
Limited Waiver of School Sessions due to COVID-19

1 message

Francine Coss <noreply@thomastonschools.org> Wed, Jul 15, 2020 at 7:24 PM
Reply-To: Francine Coss <noreply@thomastonschools.org>
To: fcoss@thomastonschools.org

Dear Parents,

The statement below was sent from the Connecticut State Department of Education regarding the Connecticut Commissioner of Education's request that the Connecticut Board of Education approve a [three day reduction in the number of required school days in the 2020-2021 school year to allow for COVID-19 re-entry planning and training](#).

"At the July 14, 2020 Connecticut State Board of Education meeting, Commissioner Cardona proposed that the State Board waive up to a maximum of 3 school days for schools to plan re-opening activities, preparation, and training on new protocols and processes implemented during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Board unanimously authorized this reduction of school days, out of the typically scheduled 180 school days as a result of the unavoidable emergency presented by the pandemic. Use of these days is voluntary, and is contingent upon the schools using this opportunity for additional flexibility prior to the start of the school year. The days should be used to provide support for school staff and families, so the community can build capacity to safely transition back to in-person classes, through training, preparation of facilities and classroom set-up, increased social-emotional support, and any other transition planning as recommended by the school leadership."

This means that the Connecticut State Board of Education is permitting the first three student days of the 2020-2021 school year to be converted to professional development days.

In order for Thomaston Public Schools to access this three-day reduction in the number of student days in the 2020-2021 school year, the Thomaston Board of Education must approve a change in the 2020-2021 district calendar.

The Thomaston Board of Education is holding a Special Meeting on Monday, July 20, 2020 at 5:00PM (online) to discuss the 2020-2021 Thomaston Public Schools Reopening Plan. Since this three-day reduction is related to the reopening plan, an action item will be added to Monday's Special Meeting agenda to allow for the Thomaston Board of Education to vote on the change to the 2020-2021 district calendar.

The proposed changes to the 2020-2021 district calendar are as follows:

- **August 26, 27 and 28, 2020** shall be **changed from early dismissal student days to full professional development days**. This proposed change is in response to the reduction of the requisite number of student days in the 2020-2021 school year (from 180 to 177). **No students will attend school on these days, neither in-person nor online.**
- **August 31, 2020** shall be **changed from a full student day to a full professional development day**. The 2020-2021 Thomaston Public Schools district calendar has 181 student days scheduled. Changing this date will eliminate the one (1) additional day from the minimum count of school days. **No students will attend school on this day, neither in-person nor online.**
- **September 1, 2, 3, and 4, 2020** and **September 8, 9, 10 and 11, 2020** shall be **changed from full student days to early dismissal student days** to allow for student instruction in and practice of proper mask wearing and COVID-19 hygiene protocols and to transition students back to in-person instruction under COVID-19 health and safety mandates. **All students will attend school in-person on these days unless their parents have chosen to have them temporarily opt out of in-person instruction and utilize distance learning.**

These changes will shorten the school year for students to the minimum level permitted by the State (now: 177 school days). **NOTE: The last day of school does not change** with this proposal (current last day of school: June 9, 2021).

If the Thomaston Board of Education approves changes to the 2020-2021 district calendar, an updated calendar will be emailed to parents and posted online at: <https://www.thomastonschools.org/DistrictCalendar>.

You can view Monday's Special Meeting of the Thomaston Board of Education at the Town of Thomaston's YouTube live stream page: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC53suszlfZ6l7XSqqtITNTg/videos?view=2&flow=grid>.

Sincerely,

Francine Coss

Superintendent of Schools

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