



# OXFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

*“Sailing Towards Success”*

March 31, 2020

Dear Parents and Guardians:

I hope this email finds you and your family healthy and safe. As this health crisis has evolved, you are aware that Governor Baker has extended school closures until May 4<sup>th</sup>. As a result, the District leadership team and I have shifted our mindset about what teaching and learning will look like with this extended closure through the end of April. To this end, we have developed the **Oxford Public Schools “Teaching and Learning Continuity Plan - Phase 2”** for **April 8 - May 1** (see attachment). This plan, which was developed by the District administrative team in collaboration with the OEA union president, outlines the District’s guiding principles and expectations for teachers, students, and instruction during Phase 2. In addition, this week, administrators and staff in each school will be developing a **building specific** Phase 2 Teaching and Learning Continuity Plan that aligns to the District plan but allows for flexibility and customization based on the grades and courses/classes in each building. Your student’s building administrator will be including their plan in an email to you next week.

In general, in Phase 2 there will be some major shifts. First, teachers will be moving from a daily set time to be available to communicate and answer questions to **daily instruction**, which will be a minimum of **three hours**. The three-hour instructional time will look different in buildings as it will be shaped to best meet grades and courses. Please refer to your student’s school building plan which will outline the specifics of what instruction will look like. In addition, teachers will be available for an additional 20 minutes daily for questions from students or parents. Finally, during Phase 2, we will be moving to a grading system with elementary and middle school students receiving Pass/Fail grades and high school students receiving Credit/No Credit grades. Similar to what teachers do when schools are in session, teachers will identify which work will be graded.

Phase 2 of the District plan presently includes 12 days of instruction and does not include Good Friday (April 10<sup>th</sup>) or the school vacation week (April 20-24). If the Commissioner of Education comes out with any recommendations regarding teaching during April vacation, I will let you know. However, I would note that this would only be a recommendation and as such any change in a school calendar would need to be approved locally at the School Committee and Union levels.

Also, I am including a March 30<sup>th</sup> letter to parents from Jeffrey Riley, the Commissioner of Education (see attachment). I urge you to read the Commissioner’s letter as it may answer some of your questions as well as explain decisions that we made in developing the District’s continuity plan which is aligned to the Commissioner’s guidelines. I also want to clarify a few things in Commissioner Riley’s letter. First, as he indicates “remote learning” is **not** synonymous with online learning. Remote learning can encompass a variety of learning opportunities, with technology used as a supportive tool. A few examples of remote learning may include: hands-on projects, work packets, reading lists, artistic creations, large and small group video calls, 1:1 video or audio calls, and other various online learning platforms.

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With respect to technology, for those elementary and middle school students who need a device (Chromebook or iPad), please let your student's teacher or building principal know as soon as possible and we will make arrangements to provide your child with a device. For those households that do not have internet access, Spectrum is providing free access to internet and WiFi for 60 days. Parents can visit: <https://www.spectrum.net/support/internet/coronavirus-covid-19-educational-internet-offer>

In closing, I want to thank parents, guardians, and caregivers for your patience and understanding as we navigate through these unprecedented times. We recognize that many of you are working from home and juggling trying to work your jobs in addition to providing instructional assistance to your children. We recognize that you may not be working because your work has closed and you have more significant concerns. We recognize that the extended time away from teachers and staff will become more difficult for our students. We recognize the stress and anxiety that students and parents may feel during this extended closure. Please reach out to us! You are not in this alone! Oxford Public Schools has outstanding educators who care about their students. We are here to support each other as we travel through these uncharted waters. Most of all, stay safe and well.

With warmest regards,

*Kristine E. Nash*

Kristine E. Nash, Ed.D.  
Acting Superintendent