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Friday, March 13, 2020

Adult and Alternative Education Interim Program Closure Priorities Page

Dear Members:

Late last night the Governor, in partnership with the Michigan Department of Education closed all public, private and charter schools in Michigan effective Monday, March 16- Sunday, April 5, 2020 in response to the Coronavirus.

We are providing this information to assist in setting priorities for the interim closure of your program and for expanded electronic professional development learning opportunities.

1)Identify Administrative and Leadership Personnel

It is important to designate who will make key decisions concerning your program in the coming days. You will want to designate one individual to establish leadership priorities and handle day-to-day operations. This person should coordinate with school district officials and the MACAE office for support as well as communicate updates and expectations to staff members.

Designate a leader teacher or coordinator to help facilitate learner/participant concerns. Be sure to communicate information in multiple platforms for learners (email, text, phone call, online social media, etc.). Disseminating the information in a streamlined and timely fashion will be important.

Establish a place for your support team and instructional staff to be empowered and to have their questions answered. You might share your personal cell for the interim to share ideas or strategies. Or you might ask that all team members submit questions in writing so that you have time to process, analyze, or ask for additional clarification.

2)Designate expectations for staff and support employees

Within your school district and program, you will want to designate priorities for essential and non-essential staff. Who will or is able to be working on campus during the closure? If working from home, what are the expectations for hours of contact and work? Setting these expectations now will be important as we work through the coming weeks.

Consider a plan for or schedule some sort of update to be shared every day or every few days during the closure if applicable. This might include an email update or phone call with staff members. Our digital learning page lists several free options. Keeping all staff members in the same line of communication will be important.

In addition, you may want to task items out to individuals to assure a sense of responsibility and calm. Use your team and check in with each other to make sure they are doing well personally and professionally.

3)Establish how you will communicate

During this time, it will also be important to determine how you will communicate with staff and learners. Your district may have a strict policy in place so be sure to check. Please be careful and considerate when communicating information. It should be factual and not information that can be easily manipulated on social media.

You will want to let staff and learners know what are appropriate sources of information (see below) and from whom in your organization any operational or pertinent information will come.

4)Establish expectations for learners

Communicate with learners your expectations for them and what opportunities they have over the next few weeks to learn. There are many educational online learning opportunities (see our corresponding email). In addition, assign

them tasks or information to cover in small chunks. Even small hours of instructional work can be counted and contribute to keeping them moving forward.

Encourage your learners to be aware of their child's school expectations and guidelines. This closure impacts the whole community so helping learners to help their children is important. Above all, communicate a sense of calm and hope for learners and families.

Finally, let learners know when they might expect to hear updates from you or where to check. As always, encourage them when normal work and school resumes that they are encouraged to return to class and pursue their goals.

You might also designate a staff member to check in with particular students via email or phone to keep encouraging them to return to finish their goals or to complete work or online learning hours.

5)Consider short term goals

Take this time to review important tasks that need to be done in the next four weeks.

Are there important pieces or items that can be accomplished in the interim? It may be important to finalize a report or cancel pending contracts or meetings. Be sure to check your calendar and make appropriate adjustments.

6)Establish long term goals

Look ahead at upcoming dates or important deadlines (ie: WIOA) to be prepared for a return to work or school. Deadlines may not change so it is important to be sure you have all the information and resources you may need, particularly if working from home.

This also is a great opportunity to consider projects for your team that have been on the back burner. Are there some great articles to be shared or discussions around a new product, or new instructional method? Is there a new program that you have considered implementing that you'd like your team to consider looking at? Now is a great time to work on those projects.

7)Monitor official communications

Be sure you are getting pertinent updates from your school superintendent or administrators.

You can also follow information on the official State of Michigan Website: <https://www.michigan.gov/coronavirus>

Continue to check the MACAE website for continued updates and information: www.macaе.org and your email.

8) Take care of yourself

This can be hard to do as the news updates are fluid and ever-changing. Please take time to make sure you, staff members and learners are well rested and get the necessary nutrition to be work and learn.

Our priority has always been to provide MACAE members with the resources and support to build, sustain and grow successful adult, alternative, community education and workforce training programs and that mission remains the same now more than ever.

Please contact us if you have any questions or concerns.