

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

Welcome to our new reality. The world has changed dramatically over the last two weeks and continues to do so at an ever more rapid pace. We hope everyone is practicing social distancing, disinfecting protocols and compulsive hand washing. Members of the Executive Board have been in frequent contact with the Agency and are working hard to find the best way forward. To date, the following information is what we know:

Firstly, I wish to thank all of our members who have stepped up to the plate. These are very stressful times and, as usual our members continue to lead the way in innovation, dedication and creativity in serving our students. Different programs have different action plans for their respective students as our populations are very diverse.

We are currently negotiating an MOA (Memorandum of Agreement) with the Agency to guide our instructional/service delivery practices. The union is actively pursuing the MOA. Even after this agreement is signed, it is imperative that we continue to provide instruction and services to our students. ES BOCES operates by billing districts for services. If those services are not provided, then those revenue streams are negatively impacted. Different groups are required to provide services in different ways. For example, according to the latest state guidance, Itinerants are required to connect through a secured ZOOM site for face-to-face sessions. This is necessary so the districts can bill Medicaid. The Agency realizes that some additional time may be required to set this up. Until then, phone contact can be made instead, but be sure to log all information. That being said, guidelines from both NY State and the Federal government are constantly being adapted, waived and changed.

It is important to remember that although we are all working from home at this time, our contractual hours have not changed. This time period is not a vacation, however our April vacation has been guaranteed by the Agency. We encourage all members to keep a daily log of their activities. As is the usual practice, the classroom teacher should coordinate all activities with the classroom staff. Para-educators are not required to reach out to students or their families but should

be reaching out to the members of their classroom team daily. Para-educators should also be checking their emails and taking directives from classroom teachers. All contact made and school-related work needs to be documented. We have attached a sample log that is broad enough for all staff to use. This log does not need to be furnished unless requested, but it will serve as your proof of productivity should districts ask the Agency for burden of proof regarding justification for billing.

As we move forward my friends, let us continue to support each other however we can. We will continue to provide the best leadership we can with courage, faith and determination. We thank you for being the best union members in New York. Please continue to practice social distancing. We will continue to stay on top of things and keep you informed in our ever-changing world.

As always, unity and strength,

Jim Beck

Weekly Log for Employer Directed Work

Name: _____

School District: _____

Grade/Subject Area: _____

School Building: _____

Date	Directive	Work Summary

Additional Notes: