

BOARD OF EDUCATION
SUSSEX-WANTAGE REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Dear Sussex-Wantage Families,

I am writing to update you on recent developments regarding COVID-19 to help build upon our mindset of ***preparedness vs. panic***. I want you to know what to expect should we be required to close. Please be aware that the decision to close schools for reasons of public health lies with the Department of Health. At this time, we have not received a directive to close, however, we want you to be prepared for that possibility as there might not be significant advanced warning. The New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) has directed each district to develop a system for remote learning in order to support our students. Remote learning can consist of digital tools or hard copy packets. Our staff at all grade levels and in all departments have been working hard to plan for a potential multiple-week closure of schools. Our plans include a blended learning experience consisting of virtual learning and/or more traditional hard copy packets of assignments as appropriate by grade level and school.

Clifton E. Lawrence & Wantage Schools

At Clifton E. Lawrence teachers have primarily focused on traditional hard copy packets of work. At Wantage Elementary School there is a combination of choices that offer a diverse selection of experiences and hard copy packets. Please anticipate these packets arriving home with your children today. We encourage you to look through the items and direct any questions to your child's teacher. In the event we do not have a school closure we recommend using these packets for enrichment activities. For students who were absent today, packets will be available for pick up at a designated district location in the future.

Sussex Middle School

At Sussex Middle School students will primarily utilize digital media and tools like Google Classroom. Your children were oriented to those resources today and have previous experience with them. If we are directed to close schools, we will do the best we can to provide as much instruction and as many learning resources as possible to students. Students who expressed a need for a device or alternative hard copy will be provided with them.

Postponed Events

I want to make you aware of our decision to postpone a number of events throughout the District that are anticipated to have large crowds in accordance with Governor Murphy's recent recommendation. We are postponing field trips, activity nights, assemblies, Family Math and Reading Nights, plays, tricky trays, bingo nights, Teen Arts, etc...until further notice. At this time we are also closely monitoring the 8th Grade Washington D.C. Trip and reviewing our options with our trip providers. Please anticipate an update on this specific trip in the near future. We understand how much time and effort everyone has put into these events and will work collaboratively to try to reschedule them. We sincerely appreciate your patience and cooperation in that regard.

Food Service (*Free & Reduced Lunch*)

At this time, the District has made preparations with Maschio's Food Service to provide students on *Free and Reduced Lunch* with continued service. The pick up zone for these meals is anticipated to be Sussex Middle School for the entire District. It is reserved for families who participate in the *Free and Reduced Lunch Program*. More information about food service will follow as needed.

While this will be an *imperfect endeavor*, we will work together to make the best of what will be a very challenging situation. It is understandable that students may feel worried or frightened about this health issue. Please do not hesitate to contact your child's teacher or to contact the school counselor, case manager, or other professional if you think your child needs additional support. During a school closure the most effective means of communicating with your child's teacher or other staff will likely be through email.

Thank you for your patience, calm, and understanding as we navigate an unusual set of circumstances. The purpose of these updates are not to cause alarm or panic, but to communicate and instill a mindset of ***preparedness vs. panic***. I will continue to update you with additional information as it becomes available via our website, *Instant Alert* phone call system, and email. I wholeheartedly believe that we are in this together and we will get through this together. Ultimately, our interconnectedness and support for each other during this unprecedented challenge will make us a stronger, more resilient *Sussex-Wantage Community*.

Sincerely,

Michael Gall
Superintendent of Schools

A directory of Faculty/Staff email addresses can be found here:
<https://www.swregional.org/domain/101>