


BENTON COUNTY SCHOOLS

Making  Difference for All Students



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RESOLUTION OF BENTON COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION IN SUPPORT OF A MORATORIUM ON STATE STANDARDIZED TESTING FOR 2020-2021 SCHOOL YEAR

WHEREAS, His Excellency the Honorable Bill Lee, Governor of the State of Tennessee, has determined that outbreak of Novel Coronavirus Disease-19 (COVID19) has created a global pandemic in the United States and within the State of Tennessee that can and has led to serious illness or death through spread by close contact among individuals; and

WHEREAS, beginning on March 12, 2020, Governor Lee declared the State of Tennessee to be in a state of emergency until June 30, 2020, pursuant to his Executive Orders 14 and 36 due to COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, beginning on March 16, 2020, Tennessee schools were closed for the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year in response to requests made by Governor Lee that they be closed to combat the spread of COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, on March 18, 2020, the Tennessee General Assembly approved the cancellation of state standardized testing for the 2019-2020 school year, due to the statewide closure of schools and subsequent lack of standardized instruction being delivered to students; and

WHEREAS, on June 22, 2020, the Tennessee State Board of Education approved Emergency Rule 0520-01-17-.01, which requires Tennessee school districts to provide students in grades one (1) through twelve (12) access to six and one half (6 1/2) hours of instructional time each school day during the 2020-2021 school year even if there are school closures or disruptions related to outbreaks of COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, Executive Order 50 signed by Governor Lee on June 29, 2020 declared the state of emergency continuing until at least August 29, 2020 and as COVID-19 continued to spread at a rapid rate in the State; and

WHEREAS, in order to comply with State Board requirements, Tennessee schools will likely have to engage in remote learning, in whole or in part, during the 2020-2021 academic school year due to the continued spread of COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to State Board Emergency Rule 0520-01-17-.01, Tennessee school districts are required to create and implement their own plans to facilitate continuous learning considering the continued spread of COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, Tennessee school districts will be implementing different plans for student learning on various county by county plans across the State for the 2020-2021 academic year, which will be based upon the needs of the students of each school district and taking into consideration COVID-19 outbreaks as they occur in each county; and

WHEREAS, Tennessee students will likely face significant academic and behavioral regression on returning to school after having lost approximately two (2) months of standard instruction and attendance due to the extended closures; and

WHEREAS, when schools resume in August 2020, students will have spent approximately five (5) consecutive months out of school; and

WHEREAS, Tennessee school districts will be focused not only on student growth and safety, but also on recoupment of academic, social and emotional skills lost during the extended closures.

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved unanimously by all the Board Members of the Benton County Board of Education that we:

1. Support and respectfully request a moratorium on State standardized testing and accountability associated with such testing for the 2020-2021 school year, to include end-of-year examinations and formative assessments throughout the year.
2. Request that if State standardized testing does continue in some format for the 2020-2021 school year, that the results of that testing be used as metrics of student progress rather than to determine district rankings and scorings statewide that will surely result from the inevitable disparity in learning methods that will be used across the State in light of COVID-19 and focus be made on recoupment of students' academic and social/emotional skills lost during the extended school closure.

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