

UPDATE: October 18, 2020

Good Evening Litchfield Families!

I am pleased to share that the Litchfield School Board has signed several Memoranda of Agreement with both the Litchfield Education Association and the Litchfield Support Staff Association. We have been negotiating with our employees since the school reopening plan was adopted on August 6th. By bargaining in good faith, both parties have resolved conflicts created by the reopening plan and our collective bargaining agreements.

One of the main issues we were able to resolve is related to teachers having classrooms with both live, in-person students, and simultaneous remote students (blended, synchronous learning). Feedback from remote parents consistently told us that they felt the experience was not equivalent to the in-classroom experience. Teachers consistently reported that they need additional time to plan for, and fully support, both in-person and remote students.

Therefore, as long as we are open for in-person instruction (blended synchronous learning), we will be dismissing early each Wednesday afternoon. The dismissal time is approximately 2.5 hours earlier than the regular dismissal time. The actual schedule and school specific details for early dismissal is contained in this week's message from each school principal. We will start early dismissal this Wednesday, October 21st.

While students are being dismissed early, they will be expected to engage in self-paced learning on Wednesday afternoons. Teachers will be sending students home with assignments so that they are able to stay engaged while our staff is participating in structured team planning and support. Please note that our support staff will be available on Wednesday afternoons to help students and families as needed.

Please know that we understand the impact changing schedules has on our families. We have been fortunate to open school with a full school day and to maintain a normal schedule so far. We hope everyone will understand that we are asking a lot of our employees, and we believe this additional time will help our staff to better meet the new demands of teaching during the pandemic.

Stay Strong & Be Well!

Mike Jette, Superintendent of Schools