



Alfred-Almond Central School District

I am an Eagle, watch me soar!

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April 1, 2020

Dear Alfred-Almond Parents/Guardians, Students and Community:

This letter is intended to provide you with an update on the district's extended dismissal due to the COVID-19 pandemic, now in the third week. There is no blueprint to help us best navigate this unique condition, but we can assure you the Alfred-Almond School District remains committed to our mission of providing an equal opportunity for every student to be challenged to the fullest extent of his or her ability and that all students will acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to enable them to become productive members of society.

The change to our daily routine has impacted our entire community, especially when it comes to assisting with basic needs for our students and families. Our food service workers, school nurse, cleaners, transportation and secretarial staff have banded together to ensure our families are provided with food resources during this time of need. Teachers, school counselors, and administration are working to ensure we are ready to provide new instruction for our students if the governor extends school closures beyond April 15 and to support the social-emotional wellness of all.

Most recently, the Governor's Office directed school districts to provide continuity of learning and distribution of meals during the school closure through April 15, 2020. This includes our Spring Recess that was scheduled for April 6 – April 12. ***In response to that Executive Order of the Governor, students and staff will now continue with remote instruction during this time period and the preparation/distribution of food will continue.*** We understand this is a trying time for all. We hope you find comfort in knowing we are in this together and will get through this together and be an even stronger educational community than before.

It must be acknowledged that during this unchartered time, home instruction is not intended to replicate the same amount of direct instruction within classrooms. Nevertheless, with our significant investment in technology, and our willingness to integrate this technology into our instructional program, we are well positioned to create powerful learning experiences for our students while at home. We will continue to work collaboratively with parents and students to identify and establish ways to meet individual needs and to shift curriculum, instruction, and assessments to home instruction. As you may know, the state has suspended administration of grade 3-8 state assessments for the remainder of the school year. Additionally, High School Advanced Placement (AP) exams will be administered online. To date, we have not received a decision on June Regents examinations from the State Education Department, but we expect to hear soon.

To provide easier access to updates and information pertinent to COVID-19 we are developing a link on the District webpage labeled '[COVID-19 Updates and Information](#)'. We anticipate this will be live by Friday, April 3. We are also in the process of developing a Continuity of Education Plan and Phase II and III of our Instructional Plan. Phase I of our Instructional Plan, which has been in effect since our closure, has involved organizing materials and supplies, resources and connectivity as well as review of previous instruction. These plans will provide both faculty and families a clear direction as to where we go from here and will be accessible under the 'COVID-19 Updates and Information' tab on the website.

April is a key month for the development of the school budget and preparation for the budget vote. This pandemic will have a deep effect on our economy, and that will in turn affect our state aid. We anticipate additional guidance from the state on the 2020-21 state budget and school budget votes in the near future. At this time, school budget votes and elections have been suspended until at least June 1.

Please know our sincere desire is to continue doing what is best for your children. This is at the forefront of every decision that is able to be made at the local level. We encourage you to reach out for help and support, if needed as we navigate this unfamiliar terrain together. At this time, more so than any other in recent history, flexibility, patience and teamwork are essential. Thank you for your continued support and understanding.

All our best,

Tracie Bliven,
Superintendent of Schools

Susan Bain-Lucey
Secondary Principal

Brett Dusiñberre
Elementary Principal

