



Michael P. Yamin
Superintendent

March 12, 2020

Dear Region 16 staff, students, parent/guardians and community members,

As we continue to prepare for a potential verified case of the Coronavirus in our Region, we wanted to update you on contingency plans to continue instruction and maintain a healthy learning environment. We have been actively working with our Interdepartmental Safety Committee, which includes the Chesprocott Health District, Naugatuck Valley Health District, emergency personnel in both the Town of Beacon Falls and Prospect as well as our administrators, BOE members and staff leadership teams, to address the challenges presented by the COVID-19 virus. In an effort to keep you informed of our planning efforts, we have outlined many critical points in this email. Please read carefully. I also want to express that we are working very closely with local health officials and that this is a very fluid situation. **Our plans are subject to change as circumstances may dictate.**

In the event that it becomes necessary to close schools **for an extended period of time**, we are presently working collectively with Region 16 staff to **create a remote learning plan**. **"If necessary, the goal of this work is not to replace instructional days but to allow our students, and families the opportunity to remain actively engaged in learning"**. The State of Connecticut is requiring us to make up these days, however, not allowing students to sit idle and without learning becomes our ethical responsibility as a staff. If we have to extend the school year due to a shutdown we have 12 days in June to help us reach the 180-day threshold. There is a process to petition for the Connecticut State Board of Education to waive the 180-Day school year requirement. However, it is subject to final approval of the CSDE.

Our efforts are focused on preparing for the continuity of instruction in a responsible manner in which we will service our students to reduce gaps in learning. **As such, we are planning an "emergency single session day" next Tuesday, March 17th.** I apologize for the short notice, however, preparing for the continuity of instruction is a responsibility we take very seriously.

Our plan, in the event of a closure is as follows:

In the event of extended school closures, the expectation would be for all students to work from home on a 2-hour delay schedule and work on assignments (online and offline) that will be provided by teachers. **Please see the attached Continuity for Education Plan below which provides parent guidelines for student learning at home should it become necessary.** In addition, we have created a page on our Region 16 website which includes a library of online resources referenced in our plan. Please notify your school if you do not have access to a computer, laptop or tablet at home.



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We also need to remember that the most important thing that we can do to limit the spread of the virus in school or at home is to regularly and effectively wash your hands. We know that this is a stressful time for everyone. If you have questions on the virus, you can **call 2-1-1** or **text "CTCOVID" to 898211**. Also, answers to many of the questions people may have can already be found by visiting the state's coronavirus information website at <https://portal.ct.gov/coronavirus>. People are encouraged to review this website for answers to their questions first before calling the hotline. The CDC site defines everyday preventive actions to help prevent the spread of the virus-to include:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, and throw the tissue away in the trash
- Avoid rubbing your eyes
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects
- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds
- Stay home when you are sick, and expect to get medical care

Visit <https://emergency.cdc.gov/han/2020/han00429.asp> to read the updated guidance.

Thank you for continuing to educate your students and children about this and for providing them with daily reminders about the importance of hand-washing throughout the day.

As of today, beyond the precautions listed above, it is business as usual for the district. We are, however, monitoring school trips, as we have a significant number scheduled throughout the spring. We are currently evaluating each trip on its individual merit. Teachers will be notified if a trip that has been coordinated is going to be canceled, but it is advisable to reach out to any trip destination or transportation providers to discuss what cancellation may mean in terms of fees or other logistical issues just in case. We are also cancelling any events that will result in a 100 people or more gathering in one area.

Finally, when it comes to your health, please take care of yourself. I know that sometimes it can be more difficult to stay home and rest than come to school; but if you are feeling sick, please stay home. If you have a fever over 100 degrees, flu-like or respiratory symptoms, this is non-negotiable and you must remain at home for at least 24 hours. Everyone should be sensitive to students and staff who may be returning from being sick or simply having a tickle in their throat. Fear can create real sensitivities. ***"There is strength in working together and supporting each other"***. Our success in managing this situation will require the flexibility and teamwork of the community, students, parents, and staff.

Thank you for your partnership!

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**REGION 16
CONTINUITY FOR EDUCATION PLAN
Grade Level Guidelines for Student Learning at Home**

<u>Grades K - 3</u>	
<u>Technology Based</u>	<u>Paper Based</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20 -30 minutes i-Ready Reading • 20 minutes i-Ready Math • 20 minutes independent reading • 10 - 15 minutes writing • 10 minutes Reading Eggs • 10 minutes Math Seeds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers will create packets to support learning at home

<u>Grades 4 - 5</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 minutes i-Ready Reading • 30 minutes i-Ready Math • 1 Reflex Math lesson a day • 20 minutes' journal writing--journal prompts on Schoology • 20 minutes of independent reading

<u>Grades 6 - 8</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 - 60 minutes i-Ready reading • 30 - 60 minutes i-Ready math • 1 Journal Entry a day -- prompts on schoology • Science • Social Studies

<u>Grades 9 - 12</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers will post assignments and communicate with students through Schoology

The above referenced resources will be made available on a link from the Region 16 website if we close school and implement the Continuity of Education Plan: [R16 Homepage](#)