



MAHWAH BOARD OF EDUCATION

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3/24/2020

Dear Mahwah Community -

Let me extend my sincere appreciation for the time you have spent helping your child make this virtual learning experience thus far successful. The success of our remote learning for our students, designed by our incredible staff, would not be possible without your partnership. We appreciate your continued flexibility and effort as we move to Phase II of our instruction.

As you know, we were confronted with a unique challenge, significantly shifting our instructional approach and extending our reach during a difficult time. We are so impressed with the work, collaboration, and commitment of our staff. Teachers have stepped outside of their regular functioning and are taking instructional risks in order to deliver innovative and meaningful learning experiences to our students.

The goal for Phase I was to reinforce, enhance, or remediate in order to maintain the learning that has taken place prior to our initial closure. We extended that goal by creating meaningful activities that allowed for our students to showcase their learning while adding the personal touch of creating moments to connect with the students via a variety of virtual platforms. We are grateful that those interactions did not go unnoticed. Many of you have sent us emails and correspondence containing accolades as to our efforts during this trying time. I have shared many of your emails with our staff and they are so very appreciative.

Please continue to be our most important partners in learning!

Phase II of Instruction

We know that our community is asking how much longer our virtual instruction will go on. Naturally, our educators are focused on what is next in how we can support our students for what is to come. Although we do not have clear guidance on the duration of this closure extension, we believe that it is important to incrementally plan in order to solidify a successful instructional model for our children.

Knowing that this closure is for the foreseeable future, Phase I - lasting two weeks, into March 27 - will have our continued focus primarily on the review of content. It is

important that we then turn the corner together, and start to gradually expose and introduce our students to new content. This will put our students in a place to effectively navigate the next stage of their educational work, we are referring to as **Phase II**.

Phase II will last the week prior and after our spring break (March 30 - April 17). **Your spring break remains intact and remains a week where school is not in session.**

Our building administration/supervisors are currently meeting to strategize on content that will be covered and digital platforms that can be used as effective teaching tools for you and your students. We recognize, too, that this shift in instruction will call for time to plan for our teachers. To this end, we have worked with our administrative team to identify planning times, prior to the start of Phase II, that have been designated to prepare for this very important transition.

- Wednesday, March 25, 2020 through Friday, March 27, 2020, beginning at 1:00 p.m. will be designated as planning time for our teachers in grades PreK-5. All instruction of our students and contact with PreK-5 students and their parents will take place between 9:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. on those days. Any communication sent after 1:00 p.m. on dates listed above, from both students and parents, will be responded to the following school day.
- Friday, March 27, 2020, will be designated as our staff planning day for our teachers in grades 6-12. We are calling this an Independent Learning Day. **Please have your student use this day to complete any independent activities they may have not completed during this week's instructional lessons, and to take a break or necessary "breather."** Any communication sent to the teachers on Friday, March 27, 2020 from both students and parents will be responded to on Monday, March 30, 2020.

Once again, we thank you for being a valuable partner during these unprecedented times. We are deeply appreciative of your support and thank you for working side-by-side with us to give our students the very best educational experience that they can have at home.

Stay well and healthy!

With sincere appreciation,

C. Lauren Schoen, Ed.D.

Superintendent of Schools