



OLD COLONY

REGIONAL VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT
476 NORTH AVENUE, ROCHESTER, MASSACHUSETTS 02770-1899

Telephone: 508-763-8011 • Fax: 508-763-9821



Aaron L. Polansky
Superintendent-Director

J. Michael Parker
Principal

Gary Linehan
Assistant Principal

Sarah Griffith
Business Manager

Krystla Fay
Special Services Coordinator

Catherine Tuccinardi
Academic Coordinator

Bethany Botelho
CVTE Coordinator

April 3, 2020

Dear Old Colony Families and Community,

We hope that everyone is healthy and that you are finding a rhythm to life during these unprecedented times. Our primary focus during the extended closure has been the well-being of our students, staff, and their families. This focus will continue to guide our decision making moving forward. At this point in time, all students have been contacted by our teachers through email or Google Classroom with enrichment assignments. We will introduce a credit/non-credit system beginning this Monday, April 6th as part of our distance learning program. If you have not been contacted by your teachers, please email Principal Parker, at jmparker@oldcolony.info, so we can ensure appropriate supports for communication are in place. Any family in need of additional supports or technology should reach out to Mr. Parker via email or phone at (508) 763-8011 extension 118.

To date, Governor Baker has announced that the statewide school closure will remain in effect until Monday, May 4th. The [Department of Elementary and Secondary Education has provided additional guidance](#) on this extended closure. We look forward to continued connection during this time of physical distancing. Please note that we understand it is unrealistic to replicate the educational experience our students benefit from during normal school operation. We thank you for your patience and continued support during this unprecedented time. Health and safety is our top priority. We are committed to the educational process while keeping in mind the multitude of circumstances that may exist for the many people impacted by current events. Please click on the links highlighted throughout this document to access a variety of additional information. To date, the following incremental approach has been taken to address our extended closure.

Our Path Together and Expectations Moving Forward

March 16-20, 2020	Snow day model utilized
March 23-27, 2020	Enrichment opportunities introduced/teacher training conducted
March 30-April 3, 2020	Teacher office hours introduced & continued enrichment offered
April 6-May 4, 2020	Credit-based: Teacher office hours, enrichment, & assignments

School-wide Expectations

Members of the Old Colony administration and faculty will work to provide resources for learning and support to students and families. We are not trying to replicate our typical school experience and will keep in mind the myriad of limitations and extenuating circumstances that members of our community are facing. Administrative team members will meet remotely on Tuesdays and Fridays for planning purposes.

Structured Learning Time and Recommended Schedule of Regularity

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education recommended districts support students to engage in meaningful and productive learning for approximately half the length of a regular school day. This learning can take place via a combination of educator directed learning and student self-directed learning. Please feel free to utilize our [academic enrichment resource guide](#) to explore learning

opportunities of interest. We know that home schedules may not allow for a continuous, uninterrupted learning block and strongly recommend students engage in an average of 3.5 to 4 hours of activities and assignments per day.

We have established a recommended [schedule of regularity](#) as part of this correspondence. These opportunities allow for a combination of structure and flexibility, while we hope to offer a regular source of inspiration to our students, staff, and your families. Please feel free to join us, make recommendations for additions to this schedule, or even offer some type of enrichment for our tight-knit community. Our Administrative team will provide additional updates as we receive more information and guidance from the DESE, DPH and the Governor's office throughout the course of this fluid process.

