



Methuen Public Schools

Superintendent of Schools
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Good evening Methuen families,

I hope these correspondences continue to find you and your families healthy and well. Our students and their families wellbeing continues to be a priority for our staff and the community. We continue to focus on meeting the needs of all of our families during this time by providing meals, support, and learning plans. Our sense of community, although appropriately distanced, is remarkably strong!

I do have several updates this week for everyone.

- The Learning from Home plans from educators will be sent on Sunday morning by 9:00am, which we hope will allow families some time to plan for the week. We received much feedback about this from families and staff and hope this makes Monday mornings feel less stressful. You may also see the weekly plans broken down into suggested activities for each day, which we hope helps with management.
- We are opening the option for educators to use video conferencing through Google Hangouts/Meet, as this tool is a part of our current Google platform. While this will not be required for any staff or student group, it is an additional tool that some staff will use. As you know, this is new territory for all of us and we wanted to make sure we had time this week to prepare notices for you and guidelines and support for teachers. It is imperative that you read through this [letter](#) regarding the use and student expectations for video conferencing. There is an OPT OUT survey in the letter for any parent to fill out who does not want their student participating in Google Hangouts/Meet for video conferencing.
- We will be discussing the issue of grading for both 4th term at the MHS and 3rd trimester at the K-8 schools next week and will reach out by the end of next week with more information. Please encourage your students to engage as much as they can at this point considering your own situation first.
- We will be continuing with our Learning from Home plans in this manner for the weeks of April 6-9 (April 10 is Good Friday), the week of April 13-17 and the week of April 27-May 1.

- The decision was made this week to keep April vacation as scheduled. At this point, it remains a local decision to change the school calendar. We strongly believe that everyone (staff and families) needs to unplug for the week. Everyone has been working very hard to maintain connections with students and teachers, adjusting to significant life changes at home, and trying to be all things to our children and family members. As we are hearing the prediction that more people may get sick in the next two weeks in Massachusetts, we also want to consider the potential stress this may undoubtedly put on the community. We feel this time should be used for everyone to take a deep breath.
- We have been fielding questions regarding special education services and what that looks like during this unprecedented closure. Our Director of Student Services, Gina Bozek has written this [letter](#) for parents around this topic. It has been a struggle to determine how the federal and state laws are being interpreted under these circumstances. Ms. Bozek and her team have been working around the clock with our state department and legal counsel to make sure we get the information correct.
- Reminder to view our webpage [Methuen Resources](#) for all information regarding learning plans and resources, mental health and social emotional resources, and technology resources and updates. All pages are updated regularly so please visit often.
- We will be continuing our lunch program at the Tenney during April vacation Tuesday, April 21-Friday, April 24. It will be closed on Friday, April 10 and Monday, April 20.

Please take care of yourselves and your families. We miss the students terribly but know we will see everyone soon.

Sincerely,

Brandi L. Kwong
Superintendent
Methuen Public Schools