

# Gardner Public Schools

Mark J. Pellegrino, *Superintendent*



www.gardnerk12.org

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April 23, 2020

Dear Gardner Public School Families:

With the extension of this school closure through the remainder of the academic year, the district will continue to conduct remote learning and food distribution services. Additionally, now that the closure is official, we will begin to address new issues. We are now planning for things like:

- Organizing refunds for preschool, the extended day program, and field trips;
- Allowing families to safely retrieve items that were left behind in the buildings after our sudden and unexpected long-term departure;
- Celebrating graduation, the prom, and awards ceremonies; and,
- Designing summer programming including summer school, summer food distribution, and professional development for staff.

We are working hard in this virtual environment to address these critical and time-sensitive concerns. We will continue to update you via telephone and email, as well as on our website and social media pages.

Additionally, please review the clarification below regarding grade level promotion. There are two sections: one for students currently in high school grades 9-12, and one for students currently in grades K-8.

First, for high school students, the promotion process is clear. In order to be promoted to grades 10, 11, or 12, or to graduate, students need to pass the required classes and earn enough credits as described in our Program of Studies. This includes any current classroom assignments that the teacher requires during remote learning. During this time, the activities assigned by your teacher are important. Please make sure you do not take them lightly and contact your teacher if you are concerned about a particular class or assignment.

Secondly, for students in grades K-8, we will follow the guidance issued by the U.S. Department of Education on March 21<sup>st</sup>, and will not make premature decisions regarding the impact this closure will have on students. Following this guidance, all students in grades K-8 will be promoted to the next grade level in September. Any individualized determinations to hold a student back will be made when we resume building-based, in-person schooling, and this will happen only when necessary on a case by case basis. This process will allow us to accurately assess a student's progress and make an informed and fair decision that's in the child's best interest. As this time of school closure is unprecedented,

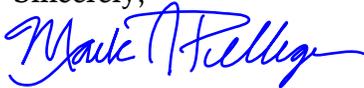
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remember that all students will be facing the challenge of lost face-to-face instructional time. We know that nothing can replace the education provided by our professional teachers in a non-virtual classroom; we can only do our best to mimic it in this time of required social-distancing. When school resumes, a system is already in place to assess and address student learning gaps. The current remote learning activities have been thoughtfully, and collaboratively designed by our professional teachers and specialists. These activities focus on essential standards for each grade. It is important that students do their best to participate in these activities. Remote learning can be challenging for some students, but know that our teachers are available if your child is struggling. Teachers are in the best position to provide your child the help she or he needs in order to successfully manage this difficult work.

Finally, if you want more information regarding the operation of our schools during this crisis, or information about guidance from the state or U.S. Department of Education, or helpful information about how we are supporting students with special needs and English Learners, please visit our website at [www.gardnerk12.org](http://www.gardnerk12.org).

We are here to help. Please do not hesitate to reach out to a teacher, administrator, or me, should you encounter any issues. Thank you again for your seemingly endless patience and support. This is a stressful time, but the district is working on solutions to ensure that this unprecedented schooling experience goes as smoothly as possible.

Sincerely,



Dr. Mark J. Pellegrino  
Superintendent of Schools

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