



# *Colchester Public Schools*

127 Norwich Avenue, Suite 202

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*"We create innovative thinkers for a dynamic world"*

**Jeffrey E. Burt**  
Superintendent of Schools

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March 17, 2020

Dear Colchester Families,

I sincerely hope that each of you are staying healthy by following the social distancing guidelines that have been issued. We are continuing to monitor the rapidly changing COVID-19 situation with public health officials and the CT Department of Education to determine the best courses of action for keeping our community safe while also providing educational opportunities to our learners. Each day brings new developments, and a number of executive orders and directives have been issued.

The 180 school day minimum has been waived. In addition, we have also been assured that if we put forth our best effort in substantive distance/online learning, then the District can end our school year on the originally planned last school calendar day of June 15th.

I understand and appreciate that this unprecedented challenge is very difficult for everyone. The uncertainty of how the Coronavirus will impact our community, and for how long, makes critical educational planning difficult. I am, however, proud of how our community is coming together to do what is in the best interest of students and our vulnerable loved ones. At Colchester Public Schools, we are working together to utilize all available resources to ease the stress of this disruption.

Here are important updates on our ongoing initiatives:

## **School Closures**

As of now, the Governor has closed all schools until March 31, 2020. However, we are preparing for a much longer closure, with the possibility of closing for the remainder of the school year (see "Distance Learning Opportunities" below).

## **Distance Learning Opportunities**

Recently, the Commissioner of Education has encouraged districts to shift from "supplemental learning" to "distance learning." Our team has been working and will continue to work during this week to develop an appropriate plan for distance/online learning for all of our students. As this is a new way of learning for both our students and staff, this plan will not be perfect, but we have been encouraged by the Commissioner to offer programming as soon as possible. As we continue to work on learning opportunities in the coming weeks, please know we will continue to improve our interactions with our students.

Prior to moving to regular distance/online learning our goal has been to provide supplemental learning opportunities that are listed [here](#), or can be found on the district's COVID19 Information/Update webpage. We intend to provide every student with distance or online learning opportunities provided by our expert educators beginning by March 31 or sooner, which will give our staff sufficient time to develop this program. I will send out specific details on this program and exact start date as we get closer to the end of March.

### **Survey on Distance Learning**

In order to help us with this task we ask that you complete the following [survey](#) so that we can identify which families are in-need of access to wireless internet and a school-issued device. Please know that we wish all of our Colchester families the best during these unpredictable events, and are eager to get back to educating students as fast, and as safely as possible.

### **Meals**

In an effort to provide you with necessary information and services during this difficult time, we are asking that you take a few minutes at your earliest convenience and complete the attached anonymous survey for information regarding food service needs. The information gathered from the survey will help us to better serve our Colchester families. Please take the survey here:

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSe3fE3tiiiqWZ8r4DqzRtKSk5cJeiI127djswiJ2OsP\\_wFkujw/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSe3fE3tiiiqWZ8r4DqzRtKSk5cJeiI127djswiJ2OsP_wFkujw/viewform)

Please note that prepared meals will be available **for pick-up only** from 9:00am-11:00AM beginning on Wednesday, March 18, 2020 at Bacon Academy.

### **Website Updates**

Link to Colchester Public School website page on Coronavirus communication:  
<https://www.colchesterct.org/page.cfm?p=593>

### **Buildings Status**

All Colchester Public Schools facilities are closed to the public until further notice. For the time being school and central offices are open for phone calls or questions. No visitors please.

### **April Vacation**

At this point, the status of the April vacation break is yet to be determined.

### **Email**

For questions and concerns, please email [covid19@colchesterct.org](mailto:covid19@colchesterct.org)

As always, if you are not able to access any of this information or need additional help please call the main office of your child's school or call Central Office, 860-537-7267.

Another update will be sent by the end of the week with additional information on the potential length of the closure and any other important updates. Thank you for your patience and understanding as we navigate this extraordinary challenge.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Burt  
Superintendent

**SURVEYS:**

**Food service needs:**

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1ppHXXJiXNqjeSpgRIAnXEFXHSEFYZq8vfvsX3GWGOAsg/edit>

**Wireless internet capability and available devices:**

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSftkOJbu4CAeJQvsJXOCrt4GqpRHP L5kw- FX4iCxfQLTqHA/viewform>

**Supplemental learning opportunities:**

<https://www.colchesterct.org/uploaded/General Information/DB - District News/Instructional Opportunities During School Closure.pdf>