

Summary of July 31 Friday Recap Fireside Chat Series

Thank you for joining us for our Friday Recap. Below is a summary of the major topics that we covered. We look forward to recapping the week with you every Friday!

General Information:

Political Questions:

- We are hearing from many administrators who are saying they are dying on the vine. We want to remind you that you are all doing amazing things. It is always helpful to find something to laugh about with someone else. Be sure to reach out to each other and us and we will get through this together.
- Many districts have made decisions about how they will start the year. There is no right way and this will look different in each district. We know that these decisions are hard and communities seem to be ripped apart by this, and these are issues we will be dealing with for a long time. Now that decisions are made, districts need to focus on implementation and we are here to assist with this. As a reminder, the more communication you have about your plan the better.
- As districts are planning for implementation, it will be important to look at metrics to guide decision-making. There are groups of superintendents who are starting to do this. CPS also put out metrics this week to guide decisions about in-person, hybrid, and full-remote learning. Right now there are a lot of emotional decisions. There has to be a moment where we start implementation and then start next steps.

Special Education:

- On Monday, we are having a webinar on special education from 1:30-2:30. We hope you can join us!
- We have heard from many districts who are sharing that local health departments are indicating they will be short staffed and unable to conduct contact tracing like they did in the spring. This means that districts will be responsible for conducting contact tracing. Darcy is taking a class on this topic offered by Johns Hopkins to help us better understand the process and assist districts in navigating this process.
- Many districts have been getting questions from parents who are wanting to delay their child's enrollment into kindergarten this year and start kindergarten next year when their child is six. Districts have local control to determine who to handle these requests to delay entrance.

Title IX:

- There have been requests and lawsuits to delay the implementation of the new Title IX regulations, but as of now the regulations go into effect on August 14. Districts must do their best to comply with this tight timeline by revising policies and engaging in necessary training. PRESS will be releasing sample policies in early August and this is something

we can assist with as well. We can also assist districts with training. If you don't have everything in place by August 14 and something comes up, contact us and we will get through it together.

IHSA/IESA Updates:

- The Governor's office recently released guidance on sports. This guidance goes into effect on August 15.
- Extracurricular activities:
 - IESA canceled all middle school sports and activities last week. We think this may change to align with guidance from the Governor's office.
 - IHSA was meeting on Wednesday. IHSA will delay the start of sports, and will have four shortened seasons.
- Districts have been asking about the use of waivers for participation in sports. We have waivers available for participation in these sports. Contact us if we can be of assistance.

Board Meetings:

- Districts should expect board meetings to be volatile when you are discussing reopening. We have had districts that have conducted board meetings that led to violence and the police needing to be called. It may be helpful to proactively have police at your board meeting to make sure everyone is safe. If you think it would be helpful to have an attorney present, please be sure to call your counsel in advance.
- Many districts are hosting board meetings on Zoom and this platform has a capacity limit. SB 2135 was passed in June, requiring districts to ensure that board meetings are open and available to the public. Be sure to have opportunities for the public to participate. One option might be to allow access via phone. It may also be helpful to contact Zoom or other platforms to see if they can expand their capacity limits.
- We have had districts ask about how to handle public comments at board meetings, especially when they are coming in by email. In these situations, make sure the board president is reading them into the record.

Labor:

- As a reminder, it is important to talk with your employees regarding your plan for reopening. The union is there as the representative for the employees and the person you will deal with on behalf of your employees. You need to bargain when you make changes to terms and conditions of employment. This means that you need to give notice and they demand the right to bargain.
- Be sure to develop an agreement with your union on the decisions you are making.
- We have had a lot of questions about how to address coaching stipends. We encourage you to continue to work with your union on this issue.

Employment:

- One of the biggest questions we have been getting this week is how to address situations in which a family member cares for an employee's child and is no longer available due to COVID. Originally a childcare provider was defined as someone who is paid to regularly

provide childcare. The DOL has expanded this to remove this restriction and no longer includes the provider be paid or be licensed.

- Another question we have been getting is how to handle a situation in which an employee has a newborn and was on maternity leave. The leave is now ending and the employee cannot find childcare. While the law doesn't contemplate a new need for childcare, we don't think the intent was to exclude these individuals from being eligible for the expanded FMLA leave
- We have also been getting a lot of questions about requests for intermittent expanded FLMA leave. An employer can agree, but does not have to agree to an intermittent leave schedule. However, if you don't agree to intermittent leave you would likely have to grant a block of time.