



## EAST LYME PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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April 24, 2020

Dear East Lyme High School Parents and Guardians:

For the Fourth Quarter Marking Period, East Lyme Public Schools has considered the severe impact of the pandemic on students and families and will take the steps stated below to prioritize ongoing learning while safeguarding against unintended consequences as students pursue secondary and postsecondary opportunities.

Our Fourth Quarter Marking Period policy is based on the recommendation from the Connecticut Department of Education on April 7, 2020:

*“Given the variability of online teaching and learning models, and issues of access and equity, it is appropriate to view the second half of the 2020 school year as a special case in terms of grading, GPAs, and transcripts. All students and staff are working under challenging conditions and, therefore, we encourage districts to focus priorities on student engagement and learning. We suggest that schools adopt a locally guided Pass/Fail protocol for grading while providing continued educational opportunities. All such “pass” markings shall constitute confirmation that the student has satisfactorily completed the necessary credits pursuant to C.G.S. Section 10-221a. We anticipate that these uniform grading policies across the state will create a consistent grading scheme for evaluating all Connecticut students by post-secondary institutions within and outside Connecticut.”*

In addition, universities across the country, including our Connecticut universities, have made it clear that students will not be penalized for missing traditional standardized tests or for posting Pass/Fail transcripts for the spring 2020 semester/trimester(s). One of the clearest explanations of the assurances our students should expect comes from Harvard University that states plainly that students *“will not be disadvantaged as a result . . . [of] the current coronavirus outbreak”*.

Based on the recommendation of the Connecticut Department of Education and Higher Educational Institutions, for the Spring Grading Marking Period of 2020, East Lyme Public Schools will adopt a policy of universal Pass/Fail with a provision for teachers to provide narrative commendations, just as they can now. Please refer to [East Lyme Public Schools Criteria and Expectations for our High School Students](#). Our policy maintains East Lyme’s high standard of 25 credits for every high school student while providing a clear path to graduation for all students and reduces barriers that may result from extended school closure.

### Revised East Lyme High School Grading Marking Periods (Effective April 22, 2020)

Third Quarter	Fourth Quarter
January 27-March 13, 2020	March 16-June 19, 2020

*East Lyme Public Schools will inspire, engage and educate each student to become a contributing citizen and a responsible, independent, and critical thinker.*

As parent/guardians to our high school students, we would like to encourage you to reinforce the opportunity that this moment in time allows. Through continued educational opportunities, students have the right to choose when and how they engage as well as how to interpret and act upon the feedback that they are receiving from their teachers. The current situation that our high school students are in, allows for character and social and emotional skill development. Our student's self-awareness, self-management and responsible decision-making abilities are key skills as they grapple with a new reality. College and employment references are often based on these skills so demonstrating them during this time is crucial to their post-secondary success. Also, it is a reminder to our students that our high school experience is based on a credit accrument process, so engagement equals credit for graduation. Our hope is that our students seize the opportunity to engage and learn and demonstrate their ability to uphold our mission statement by being the "responsible, independent, and critical thinkers" that we believe they have the potential to be.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Amy Drowne". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line extending from the end of the name.

Amy Drowne  
Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment