

Distance learning begins at Seaside High School

Like other schools around the state, Seaside schools have transitioned to distance learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. Seaside High School and Broadway Middle School principal Jeff Roberts shared implementation and goals for local schools. The Signal spoke with him April 1, at the launch of the online curriculum.

SEEN FROM SEASIDE
R.J. MARX



Q: How will Seaside High School use distance learning for students?
Roberts: The state outlined guidance and we're going to pay attention to those guidelines. I feel like we're in better shape than a lot of people, some of my colleagues I've spoken with from around the state.

Q: In terms of preparedness?
Roberts: I don't know if anybody prepared for an endeavor like this. With the exception of existing online charter schools, there was nobody ready for this to be full-time or long-term. We took steps prior to spring break to use that time with our staff to get the wheels turning, to set up some kind of consistent platforms to provide education.

Q: Can you talk about how you approached that?

Roberts: I was responsible for guiding the high school and middle school staff, and (Gearhart and Heights principal) Juli (Wozniak) took the lead from the primary standpoint. Juli and I have been here long enough and done this long enough, that we understand the parameters of what we can and what we do and don't have the capacity to do. Neither of us, and (superintendent) Sheila (Roley) for that matter, are new to the district. What we've been able to do over the course of time is to establish strong relationships with our staff and with our community. Fortunately over the last few years we've really stepped up our technology game in the district, thanks to our staffing, technology coordinator Don Mespelt and technology coach Mike Brown. Knowing that we were going to be in somewhat of a prolonged absence from school, we wanted to make sure we got the appropriate technology into kids' hands to be able to do that. (High school vice principal) Jason Boyd and (middle school assistant principal) Steve Sherren, each of the principals, were incredibly instrumental in facilitating that.

Q: How many Chromebooks are available?

Roberts: We checked out about 250 between the two schools. At the high school and middle school, if we wanted to check out a Chromebook to every student who needed one, we have enough.

Q: Do most of the kids have internet access?

Roberts: We were able to confirm that a majority of our students do. While it wasn't for this intent, the high school purchased 10 wireless hotspots earlier in the year where students would be able to check out in the event they were needed. We were able to get those hotspots to students who needed them. Jason (Boyd) shared with me yesterday that he had a 100% confirmation from the high school that every student had the technology they needed to be successful in their hands. And I think we're nearly as close at the middle school. There will continue to be some



Staff at Broadway Middle School reach out to the community.

Broadway Middle School



Katherine Lacaze

Seaside High School Principal Jeff Roberts gives opening remarks at the Class of 2019 Senior Scholarship Awards night on June 4.

challenges in sustaining connectivity but I feel like we are positioned to support those needs.

Q: What is the school day going to look like?

Roberts: High school students are still going to need to earn credits for graduation. Colleges and universities have specific criteria they're going to look for, so we want to provide students an opportunity to earn those credits. The expectation is that students should be logged on and checking their Google classrooms daily, not that they sit in front of their computer for the duration of their class. My staff was instructed to create content that could be finished at a student's own pace with guidelines around when things are due. Teachers are also going to provide opportunities for students to log on during instruction so students can interact with them.

Q: What about other interactions?

Roberts: Academics are important, but the social and emotional health of our kids is paramount to anything we do. We have the homeroom situation set up at every level and we are asking our staff that they reach out to our homeroom students multiple times a week. by phone or by video chat.

Q: One-on-one or as a group?

Roberts: It can be both. I've asked our high school staff to have both community chats and to reach out personally to students individually as well.

Q: Some classes, like phys ed, cooking and shop may not translate so easily online. How will you handle those?

Roberts: Of those, PE has the easiest translation. What we're going to operate on is best intent. We're going to trust the kids that they're doing the right thing, and being honest. The expectation for those PE classes is that they're going to complete a log of their activity. For example, we actually provided an opportunity for any student in the building if they weren't enrolled in a PE class to complete a PE class for the remainder of the term. They have to log 150 minutes of physical activity a week and submit that to a teacher for a weekly check-in. I've been working with (cooking teacher) Chelsea Archibald on what the culinary program might look like. We want to make sure those kids are still getting those hands-on experiences. We're going to ask them if they have the capacity at home to cook, and record a demo of them cooking and share with their

Gearhart mayor urges all follow spirit of governor's order, 'reside at their legal domicile'

GUEST COLUMN
MATT BROWN



We have received several complaints from Gearhart citizens the last few days asking if the city has the ability to ask homeowners and their families to leave who are staying in Gearhart instead of staying at their legal domicile (permanent residence) in Portland, Seattle, California, and other areas. We would like to address this matter:

1. We highly encourage everyone in Gearhart, Clatsop County, the State of Oregon, and neighboring states, per the spirit of Governor Brown's executive orders and directives, to stay home at their legal domicile. Gearhart and the rest of Clatsop County have limited resources for our full-time community including food supplies and home supplies, and there is an extremely limited amount of hospital beds and medical care facilities for those that get sick.

