

Orange East Supervisory Union

Serving the towns of Bradford, Corinth, Groton, Newbury, Ryegate,
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Dear Families, Staff, and Community,

Last night, the Governor issued an order that schools will be closed for in-person instruction for the remainder of the school year. Although we knew that this was a possibility, we learned of the news last evening at the same time that you did—and we share in your shock and sadness regarding this development. We understand why it is a necessary step, and we applaud the prioritization of the public's health at this time, but we still are allowed to feel sad and overwhelmed by the outcomes for our children. To the Class of 2020, please know that we have you in our thoughts during this time. You have my word, that we will find a way to celebrate you; we are all pretty creative and resourceful when we need to be.

I am writing this morning to share further details regarding the order that we have received from the Agency of Education: *Continuity of Learning (COL) means districts will be required to provide education services and related supports to all of their students remotely so that student learning and academic progress is achieved as if schools had remained open. Districts are required to make the transition to COL on or before Monday, April 13, 2020.*

To support districts in making the transition to COL, the Agency of Education will be issuing forthcoming guidance to:

- *Address student attendance and school calendar requirements;*
- *Clarify procedural requirements for compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA);*
- *Focus district efforts on ensuring equitable access to high quality instruction and learning opportunities;*
- *Describe how end of the school year gatherings and graduations will be handled in the event school is not re-opened prior to May 8, 2020; and*
- *Develop the format and submission parameters of a School District Continuity of Learning Plan which will be required to be submitted to the Agency by close of business on Wednesday April 8, 2020.*

As a result, we will be working to refine our plan to provide COL by Monday, April 13th. We expect additional guidance on the requirements to be forthcoming. Please know that we have been working diligently on this concept for the past two weeks. While that plan is being finalized, we will continue to provide resources and instruction in the same manner that we have since school was dismissed on March 17th. Please stay tuned for further communication from your schools.

Lastly, please know that these are challenging times for all of us. It is okay to feel overwhelmed by all that is on our plates. Please know that we understand that people are doing the best that they can. Please prioritize positive interactions with your children over frustrations with school work and other demands. Teach them to bake, teach them to sugar, teach them to do laundry and dishes—learning comes in all different flavors. For many of us, we have been given the gift of time with our families that is uncommon in our modern age.

Be Well,

Emilie Knisley, Superintendent of Schools