



WESTWOOD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Honoring Tradition, Inspiring Excellence, Shaping the Future

EMILY J. PARKS
Superintendent of Schools

MARCH 16 UPDATE FOR FAMILIES

March 16, 2020

Dear Westwood Families:

You have been displaying an impressive level of patience over the last couple of days. We know there are many questions and really appreciate that you are refraining from sending lots of emails with questions. Your restraint is allowing us to work efficiently and get information out to the community as quickly as possible. This is a lengthy letter. **Please be sure to read it through carefully, as it contains some action items.**

To be clear, the first four days of this closure (last Friday, today, tomorrow and Wednesday) are days that we will be required to make-up in June (along with the snow day we had in December). In that sense, we have not lost any learning time. This window has been very helpful for us as we work through many logistics and attempt to get our questions answered by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE).

Learning Activities:

We intend to communicate the framework of our plan to you by Thursday morning. This plan will not be a replication of the traditional school day, but rather a measure to provide continuity of learning for our students. You should expect that teachers will be checking in with their classes by Friday and will be rolling out learning activities on Monday. Please do not email your child's individual teachers prior to Monday. We want to preserve their ability to plan with colleagues this week.

In the meantime, our staff has created a menu of optional enrichment and review activities by grade level and content area for students to engage with this week. The menu is posted on the [WPS Continuation of Learning](#) webpage.

Special Education is working to provide equitable access for students with IEPs to the alternative learning activities being designed by the WPS. We are awaiting further guidelines from state and federal agencies and will communicate by the end of this week.

Technology Readiness:

As we work to develop remote learning resources for students, the Westwood Public Schools is looking to assess the technology readiness of families and their children. All students in grades 6 - 12 should have a functioning Chromebook or, in the case of some high school students, are participating in the Bring Your Own Device Program (BYOD). Parents of students in grades 3 - 5 will have an opportunity to pick up a school-owned Chromebook on Wednesday, March 18th (see additional information below). Students in

grades Pre-K through 2 are not expected to have a device, but we do want parents to be able to access online learning resources on their behalf.

If you DO NOT have reliable WiFi internet access or a fully functioning internet enabled device, please fill out this technology readiness survey:

<https://tinyurl.com/wpstechreadiness>

Parents or guardians that fill out this survey will be contacted by the District to help resolve any issues that may interfere with the implementation of a remote learning plan. If you are relying on your phone for Internet service or if you have a neighbor who is without WiFi, please contact the district office at 781-326-7500 and dial 0 for operator. Someone will return your voicemail.

Chromebook, Medication, and Instrument Pickups:

On Wednesday, March 18th from 9:00 am - 12 pm, parents will have an opportunity to pick up the following items from their child's school:

- Medicine being held by the school nurse
- Band instruments
- Grades 3 - 5 only: Parents and guardians of students in grades 3 - 5 are being asked to pick up a District-owned Chromebook and charger. Some parents may prefer to use a device already in the home. While this option is acceptable, we encourage you to pick up the Chromebook for two reasons:
 - Your child is familiar with the device.
 - School-owned Chromebooks are managed by the District IT department and have been configured to provide the most efficient user experience possible.

We will have a Chromebook for every student in grades 3 - 5. If you plan to pick up medication or a musical instrument, please fill out this form so that we can have your item ready and at the curb:

[Link to survey for picking up medicine and/or an instrument.](#)

Parents and guardians will simply drive up to the main entrance of the school that their child attends to receive these items using a "rolling pick up" model. Please follow posted signage and do not exit your vehicle.

Food Pantry/Grocery Card Distribution:

- Reminder: Please see the attached [letter regarding food support for students](#) who are eligible for free or reduced lunch and details regarding grocery card distribution this Wednesday from 9 am to 11 am at the Westwood Food Pantry.
- If your student is not eligible for free or reduced lunch, but your family is in need of food assistance during this time period, please contact the [Westwood Food Pantry](#).

Clearly, this period of disruption is a test of fortitude for us all. Thank you for your continued support. We are committed to doing our best for students throughout this challenging time.

Sincerely,

