



# Evesham Township School District

Meland Administration Building, 25 South Maple Avenue, Marlton, NJ 08053

[www.evesham.k12.nj.us](http://www.evesham.k12.nj.us) · (856) 983-1800 · Fax # (856) 983-2939

Dr. Justin Smith, Superintendent  
Mr. John Recchinti, School Business Administrator

Ms. Danielle T. Magulick, Director of Curriculum & Instruction  
Mr. Richard G. Dantine, Jr., Director of Personnel

Dec. 18, 2020

Dear ETSD Families,

This week's update highlights: Shortened Day Schedule Update, Free Early Childhood Developmental Screenings, Meals over Winter Break, Resource for Families, Reminder about travel quarantine, Community Activities update, and Snow Day Reflection.

*Every day of learning is something to celebrate.* Today is Day 66 of the school year. Our mission of serving students, safely and with care and compassion for students and staff, is a complex balance, with many voices from a range of perspectives, all valued. Thanks to everyone who contacts me. Safety is always first. Each day brings new data, locally and in larger contexts, that we monitor and analyze. Every day, through communication with our county health department and other districts, and monitoring and analyzing data, we balance the importance of in-person learning with the importance of health and safety.

Yesterday, a positive case was identified involving an individual from MES. Based on role, this person spent 15 minutes or more in multiple classrooms, resulting in many close contacts. **Out of caution, and in excess of the "within 6 feet for 15 minutes or more" CDC definition, we have conducted contact tracing since the summer by considering all students and staff in a classroom, regardless of distance, to be close contacts of any case who was in the classroom for 15 minutes or more. Strictly per CDC definition, the number of close contacts for each case would be far less. We have been using a higher, precautionary approach in conjunction with our county health officials.**

The only way to prevent the possibility of school close contacts would be to close all schools. Among other outcomes, closure would affect 2,942 students, the 68% of our students who currently attend in-person. 80% of Burlington County school districts individually have a student population less than 2,942.

We continue to try to balance care and compassion for everyone, staff and students, school by school, based on knowledge. Every time someone has to quarantine, especially this time of year, it is deeply painful to me.

## **Shortened day schedule update**

We are staying with our regular full day schedule, while continuing to explore possible shortened day alternatives for January and February, if needed. This is just another step in our process of proactively reflecting on any aspect of what we do. A complex factor is transportation. The shortest day possible--to meet all busing needs district-wide and maintain our AM/PM preschool and kindergarten and full day kindergarten--is five hours, with all school start times staying the same. Thus far, the pros and cons of a five hour day vs. a regular school day during Jan./Feb. do not conclusively tip toward either choice. I will provide an update in my Friday email on January 8, 2021.



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## Free Early Childhood Developmental Screenings

[Children's Specialized Hospital](http://Children's Specialized Hospital) is offering early childhood developmental screenings via telehealth, at no cost to families for children ages 1-5. Families can schedule a private developmental screening in the comfort of their own home. The appointments will be virtual through a video or phone conversation. Screenings are offered in English and Spanish. For more information, please contact Jennifer Torres, Community Outreach Assistant Coordinator, Autism Department, Children's Specialized Hospital at 908.233.3720 ext. 2490 or [jetorres@childrens-specialized.org](mailto:jettorres@childrens-specialized.org). Flyers and FAQ sheets in English and Spanish are linked below.

- [Telehealth Developmental Screening Flyer \(English\)](#)
- [Telehealth Developmental Screenings FAQs \(English\)](#)
- [Telehealth Developmental Screening Flyer \(Spanish\)](#)
- [Telehealth Developmental Screenings FAQs \(Spanish\)](#)

## Meals over Winter Break

Our district is extending meals ordering throughout Winter Break, via the same approach used this fall. Please note that this does not include a la carte purchases. Parents would need to order from MyPaymentsPlus (linked on our homepage) between Tuesday, Dec. 22 at 8 AM and Thursday, Dec. 24 at 6 PM (a hard deadline). Meals ordered between Dec. 22 and Dec. 24 must be picked up at Marlton Middle School from 12 pm to 2 pm on Wednesday, Dec. 30 (no delivery). This opportunity is supported by the US Department of Agriculture. For more information:

<https://www.usda.gov/media/press-releases/2020/10/09/trump-administration-extends-free-meals-kids-entire-school-year>

## Resource for Families

Prince of Peace Church runs a Food Pantry Mondays 5 – 7 PM and Thursdays 9 – 11 AM located in the back of the church parking lot, 61 Route 70 East, Marlton, NJ 08053. The Pantry will be closed on Christmas Eve. To pick up food, just pull up to the curb, non-contact and safe. For more information, please contact Scott Rush at (856) 983-0607 or [srush@comcast.net](mailto:srush@comcast.net)

## Reminder about travel quarantine

Just a friendly reminder for us all as we are considering trips during the holidays and any other time, please be mindful of this list. Students and staff travelling beyond the immediate region have to quarantine.

<https://covid19.nj.gov/faqs/nj-information/travel-and-transportation/are-there-travel-restrictions-to-or-from-new-jersey>

## Community Activities update

A Marlton girls' lacrosse sign-ups flyer is the most recent addition to our Community Activities webpage:

[https://www.evesham.k12.nj.us/community/community\\_activities](https://www.evesham.k12.nj.us/community/community_activities). Registration closes January 17.



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## Snow Day Reflection

Yesterday's snow day was positive by many accounts. Real snow for the first time in two years. Staff and parents even sent me photos of their kids playing outside. Awesome.

The value of anything may only really be known through counterpoint (e.g. through sounds, we know silence). The value of the snow day was not created yesterday, but rather through every day this school year, all days together giving yesterday its value, as a break from as close to a typical routine of school as has been possible to achieve. A snow day feels more and more like a snow day, when school feels more and more like school.

That yesterday felt like it did, is a testament to our staff, all roles, who support our students with excellence day in and day out, in ways beyond what many districts have asked--*to do what they have done and are doing, to achieve anything close to sense of regularity, is the height of extraordinary.*

There is much to be grateful for. For me, most of all, for our staff.

Thank you,

Dr. Justin Smith  
Superintendent of Schools