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KEIZERTIMES/Eric A. Howald

TOP: Mariella Dibble greets visitors from her window at The Village at Keizer Ridge. ABOVE: Penny Ricketts shouts birthday well wishes from the caravan. RIGHT: McKenna and Sha Eppley brought along some uncooperative balloons.

Mariella Dibble turned 100 years on Thursday, March 26 at The Village at Keizer Ridge. While her birthday plans were sidelined by COVID-19 precautions, undeterred family, friends, and staff members arranged a surprise visit. They arrived in a caravan and piled out to sing *Happy Birthday* to the young lady.



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Remaining school year will lean on virtual learning

By MATT RAWLINGS
Of the Keizertimes

It's becoming more likely that Salem-Keizer Public Schools won't be re-opening before the end of the school year.

On Monday, March 30, the Oregon Department of Education shared that students might not be returning to classroom this school year due to the spread of COVID-19. Because of this realization, the department released guidance on virtual learning that same evening.

"We also foresee the strong possibility that our students may not come back through our schoolhouse doors this academic year. This calls for a shift from providing supplementary education to a formidable effort to provide distance learning for all," said Colt Gill, the director of the Oregon Education Department. "We now have a moral imperative to meet the changing nature of the pandemic and evolve our approach to serving our children."

Just over two weeks ago, Oregon Gov. Kate Brown extended the state's school closure from two weeks to six weeks, scheduling schools to re-open on Monday, April 29. There has been no modifica-

tion to that date.

Last week, the Salem-Keizer School District released supplemental learning tools for all K-12 students. But the district made it clear that these tools weren't replacements for classroom instruction.

Now, ODE will be asking school districts to teach new materials that coincide with state curriculum standards for each grade.

ODE asks that each district will have their plan for distant learning in place by Monday, April 13.

"To the extent possible, our intent is to maintain instructional time for students that is aligned to what virtual schools provide," ODE spokesperson Marc Siegel said. "The typical learning day for Oregon's students will include a teacher-led learning time, while also including time for supplemental activities, mealtime and play."

Under the new strategy, teachers can use online tools to conduct class, though it might be easier for some instructors than others.

"The vast majority of Oregon educators have not taught online and some districts have varying levels of experience, capacity and technology tools," Gill said.

Not all learning, however,

has to be online. Gill noted that school packets could be distributed to students via individual and group calls.

Gill also acknowledged that parents and guardians will need to help provide daily structure and serve as tutors and that this process will require a considerable effort by everyone involved.

"The success of distance education overwhelmingly relies on parents and adult family members to be active partners with teachers," Gill said.

SKSD superintendent Christy Perry sent an email out to inform all parents of Salem-Keizer students of what they could expect for the month of April.

Perry stated that the district has a "team of educators working to develop our plan for distance learning for all" and that 450 classified educators had picked up Chromebooks to support supplemental learning.

"We won't have our plan ready to move forward today, which is hard for us to share, because we know there are so many questions that need answers," Perry said in the email.

Perry stated that the district doesn't have guidance from the state on high school graduation yet.

Salem-Keizer taps new assistant superintendent

Iton Udosenata has been named Salem-Keizer Public Schools' newest assistant superintendent. Udosenata, currently serving as North Eugene High School's principal, will be taking over the responsibilities currently held by Assistant Superintendent Linda Myers.

Myers announced her resignation from the district earlier this month, prompting a search for her replacement. She will work alongside Udosenata and the district's other assistant superintendent, Kraig Sproles, during this transition. Salem-Keizer's assistant superintendents oversee all aspects of teaching and learning with specific attention to support-

ing schools.

"We're extremely excited for the new and innovative ideas Iton will be bringing into our district," said Superintendent Christy Perry. "I have no doubt that his work ethic and passion for student success will align with our mission that all students graduate prepared for a successful life."



Iton Udosenata

Udosenata has demonstrated his dedication to students, working to promote equity, social justice and college-and-career readiness. He earned a bachelor of arts in ethnic studies and a master of education in education leadership at the University of Oregon. In 2018, Udosenata earned a doctoral degree in

educational methods policy and leadership, also at the University of Oregon. He also serves as president-elect for the Confederation of Oregon School Administrators.

Although Udosenata is a native Oregonian, he began his career in education in south central Los Angeles in 2004. He returned to Oregon in 2006, leading a high school alternative education program before serving as a social studies teacher at Thurston High School for five years. Since then, he has held numerous positions including assistant principal at Willamette High School, principal at Cottage Grove High School and most recently serving as principal at North Eugene High School, which has experienced significant gains in graduation rates under his leadership.

Iton is a self-proclaimed hip-hop historian and die-hard Oregon Duck fan. He currently lives in Cottage Grove with his wife Miriam, and two children, Kellen and Alora.

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