

April 8, 2020

Dear Mansfield Families,

As expected, Governor Lamont made an announcement this week that schools throughout Connecticut would remain closed for the remainder of the 2019-20 school year. Distance learning will continue through the end of the school calendar as directed by the Connecticut State Department of Education. As has happened throughout this period of school closure, teachers will send weekly learning plans, make contact with parents and students regularly, and provide supports as needed until June 22.

There are six full weeks of learning remaining and we hope to make the most of them. Your feedback and insight into what is working and what else we might try is important. We have prepared a short survey to gather your feedback. Please follow the links below to share your thoughts with us. If you have children in both elementary and middle school we invite you to complete both surveys. A link to surveys for students in grades two through eight will be sent in this week's learning plan. We encourage you to have your child complete it. All surveys will be open until May 15.

School at Home Family Survey - Elementary Grades:

<https://mansfieldct.gov/elementaryfamilysurvey>

School at Home Family Survey - MMS:

<https://mansfieldct.gov/mmsfamilysurvey>

Returning Personal and School Belongings

We know that many children have personal belongings in the schools. Staff will begin gathering these things and create a collection for each child. Principals will notify you with a pick-up time and will provide a window of time over a multiday period for this. All items will be picked up from outside the school where a staff member will oversee the collection process. In order to thoroughly clean our buildings, it is important that you collect your child's belongings. We will not be able to store items until next school year.

Likewise, there are many materials that you have at home that will one day need to be returned to school. We will not ask for these until the formal learning programs have concluded but ask that you do your best to keep track of books, technology devices, and other non-consumable materials so that they may all be returned. This return window will be early enough to allow us to clean and refurbish materials for use next school year.

Grades and Reporting

Learning tasks developed during our School at Home period have addressed the skills and understandings included in Mansfield curriculum. We appreciate the care and attention to these tasks shown by our students (and their families!). Not only are students receiving feedback throughout this time, each student and family will also receive feedback at the end of the school year in a formal report. These new reports were developed by teachers and administrators with careful consideration of the balance between accountability and realistic expectations during this time. These reports will replace the progress reports and report cards used earlier in the school year. Principals will share more details with you next week.

End of Year Events and Summer Programs

There are many traditions and celebrations that occur at the end of a school year, especially in those years when a transition between schools is occurring. While some of these events just cannot happen, at least not in the way we have come to expect them, all efforts will be made to meet the intentions of these events. That may mean a virtual celebration of year end events or promotion, a replacement activity for an honored tradition, or in some cases, the postponement of an event to later this summer should we be allowed to gather together by then. Students and parents/guardians are being consulted and invited to help plan these events. Please look for more communication from your school.

Summer programs will be adapted to meet restrictions and guidelines active at the time. Again, we expect that these will not look exactly as they have in the past, and we will work to meet the goals of our summer programs in new ways.

What About Next Year

And finally, the question that is quickly becoming the most asked, "What about next year?" Of course, no one knows for sure but there is much planning and consideration of multiple scenarios already occurring. We are observing with interest what is happening in other countries and anxiously watching as new data and information about the virus becomes available. Much of the decision making will be handled by public health experts. We will be ready to adapt as needed this fall using all that we have learned these past several weeks.

We appreciate your continued partnership and wish all mothers a Happy Mother's Day.

Be Well,



Kelly M. Lyman