

Vinalhaven School News, by Superintendent/Principal Tonya Arnold



Next week is School Vacation April 18 to 26: Students and parents will not be expected to adhere to remote learning routines. Staycation ideas: Build a Fort, Design a Garden or Outdoor Space, Be Crafty, Do Safe Home Science Experiments (https://thestir.cafemom.com/big_kid/177627/science_experiment_project_kids_home), Take a Hike, Learn a New Skill, Learn Dance Moves Together, Plan Movie Nights, Have a Picnic, Play Yard Games, Stargaze, Try New Food, Indulge in Home Spa Day, Scavenger Hunt, Create an Obstacle Course, Stage a Family Photo Shoot Contests, Story Tell Around a Bonfire or Backyard Camping. Have fun!

Food deliveries: There will be no food deliveries from school during School Vacation Week. On April 27 we will begin again. We have a very lean staff for meal production. Meeting regulations is tied to funding. Working within budget, and shipment limits, prevent some creative adjustments. The town's webpage for help with food is <https://www.townofvinalhaven.org/home/pages/help-food-and-finances>

Remote learning extends through end of School Year: We know this news is unsettling for families. We are seeking feedback from families through a SurveyMonkey link posted on our Facebook page to help us determine which dates would be best to end remote instruction, to end school food deliveries, and to hear creative ideas for end of year celebrations that comply with social distancing requirements. After we receive family feedback and collaborate as a staff about the details related to the wrap up of the school year, we will share a more detailed plan with the Board and the community.

The past month has been especially difficult for Seniors with so many changes. One thing that has not changed is our devotion to the Class of 2020 and our desire for those students to have as many cherished memories and traditions as possible. The graduation ceremony is important. Whether or not to have a graduation ceremony was never a question. The question is in light of the situation, how can we honor the class in a way that is as historic as the times?

Third Quarter Progress Reports should be on their way to homes for Upper Grades. Pre-K to 3rd Grades are on trimesters, so the next report at those grades will be narrative at the end of the year.

Budget Development Continues: Following the budget work session via zoom on 4-8-20, we continue to search for areas to trim the budget draft further. We are exploring loan options in order to complete some of critical roof and other repairs that can no longer be put off. Nearly 5% of the increases over last year's budget are non-negotiable items due to contract increases. Offering appropriate special education services continues to be our greatest challenge: from both a program and from a fiscal point of view. Fifty-four special education students are currently identified for services, with additional students being evaluated. These numbers represent an extra-ordinary high number of identified students relative to our total population, and some of these students will require significant services. We will work to provide the best possible services for our students as efficiently as possible.

Next Regular Board Meeting: We rescheduled our April 15th meeting to April 29th. The agenda is in this edition. Contact our school secretary for the zoom meeting link information after school vacation.