

New Canaan Schools and Parents Show Leadership during Global Pandemic

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NEW CANAAN, CT, USA, May 5, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The [New Canaan Public Schools](#) are giving residents of the community something to be happy about as the continuing health crisis sweeps across the state of Connecticut and the rest of the country.

Parents of schoolchildren of all ages are praising the New Canaan Public Schools for their preparation and efficiency in seamlessly transitioning from in-school learning to e-learning as soon as it became clear all schools in the community would close to prevent the spread of the Covid-19 virus.



New Canaan CT

[Schools in New Canaan](#) were advised to close on Thursday, March 12th, just two days after Connecticut's third coronavirus case was confirmed. The announcement was delivered in a letter to parents from school district Superintendent Bryan Luizzi.

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*School District Superintendent
Bryan Luizzi.*

“Closing schools is not something any Superintendent, Health Department, or town does lightly. Nonetheless, after careful thought and consideration, and with the strong support of our school district doctor and other medical experts, it is the right decision for our students, staff, and community,” Luizzi wrote in a letter to the community.

While some schools in the state are opting to close down entirely, leaving parents with full-time jobs struggling to keep their kids on a daily schedule, NCPS has thought of every contingency, and is in constant communication with students and parents to ensure this process is as smooth as possible.

Moira O'Riordan, a New Canaan resident and radiologist said, “being in healthcare, we knew the announcement was imminent, and felt immense relief when it came. We no longer had to be uncertain about what [the school closure] was going to be like. NCPS actually planned for it and were prepared. They took one day off as a “snow day” and then the next day we had a full day schedule. They’ve been so well organized while everything else is chaotic.”

Maria Carusso, a New Canaan parent with children in the 6th and 8th grades, shared her

thoughts: "It's a testament to all those involved. They [NCPS] have implemented this as seamlessly as possible. It's no wonder our schools are nationally recognized!"

Allison Tator, who has twins in 9th grade, has been equally impressed. "They've literally thought of everything. "[My children] John and Amelia are receiving daily emails from the school principal in an effort to keep as much consistency as possible. They're not just texts alone, they're recording daily assembly announcements in a YouTube video to keep it as consistent as possible".

Said Allison Zinczenko, "Our 7th grader attends Saxe Middle School and we have been watching Principal Gusitsch every morning. It gives my son a sense of normalcy and routine, and truly sets the tone for his school day."

The importance of maintaining a regular schedule is crucial in a time of crisis, and New Canaan has remained cognizant of the challenges that the current health crisis can place on parents and students. "Districts should prioritize re-acclimating students, addressing their social-emotional needs, and providing high-quality learning opportunities that prepare them for the following year," said Commissioner Miguel Cardona, lauding New Canaan's initiative.

"They've really taken this all into consideration to make it work for all families," said Carusso. "There are parents working from home with multiple children, toggling back and forth while still working for their company. They're taking all this, as well as additional feedback from parents, into consideration."

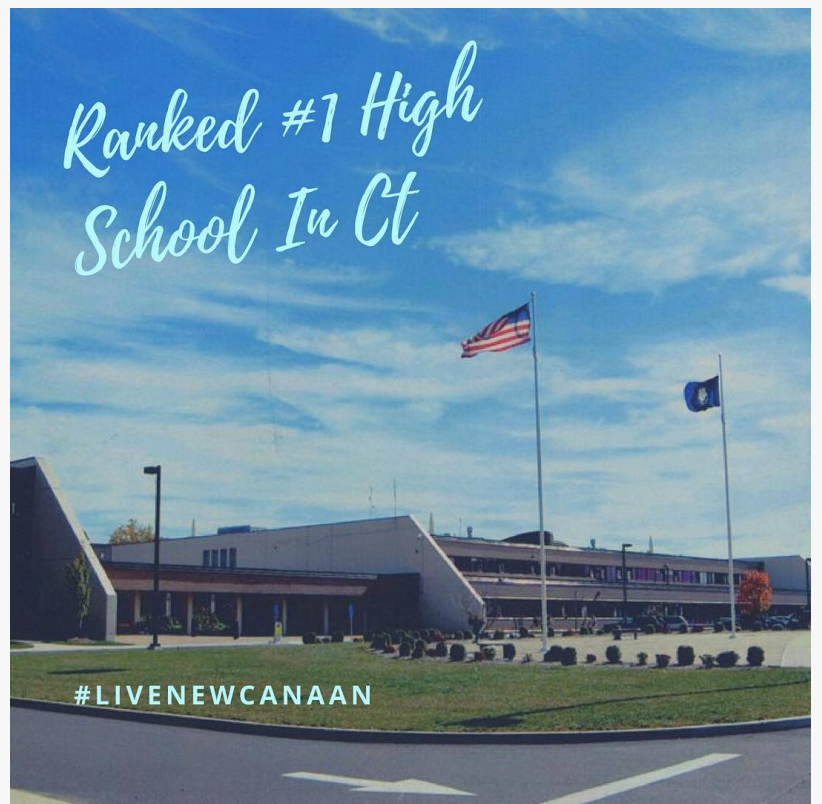
Zinczenko, a senior marketing executive and parent of two said, "We've had an easier adjustment than most because our students are using the same online tools they use in the classroom and for homework."

She added, "the New Canaan schools have certainly embraced so many tech tools, and my hope is that it is an example to other towns that had a harder time getting up to speed with e-learning. My old school district in New York had to use a two-week combination of snow days and spring break days to help their staff transition to distance learning."

The New Canaan Public Schools' initiative has been so effective that the State Board of Education is allowing the district to treat its "distance learning days as official days in session, counting toward the school year's 180-day minimum requirement," according to Michael Horyczun, the



New Canaan CT Schools



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school district's communications director.

Julie Farrell, a New Canaan resident remarked, "They have truly gone above and beyond -- everything from their thorough lesson plans, daily communication to both the parents and students, their unbelievable support and their overall preparedness. We are beyond lucky to live in such a special town. As an educator and now a private tutor, I feel such gratitude to our teachers during this very scary and unsettling time."

"Impressive is an understatement," said Heather Moore, who has children at Saxe Middle School and New Canaan High School. "I don't know of any other school district where students, teachers, and administrators were able to fully implement e-learning with only one day of down time. Our superintendent, Dr. Luizzi, also did a great job of communicating with the parents on daily expectations, resources, and goals for the program. Each teacher had a Google classroom set up days before we went live for the students to get online and become familiar with the new format."

With Governor Ned Lamont's announcement May 5th that all K-12 public schools in the state will remain closed for the remainder of the academic year, New Canaan's early preparation for the challenges presented by coronavirus has demonstrated remarkable leadership.

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