



ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES
201 Main Street
VESTAL, NEW YORK 13850

April 1, 2020

Dear Vestal Central School District Families,

We have entered our third week of school closure. I hope this letter finds you safe, healthy, and doing well during this difficult time. In this letter, I will update you as to the current status of school closure and home learning. Presently, Governor Cuomo has extended an executive order to close schools through April 14th with an expected return to school on the 15th. However, prior to the 14th, Governor Cuomo will reevaluate the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic situation and make a determination whether additional closures are necessary. If information changes, I will be sure to communicate details with you and list them on the Vestal CSD website.

Teachers and administrators are continuing to develop resources and structures to maintain home learning. Governor Cuomo's recent executive order has required school districts to continue instruction through the period of spring break. Thus, home learning will be maintained through the week of April 6th and extending to Monday, April 13th. This includes daily contact by one or several of your student's teachers related to assignments, activities, and learning expectations.

The closing of our schools happened suddenly. Vestal is committed to building a foundation for home learning that, if necessary, can sustain instruction for weeks to come. Much of this will need to be done through web-based classrooms such as Google Classroom and Schoology, supported through online resources such as Epic and Raz-Kids, or online coursework such as Edgenuity or Zearn. We recognize that this places added responsibility on families to monitor and supervise learning. In this regard, we are trying to establish resources that promote student independence and self-direction.

As faculty reach out to you and your student, we ask that you respond and confirm their communication. It is important that we know how your student is performing within these different technology platforms we are using to communicate including email, Google Classroom, Schoology, and video conferencing. We are also increasing expectations for the completion of assignments, coursework, and activities. If the school closure continues, it will become essential that students actively participate in their courses and classwork.

I have become aware that Governor Cuomo's executive order has postponed school budget votes and Board of Education elections until "at least June 1, 2020, and subject to further directive as to the timing, location or manner of voting for such elections." Again, as more information becomes known, I will provide updated communication.

All of us are aware of the detrimental impact the school closing has had on all of our K-12 students and staff. More recently, we reluctantly decided to cancel the Junior Prom, along with many other school-sponsored events. However, it is recognized that our high school seniors are concerned about the rest of their academic year. Please know that we are considering all options in an attempt to maintain some normalcy regarding senior activities that typically take place over the next few months. These include Honors Night, Academic Awards Night, Prom Promise Picnic, Senior Prom/All-Nighter, Senior Class Trip and Graduation, to name a few. We are all saddened that our high school seniors

are having their last year at Vestal Central School District severely disrupted. It is still too early to make cancellation decisions for activities scheduled for May and June. With that being said, we will continue to adhere to state and county mandates going forward.

I know it is a difficult time for all of us. However, we must all do our part and continue social distancing to the best of our abilities to help reduce the spread of COVID-19. As a result, I must emphasize that all school grounds are off limits for gathering of individuals. Thank you for abiding by this request and for doing your part in keeping our community safe. I will continue updating you as more information becomes available. Again, I hope that you are safe, healthy, and doing well.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeffrey A. Ahearn". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'J'.

Jeffrey A. Ahearn
Superintendent of Schools