Recommended Schedule of Regularity

Time	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Ongoing		Work posted weekly	Office hours	Office hours	Office hours	Teacher Feedback	
07:45 am	Morning Message	Morning Message	Morning Message	Morning Message	Morning Message	Morning Message	Morning Message
08:00 am 08:20 am (Wellness)	Meditation Courtesy of Calm.com for schools	Meditation Courtesy of Calm.com for schools	Meditation Courtesy of Calm.com for schools	Meditation Courtesy of Calm.com for schools	Meditation Courtesy of Calm.com for schools	Meditation Courtesy of Calm.com for schools	Meditation Courtesy of Calm.com for schools
08:30 am (45 minutes)		Assigned work from teachers	Assigned work from teachers	Assigned work from teachers	Assigned work from teachers	Assigned work from teachers	
09:15 am ELA+ (45 minutes)		Recommend reading of your choice	Recommend reading of your choice	Recommend reading of your choice	Recommend reading of your choice	Recommend reading of your choice	
10:00 am Media and the Arts Submit your work. We may highlight you on our OC Social Media pages.	Create a "how to" video of yourself teaching a Vocational Skill.	Record a song, parody, or poem about what we are experiencing	Explore your artistic side with Bob Ross	Conduct an interview or podcast with a guest to discuss current events.	Consider keeping a journal of the current events that could be turned into a book at a later time. Your reflections may inspire others.	If you are musically inclined, consider an online concert for an audience via a social media platform.	
11:00 am (1 hour)		Assigned work from teachers	Assigned work from teachers	Assigned work from teachers	Assigned work from teachers	Assigned work from teachers	
12:00 pm		Spend Time Outside	Spend Time Outside	Spend Time Outside	Spend Time Outside	Spend Time Outside	

Professional Staff Expectations

The following items have been established as guidelines and may be subject to change.

- Teachers will post work every Monday using our [existing 9/11 and 10/12 calendar cycle](#).
- Teachers will design activities and assignments that can be completed using technology or traditional pen and paper; not all students and family may have equal access to technology.
- [Teachers will conduct office hours on Tuesdays, Wednesday, and Thursdays](#)
- Teachers will provide timely feedback to students on work shared virtually each week.
- All staff will check email twice daily (between 7-10am and Noon-2pm).
- All staff will respond to email within 24 hours.
- All staff will attend a weekly information call at 2:00 p.m. on Fridays.
- All staff will complete the Cyber Security Pre-Assessment and Module 1 of Cyber Security Awareness Training by April 5, 2020.
- Teachers will continue to work on curriculum planning with the goal of completing the *Desired Results* portion for each unit for each of your assigned courses.
- Mrs. Levesque, school nurse, will have daily office hours from 12:00-1:00 p.m. to address health-related questions. Contact Mrs. Levesque at dlevesque@oldcolony.info.

Student Expectations

It is best for students to maintain a sense of routine. To the extent possible, we suggest students try to implement a healthy routine that includes waking up at a reasonable time, eating a healthy breakfast, showering or washing up, and getting dressed in a manner appropriate for any virtual activities that may be scheduled. The following expectations have been established for students:

- Students should check their email daily, login to Google Classroom, and respond to and correspondence within a 24 hour period of time.
- Students should plan to engage in educational activities using teacher office hours and the schedule of regularity as a guideline around which to build their schedule.
- Students will complete activities and assignments given and may be required to turn those assignments in virtually on due dates established by their teacher. If a student is unable to turn those assignments in virtually, they must contact Mr. Parker via email at jmparker@oldcolony.info or via phone at (508) 763-8011 extension 118 **immediately** to secure further support.
- Cooperative Employment opportunities are suspended during the time of extended closure. If students choose to work, such decisions are independent of Old Colony RVTHS.

Grading

We are following the guidance for grading provided by Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Commissioner Riley. We have no way to ensure students have had equitable access to learning opportunities during this closure as we keep in mind the variety of technological, health, disability and language challenges that may be present. Therefore, we will follow a credit/no credit grading system for the remainder of the year. If we return on May 4, we will continue to use a credit/no credit system, as we cannot reverse this grading practice midway through the third trimester.

- Students have completed two trimesters. Seniors have completed portfolios.
- GPAs and grades will be based on trimesters 1 and 2.
- Trimester 3 will be graded based on credit/no credit.

Trimester II Report Cards and Final Exams

Report cards for Trimester II have been posted to the SchoolBrains Portal. Hard copies of report cards will be sent via the United States Postal Service sometime next week. There will be no final exams conducted at the close of the school year. If there is a return to school, this time will be utilized in a manner to best address the anticipated and unanticipated transitions necessitated as a result of our extended closure.

