

Update – October 27, 2020

Parents & Patrons,

I am sure most of you are aware of the news shared by Governor Little yesterday. The Governor's announcement that Idaho has been placed back in Stage 3 of the state COVID-19 response plan does have some impact on SOME aspects of school. First, I need to take care of some rumor control. The statewide transition into Stage 3 DOES NOT mean we have to implement distance learning or an A/B attendance schedule. The guidelines in Stage 3 state that school day activities are exempt from the limit of 50 placed on indoor gatherings. However, that does not mean some of our activities/events will not be impacted.

I will address the two short-term activities/events that will be impacted. The long-term activities will be addressed at a later date when we receive more guidance related to school activities. Please keep in mind, we are doing our very best to ensure these events/activities are allowed to continue. I am aware of the frustration limitations cause, but please keep in mind last spring almost all of our events/activities were cancelled and were not rescheduled. I hope we are all able to look beyond the frustration and be grateful we are holding events/activities.

- PSAT day – The PSAT is a nationwide standardized test given to current sophomores. There are many reasons for taking the PSAT, and we support our students in that desire. We were scheduled to administer the PSAT to approximately 350 students. We made plans and purchases to administer this test with as little distraction to the school day as possible. Unfortunately, with the announcement of Stage 3, we need to make an adjustment to our plan for administration of the PSAT. Similar to the SAT held October 14th, Blackfoot High School will hold a “virtual school day” for those students **not participating** in the PSAT assessment on Thursday, October 29th. Blackfoot High School has already shared with parents what students can expect for that day.
- Extra-curricular activities – Unfortunately, these activities will be affected by the transition to Stage 3. As per guidelines, public gatherings will have capacity limits for each event.
 - **Outdoor activities** have been asked to limit spectators to 25% capacity. May I take a moment to say, boy I wish we had more outdoor capacity. Blackfoot High School will be limiting spectator capacity by using ticket entry to all events until otherwise stated. Each program participating in the event will receive tickets to be shared. Admission to the activity will be limited to those with tickets or passes.
 - **Indoor activities** will be limited to only 50 spectators for the event. We have a preliminary plan to address indoor activities, as Mountain View Middle School has already started with its indoor sports season. Again, participants will be issued tickets for each event. In order to better ensure the limited capacity allows for the proper spectators to attend, we will be clearing the location at the conclusion of each level, i.e. between 7th grade and 8th grade, or JV and varsity. We believe this will allow for parents of participants at each level to attend the event.

In conclusion, 2020 never ceases to amaze me. However, I truly hope each of you understands the steps we take; the procedures and protocols we implement are done with the sole purpose of keeping schools open and activities running for our students. I promise tomorrow's update will be only positive news, well maybe I shouldn't promise that just yet.

Sincerely,

Brian Kress