

Westport Community Schools
School Closure Update
March 24, 2020

Good afternoon families! As we enter our second week of state mandated school closure, I wanted to share my thoughts on some feedback that administrators have received in the past week.

- **Some families are feeling stressed with the amount of work that is being shared by teachers** - We hear you and certainly do not want to cause any additional stress during an already stressful period. We recognize that each child is unique and is responding to this situation and work expectations very differently. While we would like to see all students doing something during this time period to help prevent regression of skills, we don't want these activities/lessons to cause additional strain in the household. Parents should feel comfortable working with your child and your child's teacher to determine what is best and most manageable to complete at this time. If you are unsure or need assistance, please reach out to your child's teacher.
- **Some families are feeling like the school expectations are not rigorous enough and we should be providing more learning opportunities for students** - As with the comments above, teachers are working to provide opportunities and resources to meet all student needs. If you feel like you would like your child to be doing some extensions beyond what has been provided by the teacher, please feel free to reach out to your teacher to see if he/she might be able to recommend any additional learning opportunities... and READING is always a great activity for students of all ages!!!
- **Some families are feeling like the work is just right!** - This process is so new and unique for all of us. We are glad that there are families who feel comfortable with the school expectations. Please continue to communicate with your child's teacher about how school (at home) work is going for your child. I am reminded of Goldilocks and the Three Bears... too little, too much, just right. This looks different for each person and we respect your decisions on how much or little to push/engage your child in school work at this time.

We want to thank all of the staff members who took part in today's Westport Car Parade! We had over 100 staff members/vehicles in the parade, going through Westport to wave to students and families. It was a great example of how this community recognizes a need and works together to support our families. Watch for pictures from today's parade to be displayed during Friday's State of our Schools address. We also want to thank Police Chief Pelletier and Fire Chief Legendre for all of their assistance in making this event fun, successful and safe! We saw a number of officers throughout the route helping to control traffic safety. Additionally, we had members of the departments participating in the parade. During this time when they are busy and likely overwhelmed by responding to unique issues related to COVID-19, they took the time to help support this school effort! The collaboration amongst town agencies is incredible!

At this time, there have been no updates from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education regarding any extension of the school closure. The state agencies are working together to assess the needs in the Commonwealth and to develop a plan that ensures the greatest level of safety for all of us. We will continue to monitor the situation, follow the guidance of our state agencies, and act accordingly.

If you haven't heard from your child's teacher yet, be sure to reach out to find out what types of activities that your child can do to help stay engaged with learning.

Some families have requested technology (ie. chromebooks) in order to facilitate the learning for their child. We have chromebooks that can be loaned to families during this time. If you need one, please contact your child's principal. Additionally, if you need hard copies of learning materials, please reach out to your child's teacher and we will get a packet of materials out to you in the mail.

Thank you again for all your support of the schools during this time. If there is anything you need from us, please be sure to reach out. If it is not something within our control to help with, we can certainly help put you in touch with the appropriate support.