April Vacation

April vacation will remain a vacation. All learning activities will be put on hold during this time. Teachers and students are encouraged to relax during this time. Payroll will be managed in the same manner it has been during April vacations in the past.

Resources for Assistance

If anyone in your household has filed for unemployment in the last two weeks or if your household has experienced a significant change in financial status, please consider utilizing any of the following resources.

Project Bread's FoodSource Hotline offers free, comprehensive statewide food assistance to all Massachusetts residents. Help is offered in 160 languages and there is a line dedicated to helping those that are hearing impaired. For more information and hours, visit www.projectbread.org/gethelp, or call Project Bread's FoodSource Hotline at 1-800-645-8333.

The Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA) assists and empowers low-income individuals and families to meet their basic needs, improve their quality of life, and achieve long term economic self-sufficiency. DTA serves one in nine residents of the Commonwealth with direct economic assistance (cash benefits) and food assistance (SNAP benefits), as well as workforce training opportunities. Visit <https://dtaconnect.eohhs.mass.gov/> to learn more about DTA benefits and enroll.

Legal Guidance on Remote Learning

During this period of school closure, the District will be providing students with remote learning opportunities, which may include analog materials, telephone calls, video conferencing, pre-recorded lessons and other online services. Students are expected to participate in these supports and complete activities and assignments provided. Students will be graded on a credit/no credit basis. Please reach out to us as soon as possible if you anticipate or become aware of any issues with your child accessing the remote opportunities provided by the district.

In accordance with state and federal laws, including the Massachusetts Wiretapping Act and FERPA, parents and students must refrain from recording any and all remote lessons. Exceptions may be made on an individual basis due to special circumstances, and only with the consent of everyone involved in the lesson. In addition, while parents/guardians are permitted to observe online instruction in a non-disruptive manner, to the extent that this distance learning activity provides confidential student information, all participants agree, by participating in this distance learning activity, to refrain from disseminating any confidential student information about other student participants with any third parties. By participating in this distance learning experience, consent to this request is hereby provided.

Similarly, we ask everyone in our school community to recognize that video conferences and other online services will be taking place in the homes of educators and students who participate in the calls, and to be mindful of everyone's right to privacy. To that end, we remind our students to dress appropriately and choose an appropriate location in their home from which to participate in any and all remote learning opportunities, particularly those with a video component. Parents/guardians should take all precautions to safeguard personal or private information that they do not wish to be disclosed.

Students will be expected to behave in accordance with school rules of conduct while participating in remote instruction. Cyber-bullying, harassment, discrimination, and abuse of the remote learning process will not be tolerated and may result in suspension from remote learning, as well as additional consequences when school resumes. The District also encourages its staff and students alike to limit disruptions to remote lessons to the extent feasible (while also recognizing the sometimes pets, small children, and technical difficulties cannot be prevented from disrupting a lesson that happens at home).

Special education teachers, ELL/SEI teachers, and individual service providers will be in contact with parents/guardians of students with pre-identified specialized learning needs regarding necessary modifications to the remote instruction opportunities offered to other members of an individual student's class, as well as to discuss direct and group support provisions. These supports serve as a good-faith effort to provide assistance in accessing content during this period of school closure and does not impact the current IEP or 504 Plan for your child, which remains in "stay-put" at this time. If you have any questions regarding how to access these supports you may reach out to Krystla Fay, Special Services Coordinator via email at KFay@OldColony.info or at (508) 763-8011 extension 142 at any time.

Senior Class Activities

Our Class of 2020 remains in our thoughts each and every day. The fluidity of the current situation has left a lot of our planning up in the air as it pertains to activities for the Class of 2020. We will continue to be proactive with our planning and thought processes moving forward. We will keep our community informed as decisions relative to activities are established.

Wishing you health and peace of mind during these unprecedented times.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Aaron L. Polansky". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial 'A'.

Aaron L. Polansky, Superintendent-Director
Old Colony Regional Vocational Technical High School