



BERGEN COUNTY TECHNICAL SCHOOLS / SPECIAL SERVICES

District Administrative Office

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Howard Lerner, Ed.D.
Superintendent

Dear BCSS and BCTS Administration, Staff, Parents/Guardians,

I want to take a moment to update you on information we have received about school operations from the Bergen County Interim Executive Superintendent and the New Jersey Department of Education ("NJDOE").

Governor Murphy's Executive Order No. 104 (issued March 16, 2020) mandated that all public schools in New Jersey be closed to students beginning on March 18, 2020, and remain closed as long as this Executive Order remains in effect. There has been no further word from the Governor's office about schools re-opening to date. Our teachers and educational services staff will continue to plan instruction and support for students in two-week increments until updated information and direction is issued by the Governor.

Remote instruction will continue from now through April 3rd. Spring recess will remain as originally scheduled, from April 6th until April 10th. Remote instruction will not take place during that week. If our schools remain closed to students after spring recess, remote instruction will resume on April 13th.

In a March 24, 2020 memo to Superintendents and school leaders the New Jersey Commissioner of Education advised that Governor Murphy has canceled all statewide student assessments for the spring 2020 testing window. This includes the springtime administration of the New Jersey Student Learning Assessments (NJSLA), ACCESS for ELLs, and the Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) assessment. The Bergen County Technical and Special Services Schools will follow guidance from the State, and the New Jersey Department of Education, to create assessment plans which will meet the needs of all of our students.

The U.S. Department of Education ("USDE") will grant a waiver to any state that is unable to assess its students due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The NJDOE has applied for, and the USDE has granted approval of, a waiver for our state. Therefore, New Jersey will not be required to administer a statewide assessment for federal accountability purposes.

Cancellation of statewide assessments will not prevent students from meeting their graduation assessment requirements. Current juniors and sophomores also have access to the menu of alternate assessments (the SAT, etc.) and the portfolio appeal process as pathways to complete their graduation assessment requirement.

This has been a challenging and stressful time. I want to thank every one of you for the flexibility, creativity and collaboration you have demonstrated to support each other and our continued effort to educate our students. Stay safe and be well.

Sincerely,

Howard Lerner, Ed.D.

Superintendent