



THOMAS ANDERSON
SUPERINTENDENT

NEW BEDFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
PAUL RODRIGUES ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
455 COUNTY STREET
NEW BEDFORD, MASSACHUSETTS 02740
www.newbedfordschool.org

(508) 997-4511

"We are committed to developing a community of learners who are academically proficient, demonstrate strong character and exhibit self-confidence."

KAREN A. TREADUP
DEPUTY SUPERINTENDENT

ANDREW O'LEARY
ASSISTANT
SUPERINTENDENT OF
FINANCE & OPERATIONS

HEATHER EMSLEY
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF
HUMAN CAPITAL SERVICES

JENNIFER FERLAND
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF
STRATEGIC INITIATIVES & PARTNERSHIPS

SANDRA FORD
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF
SPECIAL EDUCATION & STUDENT SERVICES

SONIA WALMSLEY
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATIONAL
ACCESS & PATHWAY

April 3, 2020

Dear Parents and Guardians,

We understand that these are extraordinary times, and the Special Education Department is working hard to ensure that we continue to support families during this national health crisis. We understand how challenging it is to support your child's learning at home. The Special Education Department wants to provide adequate support and structure while offering enough flexibility to accommodate the realities of the situation we are navigating. We are also adhering to guidance provided by both the state and federal Departments of Education. Our primary concern is the health, safety, and well-being of families and staff.

Remote Learning Opportunities

New Bedford Public Schools is committed to providing your child with services and supports to the extent practicable during the current school closures, however, how the district provides special education services will look different during this period. Remote learning provides students with opportunities to demonstrate learning outside of the traditional classroom setting, utilizing materials such as academic packets, books, online programs, telephone and video lessons, and more. We will be making every effort to use creative strategies to provide special education services to every extent feasible. To that end, some of our educators, counselors, and therapists may be offering "virtual" sessions, live and online.

Remote Learning Plans

Your child is entitled to receive accommodations and services set forth on his/her IEP consistent with the need to protect the health and safety of students with disabilities, teachers and staff. Consistent with the Governor's Order, all in-person instruction with students is prohibited to prevent the spread of the deadly COVID-19 virus.

The district will be contacting you to solicit your participation in formulating an individualized remote service plan for your child in a good faith effort to provide your child with a free and appropriate public education during the mandatory school closure period. Your child's IEP will be a guiding document for the remote learning plan, but the IEP was not written for remote implementation without the ability for staff and students to engage in person. Therefore, services in the remote learning plan will look different than if your child were receiving services and supports in school. The remote learning plan is intended to be temporary for the period of school closure and does not alter or amend the Student's current IEP.

Notice Regarding Virtual and Remote Learning

1. Lessons may not be recorded, copied, disseminated or distributed to any person and/or entity.
2. Lessons may not be lawfully recorded without the consent of all participants.
3. Lessons may be viewed by individuals in our students' households, therefore, the district cannot ensure your student's confidentiality or privacy.
4. By allowing your child's participation in virtual/remote learning, you are acknowledging the privacy limitations.

The New Bedford Public Schools do not discriminate on the basis of age, gender, race, color, religion, ethnicity, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, ancestry, homelessness, gender identity, gender expression or immigration status.

5. The district's Acceptable Use Policy and Student Code of Conduct remains in effect, including but not limited to the issues of virtual learning, school-issued devices and school networks.

Lastly, Team meetings will be convened for students who had evaluations completed prior to the school closures. Other Team meetings will be scheduled thereafter.

Please continue to stay engaged with us at newbedfordschools.org for resources and updates.

We thank you for your ongoing cooperation and patience as we work together to navigate this unprecedented situation. As we receive information, we will continue to be responsive to your questions and concerns.

Sincerely,

Sandra Ford

