



**BRISTOL BOARD OF EDUCATION**

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January 8, 2021

Dear Bristol Public Schools Parents and Guardians,

I hope that you and your families had a healthy, safe, and happy holiday season and that you found time for some much-needed rest and relaxation. For many of us, the new year symbolizes a fresh start. New goals will be set and milestones will be surpassed. We reflect on the past year and prioritize what is most important to us. If this past year has taught us anything, it may be to celebrate the bright moments of our lives and not to take some of life's most simple, daily happenings for granted. Together, I know that we will continue to overcome obstacles and be a stronger district for it.

I would be remiss if I did not address the midweek events that occurred at the United States Capitol Building. The events were unlike any that I have witnessed in my lifetime. Bristol Board of Education Policy 6144 states that our students have the right to discuss and study controversial issues, to freely access relevant information, and to form their own opinions without jeopardizing their relations with their teacher or school. As educators, we strive to create intellectually safe learning spaces that support our scholars as they process unsettling events. Our students are watching, listening, and learning. The resiliency that our scholars continue to show in the midst of distressing national news and a global health pandemic is both hopeful and truly inspiring. If your child needs any further support, our school psychologists, school counselors, and other social-emotional support staff are here to help. Please do not hesitate to reach out.

We are very excited to begin welcoming back our scholars soon. **On Tuesday, January 19, 2021, grades Pre-K-6 and grade 9 will return to in-person learning and grades 7, 8, 10, 11, and 12 will resume hybrid learning.** Students in grades 6-12+ who have been attending 4-day weekly in-person special education services during the hybrid schedule will return to their 4-day weekly in-person schedule as of Tuesday, January 19, 2021. As a reminder, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day is a school holiday and will be observed on Monday, January 18, 2021.

We will continue to monitor the public health data for the City of Bristol and Hartford County and communicate any changes as needed. To date, Bristol Public Schools COVID-19 Health and Safety Liaisons have traced 125 positive cases related to students or employees of Bristol Public Schools. Of significant note, 54% of all positive cases were reported during December and the first week of January. Specifically, 43 positive cases were reported during December and 24 positive cases have been reported thus far in January. Please continue to proactively practice mitigation strategies (e.g., masks, social distancing, cleaning and hygiene, no nonessential travel, no indoor or outdoor gatherings of 10 or more people, etc.).

**High School Midterms**

In years past, the week of January 19th would have been reserved for midterm assessments. This year, we will administer midyear learning checks at Bristol Eastern High School, Bristol Central High School, and Bristol Preparatory Academy that cover the essential learning from the first semester in English, Mathematics, Social Studies, and Science. Learning checks are designed to assist teachers in gauging students' progress and inform their instructional planning for the second

### **High School Midterms – con't**

semester. These learning checks will be corrected so that students receive feedback about their learning. Student performance on the midyear learning checks will not negatively impact or harm a student's current course grades. Additional information regarding midyear learning checks will be communicated by each administration at BEHS, BCHS, and BPA.

### **UPDATE: Food Distribution**

**All students enrolled in Bristol Public Schools are eligible for free breakfast and lunch.** Pre-packed meals will be available for pickup on **Monday, January 11, and Wednesday, January 13.** Multi-day meal packages are available. Please [click here](#) for the food distribution locations and schedule.

### **UPDATE: Parent and Guardian Snow Day Survey**

We reshared the snow day survey to gather more feedback and 1,872 parents and guardians submitted responses. Additionally, 491 teachers submitted responses in a separate snow day survey. **As a result, there will be 0 snow days and all snow days will be considered remote learning days. The academic year will end on Friday, June 11, 2021.**

### **Securly Safety Cloud for Students**

Bristol Public Schools has transitioned to the Securly Safety Cloud for students. The Securly Safety Cloud offers a robust web filter to help keep our students on-task and protected with signature features such as scanning for signs of cyberbullying, suicide, and violence, and detecting attempts to visit inappropriate sites or material. Securly offers unparalleled classroom and device management tools, allowing BPS to filter, manage, and recover devices within one platform. Securly's Artificial Intelligence can provide full visibility into students' online activity from which BPS can download or email reports, and receive notifications for flagged content. Additionally, BPS is exploring optional tools within the Securly platform to partner with parents; these options allow parents to view their child's recent searches, sites visited, and videos watched on their school-owned device. We are committed to keeping all students safe while they learn and explore with technology.

### **Professional Support Series – Parent to Parent Conversation**

The Connecticut State Department of Education and the State Education Resource Center of Connecticut will be offering a series of opportunities for families to engage in further conversation on topics related to their children's education. The next event will be held on January 12, 2021, and is named *A Place at the Table: A Parent-to-Parent Conversation about the Importance of Attendance and Supporting Our Kids in School*. This session will offer families and key school partners the opportunity to learn about meaningful strategies and valuable resources to help connect students with learning. This webinar will offer live co-presenter translation in Spanish, Portuguese, and Arabic. Please see the attached flyer for more information.

As always, we are BPS! We will *move forward together* and as a result, *be better together!*

In partnership,



Catherine M. Carbone, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools