

STONINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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March 13, 2020

Dear Parents, Staff, Community Members:

I am writing to inform you that Stonington Public Schools will be closed until further notice effective at 5:00 PM today, March 13, 2020. At a minimum, schools will be closed for two weeks. Please be aware that as guidance is updated, this may need to be extended.

On the advice of our local health departments, the school superintendents in southeastern Connecticut have come together to make a decision to put the health of our community (both our school community and the community at large) at the center of our decision to close schools. We have been advised that the implementation of social distancing measures is a proven science-based intervention that has been shown to reduce the morbidity and mortality associated with communicable disease outbreaks. In the past, communities in which schools closed were able to positively impact and reduce the spread of disease. We felt compelled to make this decision to prevent the spread of illness among our students, staff, and our communities.

We also clearly heard that we cannot confirm that this illness will run its course in two weeks, in fact, it is not likely that it will. We made the determination to make this closure "indefinite" based on that information. This decision was made in consultation with and with the support of the health departments, elected officials, and emergency management professionals.

We will continue, during this school closing, to seek ways to provide supplemental instruction to our students. Should we be able to utilize a distance learning model, we will notify parents, students, and staff members of how this will be implemented.

School offices will be open Monday, March 16, 2020 from 9:00 AM until 6:00 PM for parents to pick up student medications or other items students need. In addition, instructional packets have been sent home with all Pre-K through Grade 8 students. High school students will receive directions as to academic work from their teachers for the next few weeks.

Our food service department will distribute breakfast and lunch to any student under the age of 18 at the Human Services building next to Stonington High School. Students do not have to qualify for free/reduced lunch in order to receive these meals. Meals will be available Monday through Friday from 8:00 – 10:00 AM beginning Monday, March 16th. Please contact Human Services at (860) 535-5015 if you need these meals delivered.

At this time, we have no other information to share but will continue to communicate as we receive updated guidance from our public health officials, the CDC, and state officials. Please continue to monitor your email to ensure receipt of the most current information. We expect that more district-specific information will be forthcoming in the next few days. I plan to send weekly updates to parents so please look for those notifications.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Van W. Riley".

Dr. Van Riley
Superintendent