

# Greenwich Junior-Senior High School

"Where Excellence is a Tradition"

George C. Niesz, Principal  
Benjamin M. Cronin, Assistant Principal

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Dear Greenwich Junior Senior High School families,

I am contacting you with two important information about some changes we are going to make to our current procedures and schedule for the second marking period (beginning on Monday, November 9). Recently our teacher leaders (ambassadors) met with Mr. Cronin and I and reviewed how the first marking period unfolded and what improvements we should make based on our experiences. The dialogue was rich and centered primarily on how we could improve/enhance our ability to help our students learn and grow while still experiencing the constraints placed upon by COVID-19. The result of our discussions were two changes to our procedures/schedule for the second marking period.

## Change to Office Hours

During the first marking period we set up two times for teachers to connect with students virtually, one before school (8:30-8:55am) and one after school (3:25-3:40pm). Out of an abundance of caution, we did not allow students to meet with their teachers for in-person extra help (except for in special situations). After experiencing this procedure for ten weeks, we believe that we need to make a change to allow students and teachers to meet together for a longer, uninterrupted period of time. Here are the changes we are making.

- Office Hours will be **8:10-8:55am, Monday-Thursday** (there will no longer be afternoon Office Hours).
- Office Hours will **open to in-person extra help as well as virtual extra help**. Students that would like to come to school early for extra help will be able to do so as long as they have the prior approval of the teacher (students cannot just come to school early without an agreed upon appointment with a teacher).
- Teachers will be able to ask students that need extra help and/or need to make up schoolwork to come to school early during this period.
- Unfortunately the district is not able to provide transportation for students to come to school early (the buses are still going to be on their regular high school runs at this time).
- **Please note.** We will not hold it against a student if they are not able to get to school early due to an issue with transportation. However, it will still be expected that students will need to make up missing work or class time.

## Remote Learning Days

The second change we are implementing to our schedule for the second marking period is the addition of two "totally remote" learning days to our calendar. During these days, teachers will be coming to school and offering instruction to their students remotely (at-home).

- During remote learning days, almost all students in grades 7-12 will stay home and experience their instruction online.
- The only students that will be coming to school on remote learning days will be those students that do not have access to the internet at home (those students will be able to come to school and sit in the Library Media Center and access the internet).
- Our first scheduled remote learning day is **Friday, December 4**. The second scheduled remote learning day is set for **Friday, January 22**.
- It is possible that these dates would change if we experience weather related changes to our calendar.

The reason we have decided to add remote learning days is that our teachers need some additional time to meet the multitude of challenges they are experiencing this year (changing their existing plans to fit our hybrid/virtual environment, converting exams and quizzes so that they can be administered to students on-line, and meeting with colleagues to discuss the best ways to use instructional technology to improve teaching in a hybrid/remote learning environment).

We know that these two changes might be a bit confusing for some of our families. We remain committed to evaluating our procedures and program at the end of each marking period as we strive to do our best to meet the needs of our students. I want to encourage anyone with a question about these changes to contact me via email ([gniesz@greenwichcsd.org](mailto:gniesz@greenwichcsd.org)) or by phone (518-692-9542 extension 6301).

It is hard to believe that we are beginning the second quarter of the 2020-21 school year. On behalf of the entire JSHS staff, I want to thank our students for the focus and hard work that they are dedicating to their educational pursuits during this VERY challenging time. I also want to thank our families for your continued support of your children, our teachers and our school. Finally, I want to acknowledge the incredible hard work and commitment to excellence that the professional staff (bus drivers, custodians, teaching aides, office staff, counselors, cafeteria workers, and teachers) continue to bring to our building every day. Together we have done our best to offer the students of our school the excellent education that they deserve during these trying times. We look forward to continuing our work together moving forward.

Respectfully,

George Niesz  
7-12 Principal