



Dear Colleagues,

I wanted to take a moment to wish all of you a very happy holiday season. I do not think that anyone would disagree that 2020 has been uniquely challenging for many of us. I find it helpful, however, to try to focus on positive events that have encouraged us all. We have seen educators around the world reinvent how they connect with their students. Our own APS educators are among the very best! You have all supported each other, problem solved the roadblocks and celebrated the shared victories. I have seen all of you develop amazing lesson plans to engage your learners. Never has there been any doubt that our members would shine so bright!

It is very evident that we would all like to return with our students to the classroom. Soon enough, that will happen. I do believe that there is light at the end of the tunnel, however, now is not the time to relax or let your guard down. As we have all become very aware, everyday community behaviors will greatly impact all of us and our ability to slowly return to some semblance of normalcy.

As we all do everything possible to keep ourselves, our families and the community physically safe, I cannot stress the importance of acknowledging the mental and emotional toll that this pandemic has taken on so many. Remote teaching and learning is **hard!** Remote teaching and learning done very well, is **incredibly hard!** Please, more than ever, dedicate a portion of your winter break to turn off your educator mind. Disconnect, as hard as that may be for some of you, and simply breath a bit. Give yourself permission to just be in the moment. If you or someone you know is struggling, you are not alone. Please reach out to family, friends and your support system and lean on them. We will all get through this together, as we always have. I promise.

Again, have a wonderful holiday season with your family and friends. I am so grateful for all of you. Please take good care and we will see you next year!



Pat

***Pat Shipe, President
Akron Education Association***

CCAA MIDDLE SCHOOL TRANSITION

As the College and Career Academies transition in Middle Schools moves forward, please be aware that AEA has not signed any MOUs for this transition, nor has the Administration proposed any such contractual changes. With that said, any CCAA middle school program implementation should not contain any conflicts to the current Agreement. Should you have any questions or concerns, please see your AEA Building Representative or contact this office.

DISTRICT REQUIRED TRAININGS

There are currently several State ODE required trainings which the district must complete with all school staff. Both the AED (defibrillator) and the student harassment/bullying trainings must be done through SafeSchools on-line training. AEA has agreed that these trainings (approximately 50 minutes for both) can be completed during building monthly staff meetings or during an In-Service training day. Staff are not required, but may **voluntarily**, complete this training during planning times, PLC time, teacher collaboration or outside contractual hours. Should you have any questions, please see your AEA Building Representative.

TEACHER COLLABORATION TIME

We will continue to remind our members that building administrators should not be scheduling meetings, professional development or encumber in any way remote teacher collaboration time. This time was embedded into the teachers' schedules in order to meet with your grade level or subject area teams, intervention specialists, tutors or service providers to plan, discuss and coordinate remote teaching lessons with your colleagues. While administrators may certainly conduct an informal walkthrough during this time period, the teachers are responsible for the direction of this time. Should you have any questions or concerns regarding the way your building has implemented teacher collaboration time, please see your AEA Building Representative.

BUILDING SAFETY GUIDELINES

Now is the time to be diligent when following building health and safety guidelines. If you have chosen to work from your classroom and have concerns regarding violations of safety guidelines, please contact your AEA Building Representative or your building administrator so that the situation can be addressed and corrected.

THIRD QUARTER INSTRUCTIONAL MODEL

As you know, this past quarter the Board adopted the Remote Plus model for instruction within the district. Because of Summit County Health Department guidelines however, the Superintendent delayed in-person, on-site interventions due to a spike in COVID community spread. At this time, the Board will move forward utilizing the Remote Plus model while continuing to delay on-site interventions. The Superintendent will review this decision sometime after winter break. We will keep you posted when we receive any information regarding a change to the instructional model being utilized.