



## EAST LYME PUBLIC SCHOOLS

P.O. Box 220 • East Lyme, Connecticut 06333 • (860) 739-3966 • Fax (860) 739-1215

Jeffrey R. Newton  
*Superintendent of Schools*

Amy Drowne  
*Assistant Superintendent of  
Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment*

Kimberly Davis  
*Director of  
Student Services*

Maryanna Stevens, CPA  
*Director of Finance, Marketing,  
and Growth Management*

March 13, 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians,

I am writing to inform you that East Lyme Public Schools will be closed effective 5:00 p.m. today. On the advice of our local health departments, school superintendents in Southeastern Connecticut have come together to make a decision to put the health of our students and community at the forefront and activate school closures. We have been advised that the implementation of social distancing measures is a proven science-based intervention that has been shown to reduce the morbidity and mortality associated with communicable disease outbreaks. In the past, communities in which schools closed during a pandemic were able to positively impact and reduce the spread of disease. We felt compelled to make this decision to prevent the spread of illness among our students, staff, families, and our communities.

We have been apprised that we cannot confirm that COVID-19 will run its course and be over in two weeks. In fact, it is not likely that it will. **Given this information, we have made the determination to make this closure 'indefinite', with a minimum two-week closure to start. To be clear, the earliest East Lyme Public Schools will reopen to students is Monday, March 30, 2020.** This decision was made in consultation with, and with the support of, the health departments and emergency management professionals. Also, please be advised we will not have any formal distance-learning in place during the closure because such an approach would not allow for equitable experiences for all students. **(It is important to note that the last day of school cannot go past June 30, 2020 based on the executive order issued by the Governor.)**

It would be our hope to have schools closed for a two-week period only. The reality is that we very well could be closed for a much longer duration. You will receive follow-up correspondence from me on **Monday, March 23, 2020**. This correspondence will be in writing via Infinite Campus messenger and will provide any further updates that we have pertaining to our schools and COVID-19.

We are currently in unprecedented times, and I know that this situation creates hardships for all of us as parents and/or guardians. This decision is being made out of the utmost concern for the safety of all of our students, staff, and community members. We will remain in contact with the CT State Department of Education, CT Department of Public Health, Ledge Light Health District and the Governor's office. All future decisions will be based on the health and education of our students. Please monitor all channels of district communication (emails, text messages, Infinite Campus portal, district website at [www.eastlymeschools.org](http://www.eastlymeschools.org)) for additional details, links and information. We appreciate everyone's patience, understanding, and flexibility in what will be some difficult weeks ahead. Please do all you can to keep your families safe, and we will do our best to maintain ongoing communication and support your children in the best manner possible.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey R. Newton  
Superintendent of Schools  
JN:lr

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