



March 20, 2020

Dear Parents, Guardians and Students of EASTCONN Schools and Programs,

The safety of each of you remains EASTCONN's highest priority as we face the ever-changing health risks of COVID-19 (the Coronavirus).

We are providing this update with the most current information we have as of today, March 20th. We will continue to communicate with you regularly and as new information becomes available. We understand that the uncertainty of this experience is unprecedented and stressful. Your first priority is to take care of one another. We encourage you talk as a family with your children about the facts and their feelings, with reassurances that life will return to normal soon. Consider this time a gift to reconnect as a family, spend quality time together, talking, playing games or taking walks. To assist you in these conversations, we offer the following resources:

[https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/school-climate-safety-and-crisis/health-crisis-resources/talking-to-children-about-covid-19-\(coronavirus\)-a-parent-resource](https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/school-climate-safety-and-crisis/health-crisis-resources/talking-to-children-about-covid-19-(coronavirus)-a-parent-resource)

If you have younger children or are an older sibling with younger brothers or sisters, this is a great story to read that may help them understand the Coronavirus:

<https://www.elsa-support.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Childrens-story-about-coronavirus.pdf>

Status of Schools:

- Governor Lamont has waived the 180-day requirement for schools to be open. As of today, schools are closed through March 31 by the Governors executive order. We anticipate the school closure will be extended for an additional 4-8 weeks and possibly through the end of the school year.
- The last day of school for each EASTCONN school or program is as follows:
 - WAC – June 10
 - NRP, RTS and QMC Magnet – June 15
 - EVC, Autism, ACT Magnet and LEAP Alternative HS – June 16
- Graduation dates and decisions about graduation ceremonies are on hold.
- Due to the unforeseen time schools will be closed, we are preparing for students' continuity of learning through online access to teachers and learning tasks.
- State Testing – SBAC and SAT testing will not occur at this time.
- If you have a special-needs student, more detailed information will be provided regarding IEP services within the next week.

Online Learning: Don't Panic!

Accessing online learning opportunities won't be like a regular school day. But don't worry: Next week, we will provide you with an overview of the expectations prior to the start of online classes. For now, teachers are reaching out and connecting with you to ensure that students are safe and prepared for this shift in our daily learning routine.

Technology and WI-FI Access

- A survey went out to all families via school messenger asking if you had access to Wi-Fi and some form of technology for students. If you did not respond, you will be receiving a call from school to gather this information.
- If you don't have technology at home, we will communicate with you next week to arrange for a computer pick-up. You will get more information about this next week.
- If you do not have access to Wi-Fi, we will discuss options with you.

Meals:

- Student meals are available through EASTCONN Food Services. Please visit www.eastconn.org/studentmeals to learn more, or call EASTCONN Food Services Director Heather Plourde at 860-455-1552.

School and Program Facilities

- Administrators, teachers and staff are working from home, remotely.
- We are available by e-mail.
- Comprehensive cleaning and disinfecting of each facility is taking place.

Self-care reminder – Because we care deeply for each of you:

- Please continue to encourage family members to wash their hands with soap often.
- Cover coughs and sneezes.
- Avoid groups of 10 or more.
- Practice social distancing (6 feet or more).
- Report to a medical professional immediately if experiencing flu-like symptoms and a fever.
- If you are experiencing symptoms, stay home.

Administrators are holding daily conference calls to share information and to plan ahead, using updates from state. Please do not hesitate to reach out to your school/program administrator or teachers with questions. We are all in this together!

Stay well!

Sincerely,

Diane Dugas

Diane Dugas
EASTCONN Director of Leading and Learning