

March 17th Updates

Feeling Stressed/Anxious about the current events?

Managing stress and confusion about COVID-19 is a very common and acceptable feeling. As stated previously, this is uncharted territory for all of us. It is critical that we talk with our children about the coronavirus. Listed below are some resources you can use to help guide that conversation. Equally important is taking care of ourselves as the adults. I equate it to the directions that we can all probably recite when flight attendants are giving safety precautions on a plane. For those less familiar, before a plane takes off, the flight attendants will go through a series of safety precautions to help passengers know what to do in case of an unexpected emergency. Part of their instructions includes something like...

“If there is a loss of cabin pressure, the panels above your seat will open, and oxygen masks will drop down. If this happens, place the mask over your nose and mouth, and adjust as necessary. Be sure to adjust your own mask before helping others.”

Most of us have the inclination to take care of others before ourselves. This is a wonderful trait to have and something we should all aspire to... giving selflessly. However, unless we also consider self care, we will not be as effective in helping our children, our families, and others in need. Below is a resource that adults can use to help manage stress and anxiety during this time.

Resources from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts

<https://www.mass.gov/guides/information-on-the-outbreak-of-2019-novel-coronavirus-covid-19>
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ghmiMZH_eOQItfH5BwpEWBQgQM_S0FF4I7E2VAQNPx8/edit

Resources from the United States Center for Disease Control and Prevention

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html>
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/summary.html>

How to Talk to Children about the Coronavirus

<https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/how-to-talk-to-children-about-the-coronavirus-2020-3-07-19111>

Talking to Teen/Tweens about Coronavirus

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/02/well/family/coronavirus-teenagers-anxiety.html>

Resources for adults

Managing Stress and Anxiety on the CDC website

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/managing-stress-anxiety.html>

MIIA Resource for Westport Community Schools Staff Members

The Employee Assistance Program (MIIA)

1-800-451-1834

Available to staff and household members 24 hours per day, 7 days per week.

Confidential Counselors

Additional Resources for Elementary Students to Continue Learning

<https://www.squigglepark.com/squigglepark/> games for pre-k through grade 3

<https://kids.nationalgeographic.com/> games and articles

Prek/Extended Day Payments

For those families that have children in our prekindergarten or extended day programs who have pre-paid for the time period of school closure, we will make appropriate adjustments to your account and credit your account for payments due in the future. We will make these adjustments after this three week period and communicate out to families regarding account balances.

Spring Athletics Update

For a second time, the MIAA has officially moved the spring sports season. All spring tryouts will now begin on Monday, April 27th. Spring sports registration paperwork is available on the website and for pickup in the main office at the WJSHS once school resumes. Paperwork must be handed in by April 17th.

WJSHS Term 3 Grades

Term three grades will now close on Friday, April 17, 2020.

There seemed to be some inconsistency in the FAQ document with regards to expectations for students to complete work during the school closure.

There are no formal grading or expectations of an online platform similar to what is happening

in many colleges across the country. There are, however, opportunities for students to reinforce their skills and continue to become proficient with information. Additionally, while there may not necessarily be assignments that are assigned and graded during this three week time period, students should consider the following:

- If you are taking an AP class, it will only benefit you to complete work assigned, turn it in over this time period, and have your teacher provide feedback. At this time, the AP exam has only been postponed for a short time and you want to make sure that you have done your best and practiced enough so that you can be most successful on this exam.
- For students that are in the grades that use the MCAS as a form of end-of-year summative assessment, it will be very important that you continue to practice your mathematical and English language arts skills. As with the AP testing, you want to make sure that you have continued to practice so that you can perform your best on this assessment.
- While assignments can not be expected to be turned in and graded during the time period of the closure, it is not unreasonable for a teacher to provide an assignment that will be graded upon return to school. While it may not necessarily be due the first day back from school, it could be graded at some point. While out of school, it would be smart to use this time to complete these types of assignments so that you are not feeling overwhelmed with work with you return to school. Remember, this is not a vacation for students or staff. We want our students to be the best that they can be and continued practice and reinforcement of skills will help to prevent any substantial regression during this time period.