



Sal V. Pascarella, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools

## DANBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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March 13, 2020

Dear Danbury Public School Community,

As you may be aware, the Connecticut Department of Public Health's State Epidemiologist, Dr. Matt Cartter, announced that COVID-19 is spreading in southwestern Connecticut. With the release of this new information, Mayor Boughton, the Director of Health Lisa Morrissey and I believe that closing school is in the best interest of the health and wellbeing of our community. Therefore we are closing all schools and district-sponsored programs beginning Friday, March 13th for at least two weeks. We will be providing you with an update by Friday, March 20th.

### **What should families know that the district is doing during the duration of the school closure?**

- Regularly communicating with our Director of Health for community updates
- Ensuring frequent conference calls with the City and District preparedness personnel
- Ongoing cleaning and disinfecting school buildings in accordance with the department of health guidelines.
- When the school buildings reopen, they will have been disinfected and deeply cleaned as per health and medical guidelines.
- Families will be notified in advance of the reopening time.
- Danbury Health & Human Services Department (DHHS) is closely monitoring the situation and tracking reportable illnesses in the City. They will be providing regular updates to the district.

### **Why was the decision made?**

I consulted with the City of Danbury Director of Health multiple times during this rapidly evolving situation. This morning, the Mayor, our Director of Health and I reviewed the updated communications from the Connecticut Department of Public Health, assessed the conditions of

the district, and acted in the best interest of the students and community to mitigate the risk of infection by closing the schools.

**Rapidly changing situation:**

As a district, it is our priority to communicate effectively with the community in order to provide the most up to date information. Information will be available on the [Danbury Public Schools website](#) and we will continue to update staff and families through robocalls.

**What about our students' education?**

District leaders have created a web link located on our district site that is called the *K12 Interactive Learning Site*. This site contains practice and learning resources by grade level along with some suggested usage. In addition, K5 paper packets will be distributed at food distribution sites starting Tuesday, March 17th. The *K12 Interactive Learning Site* can be accessed from our Danbury Public Schools main page. The weblink can be directly accessed here: [K12 Interactive Learning Site](#)

General Guidelines to follow by grade level can be accessed here: [Grade Level Guidelines for Student Practice at Home](#)

**Do we have the ability to teach students virtually?**

At this time, we do not have the ability to provide comprehensive and equitable online learning experiences as this requires a 1:1 level of technology access. We have created online access via the web link identified above for supplemental learning activities which can be accessed by any device that can connect to the internet, such as a cellphone, tablet, laptop etc.

**What if my student doesn't have a computing device or internet connection?**

K5 paper packets will be distributed at food distribution sites and made available at other locations that will be identified by date and time and sent via robocall.

**What about after-school and extracurricular activities?**

All school sponsored extracurricular activities are canceled until further notice.

**My student is worried about their AP courses and exams? What can we do?**

Students can continue to access AP course materials from either their individual class teacher who may have posted course content in Google Classroom or through the AP College Board. Website: <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses>. The CT State Department of Education will provide further guidance if there is flexibility with AP Exam dates.

**What about the scheduled SAT day on March 25th?**

The two-week closure of school means we will not be in attendance the day that the SAT School Day is scheduled (3/25). The state-determined makeup options are 4/28 and 4/29. We selected 4/29 due to other conflicts. We will also be contacting the College Board to schedule an additional date.

**What about families who need childcare before and after school?**

Danbury Public Schools are unable to provide child care during the closure. Families can call 211, the statewide Infoline, in order to find available resources in the community.

**How can I get a paper copy of the K5 Take Home Learning Packet?**

Packets will be available at the food distribution sites and dates listed below.

**My family depends on the food provided by the school. What can we do during the closure?**

We have established a plan to provide meals for all students who are in need.

Grab and go meals will be available daily throughout the district beginning **Tuesday, March 17th**. Your child needs to accompany you to the grab and go. You can drive up and a meal will be delivered to you or stations will be available for a walk up pick up; please refrain from congregating in a single area. Locations and times could change the following week. Any changes will be communicated via a robocall. If you have any questions or have challenges getting to one of these locations, you can email us at: [schoolnutrition@danbury.k12.ct.us](mailto:schoolnutrition@danbury.k12.ct.us)

**The locations for the upcoming week (March 17-March 20) from the hours 8:00-11:30 a.m. are as follows:**

- Mill Ridge Primary School, 49A High Ridge Road, Danbury, CT 06811
- Rogers Park Middle School, 21 Memorial Drive, Danbury, CT 06810
- Stadley Rough School, 25 Karen Road, Danbury, CT 06811
- Shelter Rock School, 2 Crows Nest Lane, Danbury, CT 06810
- Morris Street Elementary School, 28 Morris Street, Danbury, CT 06810
- Ellsworth Avenue School, 53 Ellsworth Avenue, Danbury, CT 06810
- New Hope Baptist Church, 12 Dr. Aaron B Samuels Blvd, Danbury, CT 06810

Breakfast and lunch will be offered at the same time. Please see the list of local food banks and mobile pantries. ([English](#) [Spanish](#) [Portuguese](#))

**How do I learn about COVID-19 coronavirus and how to reduce risks for my family?**

You can access the resources provided on the [Danbury Public Schools website](#) that include the [CT Department of Public Health](#) and the [Center for Disease Control](#).

In closing, I sincerely hope that the information provided in this letter will assist you in navigating this difficult time. I want to thank the Danbury community for your patience and cooperation. Please remember to put the health and safety of you and your family first and to take care of each other. I want to assure you that all decisions are made thoughtfully and in the best interest of our students, staff and community.

Respectfully,

***Dr. Sal***

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