March 13, 2020

Dear New London Public Schools’ Parents, Guardians, Students and Staff,

I am writing to inform you that the New London Public Schools will be closed until further notice effective immediately. At a minimum, schools will be closed for two weeks. Please be aware that as new guidance and information becomes available, this may need to be extended. Families can expect to receive updated communication, every Friday, or more frequently as necessary.

On the advice of our local health departments, the school superintendents in southeastern Connecticut have come together to make a decision to put the health of our community (both our school community and the community at large) at the center of our decision to close schools. We have been advised by local health authorities that the implementation of social distancing measures is a proven science-based intervention that has been shown to reduce the morbidity and mortality associated with communicable disease outbreaks. In the past, communities in which schools closed were able to positively impact and reduce the spread of disease. With safety and the well-being of all at the forefront, we felt compelled to make this decision to prevent the spread of illness among our students, staff and our communities.

We have been apprised that we cannot confirm that COVID-19 will run its course and be over in two weeks. In fact, it is not likely that it will. Given this information we have made the determination to make this closure indefinite with a minimum two-week closure to start. This decision was made in consultation with and with the support of the health departments and emergency management professionals. Also, please be advised we will not have any formal distance learning in place during the closure because such an approach would not allow for equitable experiences for all students. It is important to note that the last day of school cannot go past June 30, 2020 based on the Executive Order issued by the Governor.

In addendum to this letter, families will find information regarding facilities, academics, food services, communication avenues and resources. Please continue to monitor your phone, email, the New London Public Schools website (www.newlondon.org) and New London Public Schools social media to ensure receipt of the most current and accurate information. Again, as new guidance becomes available from our public health officials, the CDC and state officials, families can expect to receive updated communication, every Friday, or more frequently as necessary.

Sincerely,

Cynthia E. Ritchie
Superintendent of Schools