



Colchester Public Schools

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Dear Colchester Families,

As we enter the last week of school, I'm so happy to share firm Graduation plans, uplifting highlights of the week including WJMS students' recognition for their Broadway Cafe, and showcases of our wonderfully talented art and choral students. With so much COVID-19 uncertainty remaining in our world, I am grateful for the grace, determination, and innovation of everyone in our school community. The collective and collaborative efforts of teachers, staff, students, parents, and my fellow administrators have been awe-inspiring.

2020-2021 School Update

With COVID-19 uncertainty continuing to impact our nation and community, much work remains to be done to ensure that Colchester Public Schools is taking all necessary action and precautions for the safety and health of our students and employees. We anticipate that school districts will not receive critical guidance and/or mandates from Governor Lamont, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), or the Connecticut State Department of Education until mid-July as part of the state's Phase III reopening plans. In the meantime, the District has a Reopening Task Force that is working on multiple reopening plans to address any prerequisites coming from those governing bodies.

We greatly value your perspectives on returning to school. While all plans for returning to school will be subject to state and federal directives, Colchester Public Schools **will be sending a survey in two weeks** seeking your input regarding development of our plans for a return to school.

Summer School Support Programming

After June 15th, schools will be providing virtual summer support to students who were unable to make grade level progress this year. If your student has met the established criteria, and is eligible for summer support programming, you will receive a letter from the school indicating the focus for and amount of support being offered. Supports will be offered by our highly-trained faculty, and will assist students reach proficiency in the compacted curriculum standards that were the focus of Phase III: New Learning that

occurred between May 4th and June 15th. Please contact your school administration if you have any questions.

Meal Program

Our meal program will continue through June 30th. We will have an update by June 26th as to whether or not we will continue the program through the summer. The Colchester Food Bank distributes food every week to families in need. If you or someone you know needs food, please call their office at (860) 537-7255 to schedule a pick-up time. The district is actively pursuing the possibility of providing meals through the summer months.

Student Chromebook Collection

Chromebooks and other device collection will occur by appointment between June 22th and July 1st. This collection is for all current grade Pre-K through grade 5, and grade 11 and 12 students. Current students in grades 6 through 10 will keep their devices through the summer. Please visit the following link for directions on scheduling your drop-off.

[Student Chromebook/Device Drop-off Process](#)

School Communications

- **Bacon Academy Graduation Update:** [Graduation 2020 Informational Letter](#)
- **Bacon Academy Senior Celebration:** [Senior Celebration Announcement](#)
- **WJMS letter from Principal Bennett:** Please see the letter from Principal Bennett regarding end of year activities, including the 8th Grade Promotion ceremony on June 12th: [WJMS End of Year Letter to Parents](#).
- **WJMS Book Returns:** Students may return WJMS Textbooks and Library/Media books by placing them inside the WJMS Book Bin outside of our Main Entrance from 7:00am - 7:00pm, Monday-Friday. Please place a post-it note on each item with your student's name, grade, team, and teacher's name. Parents/Caregivers are responsible for any textbooks or library/media books that are not returned to WJMS. Please keep in mind, however, that Library/Media book due dates have been extended to September 1, 2020. The WJMS Book Bin is **not** for technology items. We will individually contact those students that **will not** be attending Colchester Public Schools next year, as well as those students who borrowed WJMS calculators, to schedule a drop-off time for those items.
- CES's [News from the Nest](#)

Feedback Survey

Please talk to your student about his or her experience online, then complete the following anonymous survey: [Distance Learning Survey](#). This is a **new** survey as of June 10th, and responses will be used to help us understand the online learning experiences of students during a period of school closure!

Nurse's Update: Empowering, Protecting, and Living in the time of COVID-19

Please visit these links for the fourth in a four-part series **#HealthyatHome** about empowering our community to take control of health to protect against COVID-19.

- From Psychology Today: [How Stress Affects the Immune System](#)
- From The American Heart Association: [Spend Time in Nature to Reduce Stress and Anxiety](#)

- Need to get away? Virtual vacations: [The 51 Best Virtual Family Vacation Ideas for Staying Safe During this Pandemic](#)

2020-2021 Budget Process Update

On June 8th, the Board of Finance set forth a proposed 2020-2021 Board of Education budget representing a 0.19% increase. The BOF will vote on the Town and BOE budgets on June 15th; prior to that is the opportunity for public comment. There is no referendum this year per the Governor's Executive Order. Please visit the [Town's website](#) for more information on the budget process, important dates, and timeline. All documents related to budget discussions, including proposed reductions, can be found on our [Budget Webpage](#). For public access to virtual BOE meetings, visit the [Board of Education Website](#). Any questions pertaining to agenda items should be directed to boardquestions@colchesterct.org. Questions must be submitted at least one hour prior to the start of the meeting.

Have a question or concern?

- Is your student struggling emotionally? Here are our Mental Health professionals: [CPS Mental Health Contacts](#)
- Visit our Frequently Asked Questions and Answers: [Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- **EMAILS**
General questions: covid19@colchesterct.org
Tech questions: techhelp@colchesterct.org
BOE questions: boardquestions@colchesterct.org
- For questions pertaining to a specific school, please email the teacher, administrator, or office staff of that school directly.

Please enjoy this week's good news and highlights:

- [WJMS's Broadway Cafe Cart Brings Coffee and Smiles](#)
- [Bacon Academy Chamber Choir sings James Taylor's "That Lonesome Road"](#)
- [Bacon Academy Women's Choir sings Eric Whitacre's Seal Lullaby](#)
- [WJMS Virtual Art Show 2020](#)

We will continue to send Friday email updates to keep you informed of District decisions regarding school opening in the Fall.

Take care and please be safe.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey Burt
Superintendent