

March 14, 2020

Dear Newton South Families,

By now, you should have received a message from David Fleishman with updates about our school closure. This letter will serve to highlight some of the information from his letter as well as to provide you additional Newton South specific information. We are working with the district, other Newton schools, and area high schools; we continue to plan and adjust based on new information developing daily.

We understand you have a lot of questions. We will share information when it becomes available.

- Food resources, as well as additional resources and updates related to COVID-19, can be found on the NPS website at: <https://www.newton.k12.ma.us/COVID19>
- Students are not expected to complete any assignments until the state and district determine what the expectations may be for supporting student learning and student social-emotional health during the closures.
- Later next week, we will share educational opportunities for your student during this unprecedented time of school closing. They are not intended to replace classroom instruction or to substitute for instruction in any way. Rather, they will be supplemental.
- Teachers and counselors have been asked to not communicate about assignments or upcoming work until there is further direction. Please be patient.
- Reading a book or writing/sketching in a journal are great options to continue the learning process until we have more information. Find some time for exercise and creativity too.
- We are developing plans regarding course registration for next year; please stay tuned.
- The Main Office is closed and students and families are not allowed in the building at this time. If you have urgent questions about transcripts, working papers, etc. please email Chris Hardiman. Please be patient as we will have limited access.
- The MIAA (Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association) has moved the start of spring sports to March 30, 2020 at the earliest. There are no practices until further notice.
- There are no NSHS meetings, practices, or any other gatherings at this time.
- Please make sure all of your contact information is up to date in Aspen including settings for notifications by phone, email, and text. Encourage your students to login to Aspen and add their email address to their account.
- The decision to close schools is an attempt to slow the spread of the virus. It will only be effective if the community also takes steps to practice self-isolation, monitor for any symptoms, and avoid large gatherings. We need all community members to do their part or the school closure will not be successful in limiting the spread of the virus. We encourage students to connect with each other virtually, not in person.

The halls yesterday were eerily quiet without students and educators. It underscored the importance of why we are taking this step, and why it's critical for each us to contribute to the greater good by listening to our local authorities and making some short term sacrifices in an effort to slow the rate of transmission of Covid19. Hopefully, South's halls will be full of people again soon.

Be well,

Joel Stembridge

Principal, Newton South High School