



# SALEM SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Superintendent of Schools

**Kim Gadaree**  
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Director of Student Services

November 23, 2020

Good afternoon Members of the Salem School District Community,

I hope you and your family are healthy and well during this very difficult time in our life experience. Thanks to everyone's diligence and following all recommended protocols, we have been able to remain open for In-Person learning for 57 consecutive days. Each of us **MUST** continue all of our mitigation strategies at all times if we are to remain healthy and safe.

Although Salem's COVID data has been somewhat low, it has been increasing, and we are one of the many towns in Connecticut with a Red Alert Status. Each week I participate in many statewide conference calls with our State Department of Public Health as well as our State Department of Education in addition to conferences with our District Health Director and area School Superintendents. Many of you have reached out to Mrs. Phillips or me regarding potential concerns following the upcoming Thanksgiving holiday. The Administrative Team, our School Nurse, and I have been meeting, reviewing various data, and consulting with our District Health Director.

So, out of an abundance of caution, we have decided to switch to Remote Learning for all students beginning Monday, November 30<sup>th</sup> through Friday, December 11<sup>th</sup>, with the expectation that we will return to In-Person on Monday, December 14<sup>th</sup>. Students will engage in live teaching and learning, with their teachers and support staff, during these ten school days. Your child's teachers will be emailing you your child's remote learning schedule. This schedule will look very similar to their regular daily schedule. Students who require school devices to access Remote Learning will take them home tomorrow, Tuesday, in their backpacks unless you have made other arrangements with Mrs. Phillips or Mr. Driscoll. Nurse Maggie will contact any parents who may wish to pick up medications from school. Please remember that school is closed beginning Wednesday, November 25, Thanksgiving, November 26, and Friday November 27.

This decision was based on multiple new factors related to this week's holiday:

1. Increasing difficulty in staffing our classrooms due to illnesses and quarantine requirements
2. Travel, out of state, that will result in quarantine
3. Unknown potential exposures over the holiday
4. Extended time to review COVID-19 data following the holiday

Our Food Service Department will continue to serve meals to students regularly. Tomorrow we will send out information separately regarding the schedule for food distribution.

We remind everyone to please limit your child's and your family's exposure to others by adhering to the following recommendations, outlined by the CDC:

- Wash your hands often

Salem School District's Mission Statement

*"Salem inspires learning, creativity, critical thinking, personal integrity, and citizenship."*

- Avoid close contact – maintain 6 feet social distance
- Wear a mask that covers your mouth and nose
- Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue and throw the tissue in the trash
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily
- Monitor your and your family’s health and seek medical attention should you feel ill or develop COVID symptoms

Please remember to contact Nurse Maggie at 860-859-0267 extension 3117 regarding positive COVID-19 cases at any given time so we can take the appropriate action to keep everyone safe, based on each individual circumstance. Your information will remain confidential. We are hopeful that everyone will continue to do their part so that everyone can remain healthy and we can resume school on December 14<sup>th</sup>. Our Administration, our school nurse, and I will update you near the middle to end of the second week of Remote Learning so we can review the most recent data for Salem, our surrounding communities, and the State.

Please know how appreciative I am to all of you for your support, understanding, assistance, and flexibility this school year. In addition, I want to express my deep gratitude to everyone on our staff who has been working tirelessly since last March to adjust to the many changes that have occurred in order to make school safe, special, and to provide the most rigorous instruction possible. Please continue to reach out to us if you have any questions and if there is anything we can assist you with at this time. Happy Thanksgiving!

Sincerely yours,



Joseph Onofrio II  
Superintendent  
Salem School District

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