

Twin Valley Elementary

December 17, 2021

From the School Board

A Letter of Gratitude

In this season of giving, the Twin Valley school board would like to give public thanks to everyone who works in and supports our schools.

Our communities are sincerely grateful that we have been able to keep our schools open during the continuing pandemic. We know that our employees have put forth extraordinary efforts to keep our students safe, healthy, and engaged in their learning.

To all of our employees:

Thank you for the extra time, including nights and weekends, doing contact tracing, and otherwise communicating with students, parents, and the community.

Thank you for implementing programs such as test-to-stay and vaccination clinics to keep our students and communities safe.

Thank you for taking on added responsibilities due to staffing shortages.

Thank you for showing care and compassion as so many of our students deal with new social and emotional challenges.

Thank you for the extra planning and creativity in the classroom as you help keep our students focused on their learning.

Thank you for being there every day for our students and their families.

We are truly grateful.

Sincerely,

The Twin Valley School Board

Upcoming Events

- Early Release on Dec. 23
- Winter Break Dec. 24-31

Reminders

- Come to the front door when arriving at school after drop off time

A Note from Nurse Lisa

Gathering for the Holidays

Have “the talk,” before you go. Find out whether people will be fully vaccinated, or if extra precautions need to be taken for anyone at higher risk, such as wearing a mask when you’re not eating. The more people who are vaccinated around your table, the safer everyone will be.

Keep it small. The more people and households, the higher the chance that someone could have the virus and expose other people. Even people you trust the most can have the virus and not know it.

Get tested. Testing before you gather is a great way to protect everyone. You can get extra reassurance with a rapid test, closer to the gathering. At-home tests you can buy at a pharmacy are a good tool for this if you have access to them. They typically come in boxes of two, so if you use them, we recommend using one a day or two before you gather and the other the same day you will be gathering — to make sure your negative result is accurate.

If you have symptoms, even mild ones, please make the hard, but right, choice to skip dinner and stay home.

Get tested 5-7 days after the holiday gathering, even if you’re fully vaccinated and even if you don’t have any symptoms.

Prevention steps help protect people most at risk

Wearing a mask

The Health Department also currently recommends wearing a mask in public indoor settings because a significant number of Vermonters remain unvaccinated and the more transmissible Delta variant is still spreading.

The need to wear a mask indoors is expected to be temporary, while vaccination levels increase and the Delta variant surge ends.

Wearing a mask helps protect you and the people around you from getting or spreading COVID-19. A mask helps contain your respiratory droplets and can keep them from reaching other people. COVID-19 can spread even if a person does not have any symptoms. This is how we reduce the spread of the virus and outbreaks in our communities, schools, and businesses.

Keep gatherings safe

Vermont data shows COVID-19 is often spreading when people get together with friends and family, dinners, parties, or other social activities and events. It’s important to think about how to gather safely right now. This can reduce the potential for further spread of the virus, especially to those at higher risk of COVID-19. Here are some ways to keep gatherings safer:

- Stay outdoors when you can
- Keep groups small
- If you’re indoors, wear a mask in public settings or around people who may be at higher risk
- Avoid crowded spaces
- Consider getting tested before and after an event, especially if it includes older adults or those with significant underlying medical conditions that put them at high risk for serious illness from COVID-19



STRETCH YOUR BUDGET with Vermont Food Programs.

No one should be worried about having enough food. Hunger Free Vermont wants you to know that there are many food resources available to help you and your neighbors.

3SquaresVT: 3SquaresVT is here to stretch your budget by helping you buy food from grocery and convenience stores, farmers markets, and co-ops across the state. 3SquaresVT benefits are deposited each month on an EBT card, which works like a debit card. While over 65,000 people in Vermont shop with 3SquaresVT, many more are eligible but don't know it. To find out more and get help applying, visit vermontfoodhelp.com or text **VFBSNAP** to **85511**.

Meals for Kids: This school year, meals are free for all kids, whether they are learning at school or remotely. School meals are kid-friendly, and give the nutrition needed to help kids grow. For information on school meals in your area, ask your school administrator, see this [2021-2022 VT Open Meal Sites list](#) or call **2-1-1**.

If your child is in childcare, ask your provider if they participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program, or if they offer meals and snacks through a different program.

WIC: If you're pregnant, or a caregiver or parent with a child under five, WIC is right for you! WIC gives you access to healthy foods, nutrition education and counseling, breastfeeding support, and community referrals. Vermont WIC is open and most services are being done by phone appointment. To find out more and get help applying, call **2-1-1** or text **VTWIC** to **85511**.

Older Vermonters and people living with disabilities can have free meals delivered to their home through Meals on Wheels, and some people may be able to get help with grocery shopping. Many organizations have also been offering curbside or in-person meals. For more information about meals for older adults and people living with disabilities, please call the Helpline at **1-800-642-5119**.

If you are aged 60 or older and meet income guidelines, you can get a free box of food every month through the **Commodity Supplemental Food Program**. CSFP is dependable, helps with meal planning, and frees up money for other foods. For more details and a simple application, go to vtfoodbank.org/share-food/csfp or call **1-800-214-4648**.

Food Assistance through the Vermont Foodbank Network: The Vermont Foodbank is dedicated to supporting Vermonters during all times of need. To get help, visit vtfoodbank.org/gethelp or call **1-800-585-2265**.

VT Everyone Eats: Everyone Eats provides healthy meals from local restaurants to anyone whose access to food has been affected by COVID. 25% of all ingredients come from local farmers and food producers. Meals are available through hundreds of sites, including a digital app that allows you to request to-go meals directly from restaurants. To find out where you can pick up an Everyone Eats meal, call **2-1-1** or visit www.vteveryoneeats.org/find-a-meal.

3SquaresVT for Families with Children: 3SquaresVT gives over 65,000 people in Vermont money every month to buy food. Many more people are eligible, but may not even know it. Shopping with 3SquaresVT lets us buy the food we know and love.

3SquaresVT is for everyone who qualifies, and a family of four can get up to \$835 a month! This is a great way for us to stretch our budgets and have flexibility to pay for other expenses.

Visit vermontfoodhelp.com/apply-now to learn more about 3SquaresVT.

To get help applying, you can:

Call **2-1-1**

Text **VFBSNAP** to **85511**

Send an email to 3SVT@vtfoodbank.org

If you are 60 or older, you can call the Helpline at **1-800-642-5119** for personalized assistance.

Call **1-800-479-6151** to speak with a Benefits Specialist at DCF-ESD!

Signing up for Fuel and Energy Assistance can stretch your budget even further.

Fuel and energy assistance programs can help pay part of your heating and energy bills. These programs are available for homeowners and renters, and it doesn't matter if you pay for heat directly, or pay as part of your rent.

Signing up for Seasonal Fuel Assistance may increase your monthly 3SquaresVT amount! You can complete the short application online, call **1-800-479-6151**, or visit your local DCF-ESD office. Visit: dcf.vermont.gov/esd/contact-us/districts

For households that are almost or completely out of fuel and who meet income requirements Crisis Fuel Assistance is here to help. Individuals must apply in person at their local Community Action Agency. Visit: dcf.vermont.gov/partners/caps

Vermont Gas Company (VGS) and Green Mountain Power (GMP) also offer energy assistance programs to help cover home heating costs. Call the Vermont Economic Services Division at **1-800-775-0516** if you have questions about this program and how to apply, or visit: dcf.vermont.gov/benefits/eap