2. Despite what you may have heard the city does not have the authority to make a homeowner leave Gearhart or to enter

someone's home to enforce indoor social distancing, count occupants, or issue tickets if multiple cars are parked legally outside someone's home. We also do not have the ability or resources to close streets and set up checkpoints to inspect everyone's ID coming in and out of town. We value all property owners and we want to keep everyone safe by limiting contact between people within and outside of the city.

3. However, per Gov. Brown's executive order #20-12 the city has the authority to enforce and cite individuals with a class C misdemeanor for disobeying the following:

Non-essential social and recreational gatherings of individuals outside of a home or place of residence (e.g., parties, celebrations, or other similar gatherings and events) are prohibited immediately, regardless of size, if a distance of at least six feet between individuals cannot be maintained.

When individuals need to leave their homes or residences, they should at all times maintain social distancing of at least six feet from any person who is not a member of their immediate household, to the greatest extent possible, and comply with the other social distancing Requirements guidance issued by the Oregon Health Authority.

Individuals may go outside for outside recreational activities (walking, hiking, etc.),

but must limit those activities to non-contact, and are prohibited from engaging in outdoor activities where it is not possible to maintain appropriate social distancing (six feet or more between individuals).

Failure to comply with any of the provisions of this executive order constitutes an imminent threat and creates an immediate danger to public health. Any person found to be in violation of this executive order is subject to the penalties described in ORS 401.990.

4. If anyone sees behavior in Gearhart that goes against Gov. Brown's executive order stated above, they may log a written complaint with evidence to the city by filling out our online contact form. The city and Gearhart Police Department will follow up on the complaint and may, by the language in the executive order, cite individuals with a class C misdemeanor for violating the executive order. A class C misdemeanor is punishable by up to 30 days in jail and a \$1,250 fine. Please be very specific with your complaint including the address or location of the occurrence, the number of people, and description of the behavior.

Please do not use the contact form just because you may not recognize someone, or if you see a car or a license plate you do

not recognize. We want to make sure we are using our limited resources to investigate serious complaints that may be violating Gov. Brown's executive order. The state, county, and city have already taken other precautions to help eliminate certain behavior by non-residents including suspending all short-term rentals and closing beach accesses and camping.

5. All of the residents have the ability to control their own behavior. We understand some folks out there may not be taking this executive order as seriously as others. Some residents may not be following the spirit of Gov. Brown's directives. Please do all you can individually and as a family to protect yourselves including staying inside to avoid potentially dangerous situations and following proper social distancing guidelines when out walking your dog or enjoying other safe outdoor activities. No type of enforcement is going to be perfect and there will always be folks that just don't get it.

This is a work in progress and things will change day to day and week to week. We know these are stressful times and no one can control another person's behavior. But we can all take personal responsibility to act correctly as Gearhart residents, both full-time and part-time. We are all in this together. Thank you and be safe.

Q: Will students graduate on time?
Roberts: I anticipate that our students will graduate on time.

Q: What about Pacifica projects already underway?

Roberts: Those are, frankly, up in the air right now. We want to honor the work kids have done to this point on those things, and hear about the positive impacts they've had on the community. (But) we certainly don't want to send kids that were volunteering or still have volunteer hours out to do things in an unsafe circumstance until we have a better idea as how this is going to play out in the long term.

Q: Reaching out to students who are homeless — is that a special problem?

Roberts: It is. It's a little trickier. One of the things we've done to help manage that is put together an outreach team focused on making connections with those typically hard-to-reach students. We've asked teachers to contact our outreach team if they haven't heard or have been unable to consistently make contact with students after multiple attempts.

Q: What is your No. 1 need? What are you looking to resolve or accomplish in the next few days?

Roberts: That's a really good question, and I don't know if I have an answer yet. Today was really the first day the (online) curriculum was launched. I think the next couple days will be pretty telling to be able to answer that question. I don't want to say something prematurely. I don't have a hard and fast answer for you. There are going to be challenges, there's no doubt about it, but I will tell you, this community and parents and teachers and students have been unbelievably gracious and patient. They know that my staff cares deeply for their kids and are going to do their very best to support them and their families through this.

Q: Do you have the resources you need? Do you have any surprise expenses?

Roberts: We're always going to try to work within the budget. I think there will be some federal relief packages if there are unusual expenses. I think we're in pretty good shape with that. From my chair, I try to be budget-conscious with how we're operating. We may experience some postage expenses, getting those things to people who need them, that may be an unanticipated expense. There will be some additional expenses in food service, it's very important to us to continue our meal service. I think we've established a good plan to get that opportunity to students as well.

Q: Does the governor's reopening date of April 28 still hold true for the school district?

Roberts: Sheila has the final word on this, (but) I wouldn't anticipate the Seaside School District doing anything that was outside the recommendations of the guidelines recommended by the state in that regard regarding opening and closures.

Q: Anything else you would like to add?

Roberts: I think it's important to convey how much I appreciate this community's support of these kids, and like I said, Pacifica may look a little different, graduation may look a little different, prom may look a little different. But those are monumental pieces in a young person's life and I'm going to do everything I can to make those happen.