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## Coronavirus Update 9

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**Superintendent Obeng** <superintendent@bsdvt.org>

Mon, Mar 16, 2020 at 6:39 PM

Reply-To: superintendent@bsdvt.org

To: superintendent@bsdvt.org

Greetings BSD Parents, Staff, and Community Members,

Thank you again to all of you who have reached out with kind words, advocacy, and offers to volunteer. As we gear up to close Wednesday through April 6th in compliance with [Governor Scott's decision to close all schools in Vermont](#), I want to reiterate that there have been no confirmed reported cases of coronavirus in our District.

The purpose of today's message is to provide you an update of the actions Burlington School District is taking related to this closure. Please note: We are working to roll these plans out as quickly as possible; I do anticipate more communication tomorrow and in the following days with more specific and updated information for many of these action items. We will also post information as timely as we can on our [coronavirus webpage](#).

**Afterschool and Pre-K on Tuesday, March 17** - Due to staffing shortages, we have made the difficult decision to cancel all Afterschool programs and pre-k offerings. We recognize that several parents were depending on having one more day of these services and we apologize for the inconvenience.

**Access to Meals** - Our food services team has taken steps to ensure that we can continue to feed students and receive federal reimbursements during our closure. Through partnerships with Burlington Parks and Recreation and the Boys & Girls Club, we will offer grab-and-go meals at a variety of sites starting Wednesday.

### SCHOOL ADJACENT MEAL SITES

At the locations below, we will provide service M-F. We will be providing one breakfast and one lunch each day M-Thurs for each eligible participant who drops in for meal pick up. On Fridays, we will be providing 3 breakfasts and 3 lunches to each eligible participant to cover meals for the weekend.

- From 9:00 AM- 10:00 AM
  - North Avenue Alliance Church
  - The Edmunds Complex horseshoe on Main Street
- From 10:30 AM-11:30 AM
  - The Sustainability Academy parking lot
  - The Champlain Elementary parking lot
- From 9:30-11:00 AM
  - Boys and Girls Club

### HOUSING ADJACENT MEAL SITES

We will host grab-and-go meal service on M, W, F for the following housing developments from 9:30-10:30 am. At these M, W, F sites, we will be providing 3 Breakfasts and 2 Lunches to each eligible participant on Monday and Wednesday. We will provide 3 breakfast meals and 3 lunch meals on Friday to cover meals for the weekend.

- Riverside
- Bobbin Mill
- Salmon Run
- Franklin Square

- South Meadow
- North Gate

Please note: these plans are subject to change; we will communicate out any changes as they occur.

**Curriculum and Continuation of Learning** - There will be a lot of resources that come your way in terms of social media and friends in regards to online learning or "homeschooling". This can create a lot of uncertainty around what is the best strategy for maintaining your child's learning. Let us take that worry off your plate. We have created District-approved resources to help keep your child's mind active and engaged in learning during this time.

**Online Resources:**

- K-8 Online resources have been posted on the district [Coronavirus webpage](#)
- 9-12 Online resources will be shared with students via email and Unified Classroom

**Hardcopy Resources:**

- K-8 Instructional Coaches will be in schools during the morning on the first day of closure (Wednesday morning). Coaches will have hard copies of curriculum resources to share with families who prefer this format.
- 9-12 Hard copy resources will be available for students to take home as needed in the main office on 3/17.

Follow these resources to the best of your abilities. In the coming days and weeks, we will be sending updated plans that will allow you to engage with your child academically but designed to be simple and effective. The state may also have more guidelines that come our way around this topic.

**Childcare** - As a pre-k-12 institution, we have hundreds of children who will not be able to stay home alone and we have several parents in our District who will still need to report to jobs while schools are closed. We have a team in place looking at ways to provide childcare for our community. Right now we are working to prioritize services to essential Burlington City and Burlington School District employees, first responders, and medical providers. We expect to have more information by the end of the week.

**Special Education Services** - All student Support Services staff, including teachers, paraeducators and service providers, will be available by phone and email during school closure. Staff will check email daily at approximately 8 AM and 1 PM. Whenever possible, all special education meetings will be held by phone or virtually as scheduled. IEPs and Evaluations must be completed or appropriately delayed as directed. Laura Nugent, Director of Student Support Services, will contact you as needed. Be sure to contact Laura via email with any questions.

**English Learners** - Our Multilingual Liaisons will continue to be employed during this time and will continue to help our families with a variety of things, including accessing the internet, curriculum resources, and translation of BSD and school-based messages where appropriate. At this time each New American family is being called individually to communicate about school closure and ascertain needs. We have translated previous messages and will continue to do so moving forward.

**School Resource Officers** - Since our buildings will be closed, our SROs will shift back into the Burlington community, making themselves available where students often gather. To be clear, it is not recommended and we do not want students meeting up or hanging out in groups during this closure, but our resource officers will be present and available for our students if needed.

**Internet Access** - Both Burlington Telecom and Comcast are offering free services for low-income families in Burlington.

**Comcast:** <https://www.internetessentials.com/>

**Burlington Telecom:** <https://www.burlingtontelecom.com/rates/> (click rates and select "discount") or call (802) 540-0007

**Information from our School Nurses** - School Nurses will be reaching out to families to pick up their student's medication that they will need at home during the school closure. Doctors' offices would like to remind families that if they are sick to call their doctor's office BEFORE going to the office so that staff can be prepared for their arrival. Please visit our website for a growing number of resources on how to talk to your children about Coronavirus.

**Green Mountain Transit** - GMT is suspending neighborhood specials bus routes as of Wednesday. In addition, to discourage/remove any incentive for students to be traveling or gathering, students will not be able to ride regular bus routes for free during our break.

**Employee Benefits and Pay** - It is my goal to be as compassionate in this process as possible. I have instructed HR to present a plan to our Board of School Commissioners that keeps in place pay and benefits for our employees whenever possible. For areas where this may not be a possibility, we are working with our lawyers to allow employees to find solutions. I expect to send more communication regarding this to staff tonight or tomorrow.

**Volunteers and Outside Visitors** - We have received several offers to volunteer to help with all of the items above. At this time, in the spirit of Governor Scott's executive order and efforts to flatten the curve, we will be relying on District staff to help implement these measures. In addition, we are asking that people not visit our buildings or District offices during this closure, outside of the days and times we have allotted to pick up hard copy materials. We are grateful for the offers of help and will communicate if our needs change.

In closing, I know this is a tremendous amount to process and several families are feeling the pinch and stress involved. I want to take a second to remind you that we will get through this together. To our Senior students, I know this is not the year you envisioned ending your school career. I am sorry and feel for you. We are fortunate to live in a time where we can connect virtually easier than ever with our friends and loved ones. Call each other often and keep in touch, pay attention to your mental health needs, and wash your hands.

Thank you for reading and continuing to be engaged,

Superintendent Obeng

**Updated Chart from the Vermont Department of Health:**

|   |            |
|---|------------|
| <b>Vermont cases of COVID-19</b>                | <b>8</b>   |
| <b>Vermonters tested negative for COVID-19</b>  | <b>421</b> |
| <b>Vermonters being monitored</b>               | <b>274</b> |
| <b>Vermonters who have completed monitoring</b> | <b>143</b> |

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