The following is a briefing for the week beginning May 11th on behalf of Dr. Cash.

Dear Colleagues:

Thank you again to our frontline Food Service staff, School Safety and Security, and our brave and tireless volunteers. On Monday of this week, we surpassed our One Million mark for meals served since the closure of schools. As of today, that number is 1,220,510! Thank you also to our building Engineers and Custodians for daily sanitization of our food sites, and to our Service Center workers for delivering books, helping to distribute donated backpacks and so much more! Thank you to our friends at Independent Health who distributed 10,000 wellness bags to our families, promoting health and self-care. And thank you to National Grid, who donated $10,000 for an additional 100 hot spots for our students. We appreciate you!

Arthur O. Eve School of Distinction #61 teachers miss their students. Social Worker Victoria Gillison made 14 home visits this week with wellness bags for her students and their siblings. The bags were filled with hand sanitizer, Kleenex, soap, and a washcloth. Mrs. Gillison was able to take some photos for posterity. She also caught Principal Parette Walker filling up the neighborhood food pantry! Pre-K teachers Mrs. Roberts and Mrs. McGarvey are also seen here, showing love towards their students. Great job, all of you, in reaching out to our students, parents, and the community. Mrs. Gillison says, “The parents were very appreciative and so were the students. 😊”
Regarding virtual learning, Marva J. Daniel Futures Academy 12:1:1 teacher Mrs. Huk says, "I would never have believed that this much instruction would regularly take place with my students through distance learning. I’m so overly proud of them for regularly keeping in touch with me. Notice,” she adds, “parents have been an excellent addition in my classroom.”
Lynn Matwijko, 5th grade teacher at International School #45 writes, “Delivered fun bags with games, snacks, books and differentiated work for our at-risk students and our entering and emerging ENL students with Mr. Olgin from Western NY United Against Drugs and Alcohol Abuse. Mr. Olgin teaches a life skills and good choices program at School 45. We also ran into some Buffalo Peacekeepers along the way who will be delivering some food to some of our families. It was great to see our students and families!❤️❤️❤️

Celebrating Art! 2020 Virtual Student Arts Exhibition is now available to view and share! Please join us in celebrating the hard work and talent of our PK-12 students as we highlight their artwork created both pre and post COVID-19. The BPS Department of Arts thanks the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library for sharing this on their website. They are great partners! We look forward to 2021 and continuing our annual BPS arts exhibition at the downtown library. A big debt of gratitude is owed to all of our wonderful BPS arts teachers who shared their students’ work for our first virtual exhibition. Enjoy! https://youtu.be/3Opeg6E1M_4

On Thursday, May 14th at 5:30 p.m. the BPS Parent Centers Facebook page hosted Chief Academic Officer Mrs. Anne Botticelli and Chief Accountability and Information Officer Dr. Genelle Morris who presented an overview of the BPS Instructional Plan and Grading Procedures During the Extended Closure. Questions were emailed in advance to the Office of Parent and Family Engagement. 3,000 parents and families participated in the event! Live Facebook events are held in the BPS Parent Center evening suite each Thursday, exploring various topics of special interest to parents.

Character.org, a national advocate and leader for character development in our schools and communities, today certified 84 schools and 7 districts in 15 states as National Schools of Character including Harvey Austin #97! Lori Soifer, who directs the Schools of Character program stated, “The
educators at these schools are inspiring their students to treat all people with respect and dignity. They are teaching their students to be honest and trustworthy, to contribute their time and talents to the common good, and when necessary, to show the courage to stand up for what is right.” This certainly exemplifies Principal Demario Strickland, his team of educators, and the students and families of #97. Kudos to all!

Keeping Community School spirits and learning activities high, Say Yes Buffalo is hosting our weekly Virtual Saturday Academy themed “Our Time to Shine!” The session will include story, time, Girls on the Run, Arts & Crafts, Buffalo Museum of Science Exhibit Tour, Gardening, Encouraging Emotional Growth (for Parents), and YouTube University for middle schoolers, and CPR training for everyone at Facebook.com/BPSCommunitySchools! Shine on!

Be well!

Dr. Kriner Cash
Superintendent