



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION



March 16, 2020

Dear Colleagues,

Thank you for your efforts to continue education, provide food, and assist with supervision of students over the last few weeks. As you know, schools are closed for two weeks due to the Governor's Executive Order issued last night. There is a possibility that school closures will extend further. Please see updates below. Continue to use the previously provided Superintendents' only email address for questions as our leadership team's emails are not checked as routinely as the dedicated Superintendents' email.

Continuing Education

With the updated Federal Guidance shared last week and the likelihood that closures will extend past two weeks based on new CDC guidance, we are providing clarification on continuing education in districts.

1. Shift thinking from supplemental learning, which was intended for short-term cancellations, to distance learning, which is intended to serve as an alternative to learning in a school house. Engage students and families as soon as you can. You may choose to start with the resources sent last week or reach out to EdAdvance or your local RESC for more information. Given these new updates, do not wait for a perfect plan to be developed to start your distance learning. Continue to strengthen your model that can serve as long term education in the coming weeks. CSDE will provide you with a basic option to support your planning tomorrow. We are exploring options to allow for districts to maintain their original calendar end dates.
2. This crisis will provide plenty of opportunities for us to become one educational community. We are working with partners to develop more robust resources to promote equitable access throughout CT. More to come on that. Districts that have great resources in these areas are encouraged to share their plans with RESCs so that we can begin providing basic programming for students in districts that do not yet have a plan.
3. Begin your programming regardless of where you are in the waiver process. Apply retroactively in the next week if needed.

Food Insecurity

Districts have been very proactive communicating to families the plans for providing food to students. The CSDE Food and Nutrition Team has and will prioritize applications from districts to allow them to serve students in remote locations. Email John.frassinelli@ct.gov with questions.

Safety and Supervision

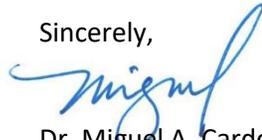
CSDE is part of the Governor's Emergency Operations Center's team convened to address Mass Care-Emergency Service Function (ESF) #6. Together with sister agencies such as Office of Early Childhood, Department of Children and Families, and Department of Social Services, we are collaborating on how to best provide supervision to students where needed. Special attention is being directed toward providing child care for children of health care professionals and first responders. Many have shared

efforts underway in their community. Please email Chris.clouet@ct.gov with information you may have on this.

I will be addressing standardized testing soon and plan to have information for your planning. At this point, standardized assessment is not a priority for me given the unprecedented disruption caused by this pandemic. I will be exploring options provided by the Federal Department of Education to waive requirements. Further, I would rather you utilize your staff's time to ensure educational continuity and student support.

Stay positive, stay safe, and continue to take care of yourself as you lead in unprecedented times!

Sincerely,



Dr. Miguel A. Cardona
Commissioner of Education