

Susette L. Bollard
Superintendent of Schools

Andrea M. Wasson
Co-Director of School
Transformation



Michaela B. Martin
Co-Director of School Transformation

Christopher F. Locarno
Director of Finance & Facilities

Committed to cultivating within all our students the knowledge, skills, and character essential to becoming purposeful, productive and engaged members of their world.

June 5, 2020

Dear CVSU Families:

I hope this letter finds you well and looking forward to summer. It's frustrating to continue to have to deal with all the unknowns but I will share what I know and will be back in touch in August when we get a clearer picture of what we will be facing. Below you will find responses to your most recent questions and some added questions I am anticipating some of you might have.

- 1. When is Northfield elementary school being officially dismissed for the school year 2019/2020?**
The last day of school for all schools in CVSU is Monday, June 8, 2020.
- 2. Will all students be going to their next grade for the year 2020/2021? Yes. We will assess students in the fall and those students who need additional support will receive it.**
- 3. What will our childrens (or in my case grandchilds') schooling look like this next year? (2020/2021)**
I honestly don't know. The entire staff will spend four days next week sharing what they have learned from their on-line experience this spring, reflecting on all of the responses to the survey questions from students and families regarding their perspective on distance learning and then begin to make plans for instruction for the fall. That instruction we hope will be full time in the buildings, but in addition we must plan for full-time distance learning and something in between so that we will be prepared for whatever is required of us. The Agency of Education has been clear that decisions of when and how we open schools will be driven by the Vermont Department of Health.
- 4. It has been such a strange year for all of us. I do hope after this covid-19 and subsequent startling shutdown of school without a plan, that you will now have an emergency plan in place. Yes, we feel fortunate to have the time next week to do that planning. Families will be kept informed as we know more.**
- 5. Can you share your thoughts or initial plans on how you will keep students and faculty/staff safe when we are able to go back to in person classes? As I mentioned earlier, we will spend four days next week planning for next year. That includes all of the safety protocols that will need to be in place. Although I cannot be certain of anything, I anticipate daily staff and student temperature readings, daily questionnaires on how they are feeling, and staff and students being expected to stay home if they do not feel well (or being sent home). If we were to have a staff or student test positive for the virus, we would follow the response protocol from the Department of Health in place at that time.**
- 6. How long will my Internet assistance last? Families who already qualify for Free and Reduced Lunch MAY be eligible for assistance with internet costs associated with distance learning. We are working on an application process to identify the best solution for each household in need. Be on the lookout for more information.**

In the meantime, we ask that ALL families complete the Department of Public Service Interactive Broadband Map and Survey (see link below)

Please help the Department of Public Service improve Internet availability in your school district by providing DPS with information, by home address, where children can't access the Internet. DPS will use this information to seek funding and coordinate service providers to bring high speed Internet to areas where it currently isn't available.

- Staff or student households can complete a brief survey online at [Interactive Broadband Map and Survey](#).

NOTE: Use the search box at the top-left corner of the map and enter your street address. Once you locate your house on the map, click to complete the survey for that location.

- Staff or student households can also call the Consumer Affairs and Public Information Division (CAPI) at 1-800-622-4496 for assistance with filling out the map and survey. CAPI will also review available options for internet service when families call.

In closing, I want to thank you for all of your support and hard work this spring as we navigated the pandemic together. I know that I learned many new things about my staff, my students and my communities and all of it was positive. I hope you find a way to rest and relax this summer and a way to live with the uncertainty.

Stay healthy. Stay hopeful. Wash your hands.

Sincerely,

Susette Bollard

1. **I want to know how this attendance policy is going to work? I have a Kindergartener who needs my help on most of her work. I am considered an essential worker and we don't do work until evenings or weekends. I'm sure there are other parents in my situation. How is this fair to our students? Or us? First of all, thank you for everything you are doing to support your child in her learning. There is nothing "fair" about the pandemic and I wish we did not need to burden parents with additional responsibilities at a time like this. But, all we need for documentation is an email or some kind of contact with a teacher everyday from you that your Kindergartener did some school work. This does not need to happen within the regular hours of the school day. It can come in the evening and it will still be counted.**

2. **A Teacher said that if less than half of the kids show up for online meetings or checking in with the teacher, that day will not count as a school day and will need to be made up in June. Is that true?** *Yes but we did not mean it as a threat. Vermont law requires schools to be open for students for a minimum of 175 days per year. There are circumstances where the state will waive those requirements but right now the requirements have not changed. The Agency of Education has said that with the new distance learning in place, we must have 50% of our students “present” in order for that day to count toward the 175. That is the same requirement we have when school is in regular session. If for some reason schools failed to meet that standard, the State could decide we need to make days up. I am not anticipating a problem.*

3. **This was in a school email: Teachers have worked together to focus on one or two PBGRs per class for the remainder of the year, allowing students to focus their efforts and hopefully decrease the feeling of being overwhelmed. We will be working under the guidance of the Agency of Education to be sure students are NOT penalized for proficiencies required for graduation that were unattainable due to the dismissal of school. To me, this means, since you don't want to penalize the students, you will give each student in each grade a P for proficiencies that were supposed to be tested but didn't because of the virus. What does it mean to you?** *Graduation requirements are a local decision so we have some flexibility so no, it does not mean that all students will receive “Ps”. As we move forward this spring, however, we might very well deal with Seniors differently than students in lower years who will have learning opportunities past June. We are also exploring ways for students to move toward proficiency this summer if students are interested. If you have a Senior and are concerned about graduation, please reach out to the principal. We are working hard to preserve the integrity of the High School Diploma, while at the same time making sure that students are not being penalized for something they have no control over.*

As always, thanks for everything you are doing to support your students in these unsettling times. You are doing a GREAT job. Schools are closed next week and there will be no distance learning offered during that time. Meals, however, will be distributed. Please look for information from your school for the schedule. Enjoy the break!

Take care. Be well. Wash your hands.

Sincerely,

Susette Bollard

