

WSWSU Guidelines & Expectations for Parents for Continuity of Learning

During COVID-19 School Closure, v1 April 9, 2020

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Purpose:

This document is intended to share the guidelines that teachers are following for new learning during the emergency school closure. These guidelines are not meant to dictate a one size fits all approach to teaching. These guidelines are written to provide points of commonality across the WSWSU. They will provide a common starting point and a common understanding.

Guiding Principles and Beliefs:

These are the guiding principles and beliefs will we use to make decisions about student learning for the rest of this year.

- We have to think of the next two and a half months as a process not an event. Not everything will go as we want.
- "Less is more." Teachers will focus on what is critical for learning right now or what is essential for graduation.
- Social Emotional Well Being is the main focus.
- Reducing stress is important. Let's be gentle with ourselves and each other. We know high stress impedes learning for students.
- Equity of access to learning will be a lens schools look through constantly.
- Relationships and staying connected is our priority.
- We believe, "Everyone learns from everyone."
- No child will be held accountable for situations that make them unavailable to learn.

Social-Emotional Learning and Relationship

It is important during this time that we create remote learning that addresses student social and emotional needs. The WSWSU will work to ensure that all parents and students feel connected and informed.

- Communicate regularly with your child's teacher/school
- Your child's teachers will provide opportunities for positive feedback/ connection with students.
- Utilize school and community resources to provide mental health supports.
- Your school's website has resources available to assist you in these areas.

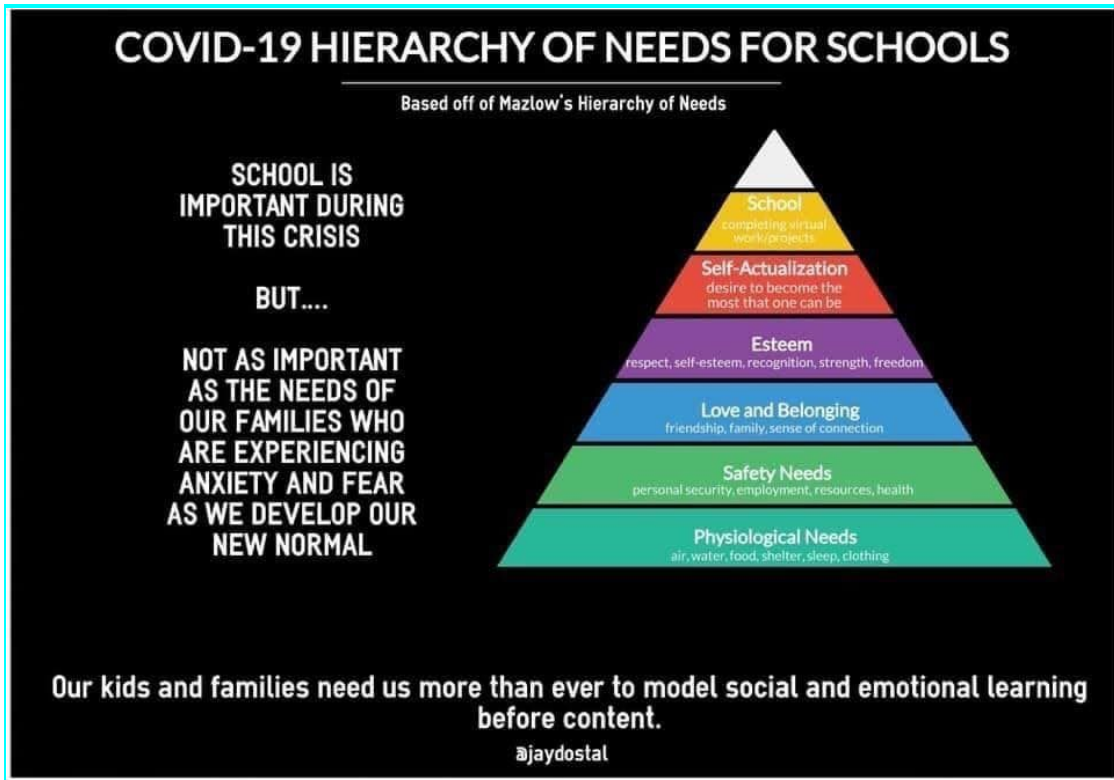
Acknowledgments

In addition to the Vermont Agency of Education essential elements and recommended resources, these guidelines are drawn from other model plans, including the Kansas State Board of Education, the California Department of Education, the Illinois State Board of Education and Vermont's Tarrant Institute for Innovation in Education. We are grateful for the contributions and spirit of sharing among our educational leaders across the U.S. in this time of crisis.

