

Dear Parents/Guardians:

We are clearly in uncharted territory at the present time. With a situation as fluid as this response to the coronavirus pandemic, the only thing we can be sure of is that plans will change. For now, here is the best information we have for moving forward with our district's top priority, which has turned to launching a distance learning plan in order to allow for continuity of your child's education.

As you surely know by now, Governor Lamont has declared by executive order that all Connecticut public schools are closed until March 31<sup>st</sup>. The Commissioner of Education has indicated the distinct possibility that school closure will extend several weeks further – a belief that we share given the recent guidance issued by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) as well as the actions of Governors in other states. As a result, the Simsbury Public Schools is shifting our implementation plans for distance learning. **Our targeted launch date for this initiative is now Monday, March 23<sup>rd</sup>.**

Given the Commissioner's latest guidance (subject to change), we are planning for the school year to end on its previously announced date of June 15<sup>th</sup>. While districts are being encouraged to launch distance learning as soon as possible, flexibility regarding the 180-day requirement has been extended. **Therefore, the school year will end at its regularly scheduled time, and we will plan to observe the scheduled vacation week during April.**

The school administration's preparation and planning for distance learning started a few weeks ago and kicked into high gear on Monday. Principals, department supervisors, elementary curriculum and special education leaders, and others have developed a framework for delivering learning outside the walls of the traditional school, and we will be rolling that plan out to teachers by the end of this week. Of course, we know that there will be challenges – especially in the early phases -- and we will work to make the process as smooth as possible over time. This delivery model, which may last for many weeks, will be far from perfect as school districts across the nation are embarking on an educational model never attempted before K-12. Nonetheless, we have confidence that our teachers will make this experience meaningful for your child. You will hear from the office of Erin Murray, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching & Learning, as soon as we can share additional details.

Teachers will be at home while delivering this distance learning opportunity. In fact, the Simsbury Public Schools has adopted a work-from-home guideline for all non-custodial employees until further notice.

As always, I appreciate your continued patience, flexibility, and partnership with the Simsbury Public Schools. You may find the [Farmington Valley Health District guidelines to protect yourself, your family and your community from COVID-19](#) helpful. I wish you and your family the best possible physical and mental health as we navigate through these challenging times.

Matt Curtis  
Superintendent of Schools