



Littleton Public Schools

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KELLY R. CLENCHY, Ed.D., SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

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March 13, 2020

Dear Families,

I appreciate your support as we collaborate with elected town officials and the Department of Public Health to make decisions that are in the best interest of our students, staff, and community. At this time, we have made the decision to close all Littleton Public Schools starting today, Friday, March 13, 2020, until Friday, March 27, 2020. Our goal in doing this is to proactively mitigate the spread of the virus and protect our community from the possibility of a widespread outbreak. It is important to note that health officials continue to report that the risk of contracting the virus in Massachusetts remains “low”.

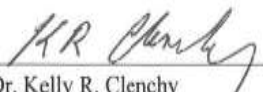
The closing of our schools is only a piece to the broader solution to prevent community spread of this virus. We ask that everyone do their part. As the CDC states, “the best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to this virus”. In order to maximize the benefit of closing schools, please refrain from hosting social gatherings and traveling during this time to minimize exposure. CDC recommendations to prevent illness can be found on their website located at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/prevention.html>. We will continue to closely monitor the situation with updates provided by our local Board of Health, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

For this temporary closure, we have compiled a list of enrichment resources that is available to all students during the school closure. This list can be found here: http://bit.ly/lps_enrich and on our LPS website. These activities are for enrichment and are optional, not required.

During the closure, we will complete a second deep clean of all schools. The first was completed during the February vacation and proved to be very effective. All school events in building use during this time period will be canceled.

Please find below the letter from Merrimack Valley Superintendents’ Association indicating the number of districts that also felt school closure was the best way to collectively mitigate the contact and transmission of COVID-19. It is comforting to know that a number of districts in our region are employing school district closure as a means of proactively trying to prevent contact with COVID-19 and also decrease the chance of its spread in our communities.

Sincerely,


Dr. Kelly R. Clenchy
Superintendent of Schools

It is the policy of the Littleton Public Schools not to discriminate on the basis of race, gender, religion, national origin, color, homelessness, sexual orientation, gender identity, age or disability in its educational programs, services, activities or employment practices. Further information may be obtained by contacting Justine Muir, District Equity Coordinator at 978-540-2500, jmuir@littletonps.org or 33 Shattuck Street, P.O. Box 1486, Littleton, MA 01460.

Our mission is to foster a community of learners who strive for excellence and prepare each student to be a successful, contributing citizen in a global society.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday, March 13, 2020

Two-Week School Closure

As superintendents of schools await further guidance from state and federal public health officials, the Merrimack Valley Superintendents Association has collaborated to make a timely and unified decision about school closure that we believe is in the best interest of students, staff and the larger community.

The following school districts have mutually decided to close schools through at least March 27, 2020:

- Andover Public Schools
- Ayer-Shirley Regional School District
- Billerica Public Schools
- Chelmsford Public Schools
- CREST Collaborative
- Dracut Public Schools
- Groton-Dunstable Regional School District
- Haverhill Public Schools
- Littleton Public Schools
- Nashoba Valley Technical High School
- North Andover Public Schools
- North Middlesex Regional School District
- North Reading Public Schools
- Reading Public Schools
- Stoneham Public Schools
- Tewksbury Public Schools
- Tyngsborough Public Schools
- Valley Collaborative
- Wakefield Public Schools
- Westford Public Schools
- Whittier Regional Vocational Technical H.S.
- Wilmington Public Schools

Our decision has been informed by conversations with local officials to address the concerns raised. We know we can have a greater and more positive impact on public health and safety if we do this together. We collectively believe that this decision will assist with the ongoing efforts of our communities to mitigate the spread of this virus. It is important to understand that closing schools is only a part of the broader solution to prevent community spread of the virus. If students and families continue to meet together in large groups outside of school, this initial two-week closure may not have the desired impact. It is critical that students and families do their best to refrain from meeting in large groups and practice social distancing as recommended by the CDC.

The collective decision to close schools in the Merrimack Valley has been made after multiple and ongoing discussions. We acknowledge that this unprecedented closure will be difficult for everyone involved. Families will have questions and concerns as we move forward and can expect to hear from local district leaders in regard to educational programming and local information. We appreciate your support and patience as we continue to manage this ever changing situation.