

Grand Isle Supervisory Union

224 US Route 2 Grand Isle, Vermont 05458

P.O. Box 54 Grand Isle, Vermont 05458

Phone: 802-372-6921 Fax: 802-372-4898 Web Site: www.gisu.org

12 May 2020

Dear Parents, Guardians, and Community Members

During Governor Scott's press conference Friday, May 8, Dan French, Vermont's Secretary of Education shared the following:

- *The current public health data does not support the practical re-opening of school for in-person instruction this spring. Schools will continue to be closed to in-person learning through the end of this school year and districts shall follow their established calendars for the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year.*
- *Group gatherings are limited to 10 people or less, with careful physical distancing and hygiene requirements. Schools should expect that larger group gatherings will not be permitted prior to the end of the school year.*
- *Schools may only plan in-person end of school year gatherings and graduations consistent with the State's limitations on the size of such gatherings; any other such events shall occur virtually or by means other than in-person gatherings.*

The GISU Leadership Team is in the process of analyzing how these requirements will impact our work in the Islands. Based on this guidance, we will make our final plans for many of the components connected to closing out the school year. You can anticipate that over the next several weeks we will be sharing information with our families on many topics. We know there are lots of questions out there; below is a small sampling of decisions and that we are working to finalize:

- Finalizing the last day of school for students and employees.
- Transition plans for students who will be transitioning into a new school next year.
- Kindergarten screening process.
- Library book return process.
- Students retrieving any items they left in the school building.
- Device return process.
- The opportunity for faculty to get back into their classroom to close it up for summer.

End of year celebrations:

Following the guidance that was provided, it is clear that end of the year celebrations will not take place in a traditional way. The Secretary of Education made this decision for the health and safety of all Vermonters and while we are mourning this official announcement right along with our students, we are committed to finding a way to honor our students and what they have accomplished this year. Principals in each of the schools will communicate directly with the communities they serve.

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Summer school programs:

Throughout the Islands, we provide a variety of different summer school programs. Secretary French informed superintendents that guidance specific to summer school programs will be released by the Vermont Agency of Education over the next two weeks. Once we have that, we will finalize plans for any programs that we decide we are able to open.

Next school year:

I know many of our families are starting to see information on the news and social media about the reopening of school in the fall. As expected, Friday's announcement did not provide us with any official regulations or recommendations regarding fall, but I know that the Agency of Education is working hard to give school districts guidance on this topic so that we can begin planning. Balancing the need to plan with waiting to use the most updated public health data is important. We are staying closely connected with the Agency of Education and the Vermont Department of Health and we want to ensure that we open schools this fall throughout the Islands in a way that is in alignment with the most current rules and regulations so that we can keep our entire school community safe.

Physical distancing reminder:

Earlier this week Governor Scott relaxed the "Stay at Home" rules to allow small gatherings and outdoor recreation. The guidance suggests that families only connect with others from "trusted households" such as family, neighbors, and friends known to be following the recommendations from the Department of Health regarding precautions such as social distancing and hand washing.

Community Google Hangout:

Every Wednesday evening- for the remainder of the year- I've scheduled an opportunity to talk with community members who have questions, concerns, or just want to talk via a Superintendent/Community Google Hangout. **This week's Hangout is Wednesday, May 13, 2020, beginning at 6:00 p.m.** The information to join the meeting is below:

[Join with Google Meet](#)

meet.google.com/qxo-jwpq-opf

[Join by phone](#)

+1 813-773-3374 PIN: 105 354 582#

The next Community Hangout will be May 20, 2020.

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GISU Learning Targets:

I'm pleased to let you know the learning targets we will be working on for the rest of the year are published and available online. You can find them in appendix I of the [GISU Continuity of Learning Plan](#). You will notice the learning targets are arranged by grade and subject alike areas. Next week we plan to share a draft of the learning report template we plan to use at the end of the school year.

I appreciate your support and know how hard everyone is working to make sure our children have the best experiences possible. I will continue to send a weekly letter and will update you with the most up to date information there. Please don't forget that I'm available to the community every Wednesday at 6:00 p.m. via a Google Hangout.

Thank you again for your hard work in helping ensure our students are curious, creative, courageous, and capable of achieving their aspirations in an ever-changing world.

Once again thank you for all you are doing to support learning. If you have questions or concerns, please reach out anytime.

Sincerely,

Michael J. Clark

Michael J. Clark
Grand Isle Supervisory Union
Superintendent