



April 9, 2020

Dear ACT, QMC and LEAP Parents, Guardians and Students,

I hope this communication finds you, your family and loved ones well and coping with our community's adjustments since the onset of COVID-19. It's hard to believe we've been home for four weeks. During this time, we recognize that there are challenges in adjusting to learning and living exclusively at home, including managing stressful financial, physical, emotional and health challenges. Please know that our first and foremost priority continues to be the well-being of each of you.

Today, Governor Lamont announced that Connecticut Schools will remain closed until May 20th. As always, his decisions are based on keeping our communities safe and healthy. As we know, northeastern Connecticut will be impacted by the virus last in the state, bringing us late into the spring.

With that in mind, I am writing to provide you with the most recent updates.

Continuous Learning from Home

ACT/QMC and LEAP launched continuous learning-from-home on March 30th. As we enter week two, our goal is to continue connecting and engaging with students in continuous learning. We recognize that the transition from school-to-home is full of new challenges. And while a weekly, online schedule has been shared, we also understand that family circumstances may affect students' ability to participate online. We ask that students make their best effort to participate in online classes, and they check in, work the best they can, and that they connect with teachers, ask for feedback, and hand in projects.

April Vacation

April vacation starts tomorrow, Friday, April 10th (Good Friday), through Friday, April 17th. This week will allow everyone to pause and regroup. Teachers, administrators, staff, students and parents can take a break from screen time and enjoy what promises to be a week of spring-like weather.

Technology Support

Over the past two weeks, we have provided technology and Wi-Fi to families who need them. If your child has a technology equipment issue with an EASTCONN-issued laptop, he/she can get technical help by sending an email to studenthelp@eastconn.org.

Or, they can visit <https://www.eastconn.org/studenttechsupport> to find out more. The link is also on each menu bar on your child's school webpage.

Graduation Dates

We know how important High School Graduation celebrations are. I've had the pleasure of meeting virtually with seniors and senior advisors from each school. They were asked to assist in sharing ideas and planning various options, keeping safety in mind. Walking across a stage in caps and gowns was their number-one hope. While we can guarantee that it will happen, we don't yet know when. At this

time, we'll need to delay our graduation-celebration decisions, while continuing to monitor the Governor's guidance. We'll make a final decision later this spring.

Parent Tips and Resources

We understand the stress that social distancing has on everyone. We are all experiencing the sadness and loss of missing family and friends, the loss of our old daily routine and in some cases, work. A variety of resources can be found in the following link to support families in a number of ways:

<https://portal.ct.gov/Coronavirus/Pages/Public-Health-Resources/Mental-Health-Resources>

With regard to supporting your child's learning, the greatest assistance you can provide is encouraging them to stay connected and engaged with their teachers, and to help them create a learning routine, even if it's not exactly the same routine or schedule provided by their school. No matter what, we hope you'll encourage them to persevere, a life-long skill that will always serve them well.

Your feedback is important to us. If your child is having difficulty learning from home, completing assignments, or needs other supports, *please reach out to his/her teacher directly*. Also, if you are having difficulty connecting or have other questions, please contact your school administrators for help.

Nursing Support

A letter went home earlier this week regarding student medications and support from the nursing staff. Please make sure to connect with your school's nurse if your child has medications that have not been picked up. The nursing team is ready to assist you with information and resources, in the event your family is experiencing challenges due to COVID-19.

Lastly - Stay Safe

1. HANDS – Wash them often.
2. ELBOWS – Cough into them.
3. FACE – Don't touch it.
4. SPACE – Keep a safe distance.
5. HOME – Stay home if you can.

Finally, I would like to remind everyone that we are in this together. We will continue to gather your feedback regarding what is and isn't working, to modify and adjust our plan as we navigate the next several weeks together. Fitting for today's weather, I will leave you with this: "Rain doesn't last forever, the sun does shine again!"

Please stay well, Everyone,



Diane Dugas
EASTCONN Director of Leading and Learning