



# Griswold Public Schools

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March 20th, 2020

Dear Students, Parents, Faculty and Staff & Griswold Community:

We want to thank you all for your patience, understanding, and support during this unprecedented public health crisis. A flexible, adaptable mindset is most needed, as the plans we make today can very well change by the developments we encounter tomorrow. Our teamwork as a community continues to strengthen, as we remain a united front.

There are significant, timely developments we would like to share. Given that Governor Lamont put into effect an Executive Order this week that impacts public education, we have had to transition to distance learning to provide regular daily instruction to students, and to count these days as full school days. We are no longer expected to fulfill the 180-day requirement, and therefore, Griswold Public Schools will end the school year on our scheduled last day of school, which is June 17th. The Griswold Board of Education has set the Griswold Middle School 8th Grade Promotion Ceremony for June 16th, and the Board approved the Griswold High School Graduation Ceremony for June 17th. At this juncture, we will have April vacation.

Over the next week, we will all shift to online teaching and learning until further notice. This shift is by all means major, and it necessitates the collective efforts of our teachers, administrators, support staff, and most importantly, our students and their families. Students, parents, and caregivers will learn more from our administrators and teachers regarding the expectations for this new education delivery approach, which includes an assortment of virtual, on-line meetings; interactions with websites and other digital resources; and different communication methods between school and home. Please be aware that staff members will reach out to you by email or by phone in many cases. In the event you see a "blocked number" call, that may very well be one of our teachers or support staff attempting to make contact. We ask our students, parents and caregivers to join with us, as we all transition to this new reality. In moving forward together, we also implore you to exercise patience, anticipating the many bumps ahead in acclimating to this new landscape. To reiterate, in the upcoming weeks the interactions between our teachers and students will mostly occur online. Therefore, should there be any concerns, including those that may involve data privacy, we ask that you inform an administrator.

Equity and access to distance online learning have been raised, and we hear those concerns and your frustrations. Know that the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) informs us that these pressing issues are being taken into serious consideration, and the CSDE will provide more focused guidance next week. Our Griswold Public Schools Technology Department is working diligently to respond to technology issues, including issues of internet access and other tech topics. To that end, the Technology department created a

resource website to address your needs, which you can access from our homepage. We are requesting that all technology related topics be addressed to Jill Curioso at [jcurioso@griswoldpublicschools.org](mailto:jcurioso@griswoldpublicschools.org).

In terms of spring sports, we regret to inform you that there will be no team activities until further notice. This includes all practices, team conditioning, fundraising, and any and all team functions. While this is certainly disappointing to our student athletes, coaches, and families, we have been advised from a number of agencies including local health officials and the Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference (CIAC) that there should be no gathering of players whatsoever during this public health crisis. We hope to learn more about spring sports from the CIAC in the near future.

Access to the Griswold Public Schools buildings, at this point, is limited to essential personnel only and thus closed to the public. This is a preventative measure to ensure that our extra sanitation efforts are sustained. Our custodial staff remains committed to continuous deep cleaning, to extra precautions, and to make sure that our buildings are not compromised. The restricted building access does not have, at this point, any impact on our "Grab & Go" breakfast and lunch program sponsored by our Food Services Department. We plan to continue with the program next week, Monday through Friday, from 10:00 am - 2:00 pm at Griswold Middle School.

As community partners, we firmly believe in working together to address the needs of Griswold. If there is anyone who is in need of food or has some other unmet need as a result of this public health crisis, please contact the Griswold Senior Center for more information and guidance. You may contact the center at 860-376-2604, or the Director of the Griswold Senior Center & Social Services, Tina Falck, at 860-884-5876.

This is a lot of information to digest, and we realize how overwhelming it all can be. The important thing to remember is that you are not alone, and Griswold Public Schools and the Town of Griswold are here for you. Do not hesitate to let us know what we can do to help, for we are Griswold, Wolverine Strong.

Sincerely yours,

Sincerely yours,

Sean P. McKenna,  
Superintendent of Schools

Todd Babbitt,  
First Selectman, Town of Griswold