

VERNON PUBLIC SCHOOLS



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Congressman Joe Courtney tours ASTE Program at Rockville High School, Delivers Face Masks to School Nurse

(VERNON, Connecticut) – U.S. Rep. Joe Courtney visited Rockville High School Thursday to drop off face masks for staff in the school nurse’s office and to tour the school and take a look at the improvements being made to the Agricultural Science and Technology Education program.

The congressman, who is a Vernon resident, also discussed with Superintendent of Schools Dr. Joseph P. Macary the extension of the free school meals program through the end of the school year. The CARES Act provided meals through the summer and then through Dec. 31, but the extension ensures all Vernon students can get free breakfasts and lunches through the end of the school year.

Congressman Courtney, D-2nd District, and several colleagues wrote to U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue urging him to extend the food programs and waive the income eligibility requirements. Secretary Purdue subsequently agreed to do so. That means all Vernon students continue to be eligible for free meals, whether they are attending school in-person or virtually.

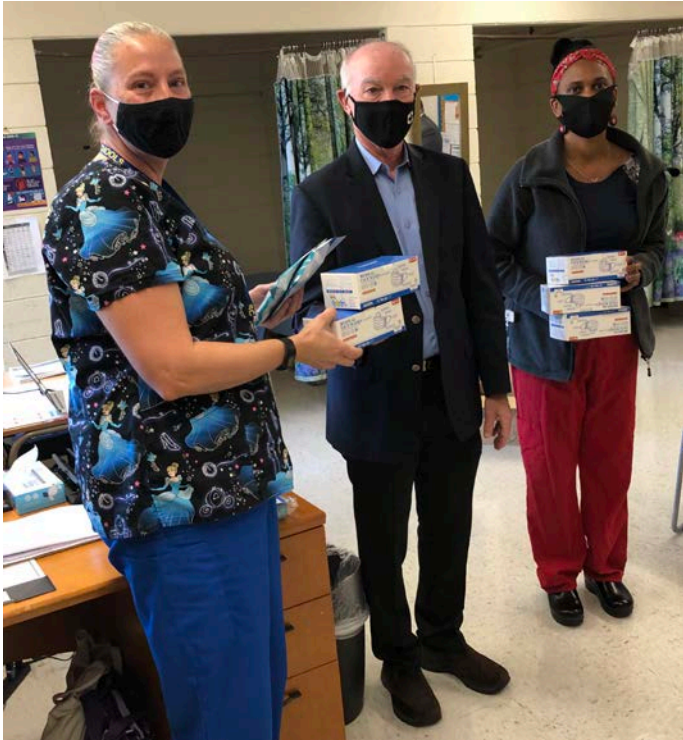
“This has been a real help to our families as they navigate the challenges of the coronavirus pandemic,” Dr. Macary said. “As a school district, we are delighted we are able to partner with the U.S. Department of Agriculture to ensure our students receive nutritious and healthy food.”

“In my visits to schools around the district, I have seen firsthand how much our communities have relied on the new flexibility Congress authorized for our Summer Meal Programs,” Congressman Courtney said. “And I am grateful Secretary Purdue acted on the new funding that we authorized, and has extended these programs through the end of the school year.”

The Vernon Public Schools, in partnership with family and community, is committed to provide a quality education, with high expectations, in a safe environment where all students become independent learners and productive contributors to society.

Students attending school fulltime will continue to receive free breakfast and lunch at school. Students who are attending school under the hybrid plan will receive free breakfast and lunch the two days they are at school and can pick up a three-day meal box for the remaining three days of the school week. Students who are learning from home fulltime can pick up five-day meal boxes.

Pickup is Wednesdays from 2 to 3:30 p.m. at Vernon Center Middle School or Rockville High School. The meal boxes must be ordered by the Monday before pickup. To order meal boxes, please click here: [Meal Box Orders](#).



Congressman Joe Courtney of Vernon delivers face masks to Rockville High School Nurse Jasmin Flores, right, and Nursing Assistant Jennifer Nichols.

Congressman Courtney also delivered five boxes of facemasks and several KN95 masks to School Nurse Jasmin Flores and Nursing Assistant Jennifer Nichols. The masks were donated by the Rossi Foundation.

Flores said masks are always needed and will be used for students who forgot their mask or need a replacement.

Rockville High School Principal Jason Magao gave Congressman Courtney a tour of the school, including the Agricultural Science and Technology Education program, where several improvements have been made and more are planned.

“We’re giving the students the opportunity to bring all aspects of agriculture to the next level,” Magao said. “Agriculture is not just growing crops and raising livestock. Sustainable agriculture is what we’re working on, breeding programs, agricultural structures, aquaculture, veterinary science, floriculture. These kids are coming out with certifications in welding, in mechanics, they’re coming out with skills and certifications that will get them jobs.”

“Agriculture is so important to our economy, nationally and right here in Connecticut,” Dr. Macary said, adding Magao has worked hard to get ASTE students and faculty the tools and facilities they need to move the program forward.

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