check in with students and families. Students and teachers learned how to use Google Classroom for lessons, and they participated in virtual class meetings/lessons. Teachers also took time to polish curriculum and assessment documents. The school year was ended in celebration with our fifth-grade students. Fifth grade teachers prepared a celebration parade for students that included a gift, fifth grade shirt, yard sign and report card. Families and students followed all social distancing guidelines. We are proud of West Irvine staff, students, and their families!





NEWS!

June
2020
Page | 9



ESTILL SPRINGS ELEMENTARY

The end of the year may not have been normal, but there are so many blessings as we reflect! We are so thankful for the hard work from our students and families. We are very proud of the learning that took place at home despite many obstacles. We can't thank our staff and families enough for the support and encouragement they have shown!

Our Kindergarten Graduation Parade was a HUGE success! We were able to honor each Kindergartener and celebrate this big milestone!

We look forward to the 2020-2021 school year!



SOUTH IRVINE ELC

Thank you for a wonderful school year! You worked hard at school and grew smarter every day. When our normal operations changed at the end of the year, you still pressed on and continued to strive for excellence. I hope you have a wonderful and safe summer. I am looking forward to seeing our returning preschoolers next year and I plan to visit Estill Springs and see all of our new kindergartners. Stay safe.

SUCCESS ACADEMY

The Success Academy would like to welcome our new principal Austin Moore. Austin is joining us from North Laurel High School. Previously, Austin has worked at Estill County High School as a social studies teacher and former football coach. In his new role, Austin will also be the District Athletic Director. Welcome back Mr. Moore!