

March 16, 2020

Dear Walpole Public Schools Community:

I would like to address concerns regarding Governor Charlie Baker's announcement last night to close all public and private schools statewide until April 6. Although there are currently no confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Walpole at this time, this protective measure was put in place to best keep our staff and students safe.

We realize that the closing of schools can be difficult for many parents and students. We, too, are concerned about the impact this disruption of instructional time will have on students. While there is no replication of the traditional school day or the instructional time for our students in classrooms, our staff is working diligently to provide continuity of learning for all students. Parents/guardians (elementary) or students (middle school/high school) will receive information from their teachers by Friday of this week. As our teachers work to navigate this uncharted territory, we appreciate your patience and understanding.

There have been some questions regarding April vacation and the last day of school. While I understand the need to have this information, the last thing we want to do is to provide information that may change prior to the end of the school year. We will let you know when information becomes available.

Thank you for the many emails of support during this unprecedented time. We are grateful for those who have reached out to offer assistance to ensure our community has access to food. Maria Hall, Food Service Director, is working with the Food Pantry to assist our families in need. While we do not need volunteers, there is an opportunity for community members to make a financial donation to the Food Pantry to support all the good work this organization does for our community. Families are welcome to donate to the Food Pantry by clicking [here](#) and scrolling to the bottom of the page to the "Donate" icon or by mailing a check payable to the "Walpole Food Pantry" and mail to 135 School Street, Walpole, Ma 02081.

The CDC is recommending that people practice "social distancing" to further mitigate any potential spread of the virus. Social distancing - maintaining a distance of approximately 6 feet from other people - has proven effective at slowing the spread of COVID-19. I encourage families to take this recommendation seriously by avoiding crowded areas and limiting "play dates" with other families.

As we move through these next weeks, we will continue to update you with additional information. We recognize that this is unprecedented and that this school closure will be a significant burden for a number of our families. Should you or your family need support during this period, please do not hesitate to reach out to me and the school administrators via email.

Sincerely,

Bridget A. Gough, Ed. D.
Superintendent of Schools