

## **Cancellation of In-Person Classes**

Dear Parents and Community Members:

We hope that this message finds you all safe and well. As a school district, we have been closely monitoring local, state, and federal public health guidance and data regarding the spread of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19). We are currently at a rate of 17.7%, which is in the red metric as shared by the state (<https://portal.ct.gov/Coronavirus/COVID-19-Data-Tracker>). While this number is very concerning by itself, what is more concerning is that this number is going to go up based upon the number of new cases (10 new confirmed cases amongst students and staff) that have been reported since last Thursday when that number was issued. As a point of reference, this number affects many more students and staff through contact tracing which also affects our ability to safely keep our schools open and adequately staffed.

After much consultation with our district doctor, the Chief of Pediatrics from Griffin Hospital, our Head Nurse, our Emergency Management Director, the Director of the Naugatuck Valley Health District, the Board Chair, The Board Vice Chair, and the First Selectwoman we have made the extremely difficult decision to cancel in-person hybrid classes for all students and staff and move to remote learning for the next two and a half weeks. This change will take effect starting on Monday November 9, 2020 until Monday November 30, 2020. In person hybrid learning will resume on Monday November 30, 2020. Please continue to do your part to help mitigate the spread of the virus while at home doing your remote learning. Please be cautious of social gatherings. We look forward to seeing everyone back in person on Monday November 30, 2020.

The closure affects all school programming, including before- and after-school activities, all athletic and extracurricular practices and competitions, and all weekend events.

Please Note: Meals for students will continue to be available every day for pick-up at Seymour Middle School from 12:00pm – 2:00pm.

District teachers and staff have already been using the remote learning platform for our students, and as such, we want all students to log into their teachers classroom as they normally would on their remote learning days. If you have any questions, please contact your child's school administrator.

COVID-19 is spread mainly via person-to-person contact through contaminated air droplets from coughing and sneezing by an infected person. As with controlling the spread of other viruses, we urge everyone to take and speak to your children about the following preventive measures:

- Wash your hands frequently, but especially after using the restroom and before preparing or consuming food. Using soap and hot water, wash for about 20 seconds. Be sure to also wash your fingertips. When soap and water are not available, use hand sanitizer.

- Avoid coughing or sneezing into your hands or in the air. Always try to cough or sneeze into a tissue, then throw the tissue away. If you don't have a tissue, cough/sneeze inside the elbow of your arm.
- As much as you can, avoid touching your eyes, mouth, and nose.
- Wear a face covering (mask) whenever there is a likelihood that you or your family members will be in the presence of others.
- Maintain social distancing (at least 6 feet) between yourself and others when outside of your home.

Below is the list of COVID-19 symptoms for which everyone should monitor in their family members:

- Fever (100.4° Fahrenheit or higher)
- Chills or shaking chills
- Uncontrolled new cough (not due to other known cause, such as chronic cough)
- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- New loss of taste or smell

In addition to the previous symptoms, sore throat, muscle pain, nausea, vomiting, headache and diarrhea have also been associated with COVID-19.

For additional information on COVID-19 symptoms, please see:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>

Staff and students exhibiting any of the above symptoms, or feeling ill, should remain home, call their medical provider to report their symptoms and ask about testing prior to seeking in-person care at a clinic, physician's office, or hospital.

For more information on what to do if you or a family member has possible symptoms, a diagnosis, or exposure to COVID-19, please see *Addendum 5: Interim Guidance for Responding to COVID-19 Scenarios in Connecticut School Districts*, available here:

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/COVID19/COVID-19-Resources-for-Families-and-Educators/Addendums-and-FAQs>

We are closely monitoring this situation and working with Naugatuck Valley Health Department and will provide you with updates as we know more. If you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact us. Please stay healthy and safe.

Sincerely,

Michael Wilson, Superintendent  
Vonda Tencza, Associate Superintendent