


MEMORANDUM

TO: Superintendents and Independent School Heads
FROM: Daniel M. French, Secretary 
SUBJECT: April Vacations and Regional School Calendars
DATE: April 6, 2020

Background

By April 1 of each year, superintendents and headmasters of independent schools in each region shall establish a uniform calendar for the following school year that includes school attendance days, periods of vacation, holidays, and teacher in-service days. 16 V.S.A § 1071.

April Vacations and Regional Calendars

School districts should follow their established regional calendars for the purposes of implementing April vacations for the 2019-2020 school year. Since teachers are contracted to work a finite number of instructional days each school year, it is important to follow April vacations as scheduled in order to preserve the potential option for implementing in-person instruction for students later this spring if the public health conditions relative to COVID-19 support such a decision.

There are two variations for regional school calendars in the 2019-2020 school year. About half of the districts will be on vacation the week of April 13, 2020, and the other half will be on vacation the week of April 20, 2020. School districts should advise students and families to adhere closely to social distancing and other public health directives during April vacations.

Supports for Students and Families

Students and families are experiencing incredible stress and anxiety during this emergency. April school vacation can provide them with an opportunity to have some down time relative to complying with new Continuity of Learning requirements and routines, but the economic and emotional impacts of the emergency will no doubt continue. Since schools play such a vital role in supporting students and families in times of crisis, ensure your communications on April school vacation are sensitive to these needs and describe how school/district resources will be available during this time period to coordinate community-level supports.

Student Meals During April Vacations

School districts have the option to continue to provide student meals during April vacations. On April 4, 2020, USDA verbally advised AOE that all these meals would be allowed for federal

reimbursement without school districts needing to take any special actions. We expect written guidance to this effect from USDA shortly.

School districts are encouraged to operate student meals programs during April vacation, but some districts may prefer to temporarily shut down these programs, particularly smaller programs, in order to prepare for the next phase of the COVID-19 response. Districts that choose to cease operation of student meals programs during April vacation should do so in close collaboration with families and other community resources that could be available to support students.

Families should be advised to call 2-1-1 to find other open meal sites that are operating during this time period. Alternatively, a school district may consider offering a reduced number of meal distribution days. For example, a school district could consider offering seven days' worth of meals on the Friday prior to April break or five days' worth of meals on the Monday of April break. Multi-day distribution is allowed with [an email to AOE Child Nutrition Programs](#). Finally, schools could consider continuing to offer grab-and-go meal pickup during this time period, but halting delivery routes.