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Health and Wellness

The health and wellness of all WSWSU parents and students is the main priority at this time. With remote learning and work schedules for many adjusted, health is an even more important foundation for adults and children to be ready to engage with the world. Below are some recommendations for students and families:

- Take time for Personal Wellness (outdoor time, exercise, mindfulness, etc), encouraging one hour daily for this
- You must take care of yourself so you can be available for your children.
- Reach out to your teachers and schools if you need any help.
- Remember social distancing (6 feet)
- Follow hand washing recommendations
- Do wellness checks with your child(ren), friends and family
- Stay hydrated
- Eat healthy
- Get enough sleep

Planning for Possible Illness

If your child or a close family member becomes ill, please notify your child's teacher or school. A student who becomes sick will be excused from the assignments provided during that time, or given ample time to make up the work. Students will not be negatively impacted during the remote learning period.

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Communication

Family access to information is essential in a remote learning context. Our goal is to be understanding, responsive, and flexible.

- Teachers have offered a variety of ways and times that they are available to communicate.
- Appointments - Please reach out and schedule as needed.

Attendance

The State of VT requires daily attendance to be recorded for every student. Starting the week of April 13th, a majority of students are required to engage each day (Monday-Friday) with learning in order for that school day to count. We will be following the regular school calendar from this point forward. Students who make some form of contact with their classroom teacher or other instructional staff in a day will be counted as present for that day. Contact occurring anytime on the day will count as "present" for attendance.

Contact can take many forms including:

- Online meeting (Google Meet) attendance
- Phone contact
- Email contact
- Student work submission
- Google Form
- Participation in Google Classroom, SeeSaw or another interactive digital platform or document

WEDNESDAYS : WSWSU-wide Teacher Professional Development (Student learning continues)

- Attendance/engagement is required of all students
- Limited live meetings: Synchronous (live) online meetings and phone appointments with classes/students will be limited
- Students will still have learning to engage with

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Recommended Time Guidelines for Student Learning Based on Age

These time guidelines reflect our focus on keeping children emotionally and physically safe, fed, and engaged in learning as our first priority during this unprecedented time. Having assignments, projects, and video check-ins are all ways to engage learners. Once again, focus is on critical learning. These guidelines take into account many factors, including the fact that many families have limited internet access/data/speed and one device which must be shared between multiple people. Each school may modify to adjust to grade span and classroom configuration of their specific context(s). We will transition to these new recommendations during the week of April 13th.

Our recommended guidelines for student commitment each day are as follows:

- Pre-K : 30 minutes
- Grades K-1: 45 minutes
- Grades 2-3: 60 minutes
- Grades 4-5: 90 minutes
- Grades 6-12: 30 minutes per teacher, content area, class or course (3 hours/day)

Supporting Student Engagement

Our goal is to be responsive to students and families who ask for additional learning/engagement opportunities. We can offer guidance, direction and encouragement for extension projects, readings, and other work. In addition, we can encourage students and families to engage in academic skills and promote social-emotional health through activities that extend beyond assigned remote learning work.

Assessment/Grading

A focus on keeping children emotionally and physically safe, fed, and engaged in learning is the WSWSU first priority during this unprecedented time. The emphasis for schoolwork assigned, reviewed, and completed during the remote learning period is on whatever works best for your child(ren) and your family.

- All students will have the opportunity to redo, make up, or try again to complete, show progress, or attempt to complete work
- If your child(ren) is unavailable to learn, or refuses to complete assigned work, please reach out to your students teacher(s) so that they can collaborate with you on ways to best meet the students needs.
- Grading will focus on the continuation of learning and prioritize the connectedness and care for students and staff
- Teachers will assess and report on only the critical indicators needed for their grade/content area.

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- No child will be held accountable for situations that make them unavailable to learn.

Critical Indicators:

Teachers assess and report on students' learning on specific skills and behaviors, which are referred to as indicators. There are many indicators within each content area, some of which were taught, assessed, and reported on before this school dismissal. For the remainder of the year, WSWSU teachers are limiting their assessment and reporting to very few indicators. Each school may modify to adjust to grade span and classroom configuration of their specific context(s).

PK-5 Elementary Critical Indicators:

- 1-2 per grade in each core academic area (English Language Arts, Social Studies, Math and Science, Specials)
- 2 for Approaches to Learning:
 - Engages actively in learning (K-2);
 - Works independently, makes effective use of time (3-8)
 - Demonstrates perseverance (K-8)

6-8 Critical Indicators:

- 1-2 per grade in each core academic area (English Language Arts, Social Studies, Math, Science, and Specials/Unified Arts)
- And 2 Approaches to Learning
 - Works independently, makes effective use of time (3-8)
 - Demonstrates perseverance (K-8)

TVMHS

- Grades 6-12 Critical Indicators: 1-2 academic content performance indicators per course
- 1-2 transferable skill indicators per course
 - Demonstrates initiative and responsibility for learning
 - Perseveres in challenging situations

Grade Level Advancement

For grades Pk-8, no child will be retained solely based on this period of closure. If your child's team was discussing retention prior to the closure, this may still be a consideration for the team. For grades 9-12, we will continue to follow our proficiency based guidelines, as we await guidance from the Vermont Agency of Education (expected May 8).

High School Graduation

TVMHS graduation requirements remain consistent with our handbook for now; Vermont state guidance is expected May 8.