



ANSONIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

March 20, 2020

Good Evening Ansonia Families,

We miss our students already and hope that we get to see them back in school in the near the future. It was so nice and refreshing for us to see all of your smiling faces yesterday and today while picking up your technology and lunch. Your kind words of support and thanks were truly appreciated by me, my Assistant Superintendent, Food Service Staff, our Administrators, and our IT Team. Even though our schools may be physically closed, please know that your team is very busy developing plans for distance learning and to support our families and students! We want to reassure you that our primary communication path with you will be through our email blasts, Facebook, and website postings.

As of 6:00 last evening, over 850 Chromebooks have been distributed to our Ansonia students. If you were unable to obtain a device for each learner in your home, please contact your child's principal and they will work with the Technology Department to develop a plan for you to acquire the devices your families need.

We are impressed and proud of how well our community has pulled together to support our efforts to implement ongoing instruction. We are learning an incredible amount during these new experiences and will continue to learn in partnership with you, each and every day. As evidenced by the last few days, we will get through this as a team!

School Closures

The Governor has ordered that all public schools will remain closed through Tuesday, March 31. Our schools' date of re-open will be dependent on the recommendations of our state and local health officials.

We received word from the CIAC that it still may consider a modified Spring Sports schedule if health conditions allow. More information on this will be shared from our Athletic Director as it becomes available.

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At this time, we are unable to provide families access to the buildings during the closure to minimize the possibility of re-introducing germs into the building. All buildings continue to be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected by our custodial staff during this closure. A big THANK YOU to those members of our team as they have worked tirelessly to keep our buildings safe.

Distance Learning

Teachers from each school are working to create additional materials and lessons to support student learning during this extended closure. Teachers are using the familiar online platform Google Classroom for grades 3-12 to post lessons and communicate with students and families beginning Monday, March 30, 2020. Students in grades K through 2 will use ClassDojo. Timeframes for distance learning will come from your building Administrators, but remember, your teachers will be available from 9:00 am – 2:30 pm Monday-Friday to support our students and parents.

Teachers will be able to push out and collect student assignments through these online platforms. Teachers may also use Google Chat, in order to provide opportunities for student interaction if they so choose. We are encouraging ways to remain in verbal contact. We want to maintain a consistent and reassuring presence in your child's life during this potentially stressful time.

These distance learning days will count as school instructional days. Therefore, it is important that each child participates in the online learning every day. Teachers will be taking attendance based upon a multitude of verifications such as: evidence that students are online and participating, as well as the completion of assignments or attendance of an online meeting.

Students who are not participating online will receive a call from the teacher or other school staff member to see if families are in need of assistance with technology. Daily attendance is important. If a child is sick and unable to participate in learning on a certain day, the parent/guardian should notify the school that your child will not be able to complete their work or participate due to illness.

Special education and support service staff are working to provide learning modifications and support to students with special needs. These staff members are also available by e-mail (they will get back to you via e-mail or phone) to support families during this time.

Our technology staff has been working to communicate with families to make devices available to students and to help families gain access to the internet. If you have any technical questions, please submit an inquiry on the Chromebook Help Request link located on the "Distance Learning" and "Parents and Students" pages of our website. This should be used for issues such as: user id/passwords for students, connecting devices to wifi, and other technical issues. This inquiry should not be used for any lesson and instructional questions.

In the event that you do not have Internet access at your home, please use this link from Comcast, which is providing Internet access free for 60 days. Please see the link below for information on two months of free internet service in response to COVID-19: <https://www.internetessentials.com/covid19>

No 504 meetings or PPTs will be held during the weeks schools are closed.

Lunch For All

We will continue to provide lunch five days a week. The times and locations for our Mobile Meals Distribution program are posted on our website.

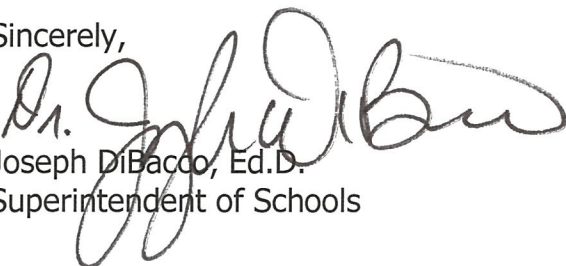
We want to reiterate that Ansonia Public Schools recognizes this is a concerning time for all and that no digital plan will ever replace your child's teacher. Our students in grades K-12 should have approximately four hours of work each school day in order to keep them focused and to continue their learning the best way possible. All principals, teachers, and staff will periodically check in to assess and receive feedback about what you may be seeing at home and what may need to be adjusted. We want to thank you in advance for your patience and partnership! As always, all staff are here to help in any way needed to ensure an equitable learning experience for students. Please note that during this time of working remotely, our staff will be expected to be actively engaged in work during the hours of 9:00 am -2:30 pm and to be available.

We would like all to remember that flexibility is the key to support distance learning along with supporting individual students and families. Please understand that this is a new process for everyone and we may need to make changes as we go, but remember it is the students for whom we are here. Keeping their learning in mind and us making our best efforts to achieve this, will help us to get through this.

If you have any questions about COVID-19, please call 2-1-1. Please be assured that my team will continue to monitor the situation daily and will keep you informed as changes occur.

Please make every effort to keep your families safe and healthy. Be assured that we will get through this together, WE are Ansonia Strong!

Sincerely,



Dr. Joseph DiBacco, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools