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Distance Learning: On reflections, relationships, resilience and rest

Dear Parents/Guardians:

As I reflect on how far we have come in a short period of time, I am most grateful for the guidance from Public Health, the leadership of trustees and school administrators, the efforts of teachers and support staff, and the response from students and families.

We have worked in partnership to make the best of learning together while safely apart and can be proud of how much we have accomplished since the extension of school closures. We safely distributed over 2,000 devices from chromebooks to laptops and continue to provide paper-based assignments for some 300 students to ensure continuity of learning.

Teachers and support staff are connecting with students daily for reading, writing, math, physical activity, creativity, subject-based learning and wellness check-ins to say hello and see how everyone is doing. Health and safety remains our first and foremost priority.

Students have been engaged with their teachers in real time learning through livestreaming, two-way dialogue, and applications like Seesaw, Google docs, slides, and read and write. Pre-recorded video lessons and online assignments are also being provided with ongoing teacher feedback. Collaboration and communication are the foundation for student success.

Distance learning has given parents/guardians a unique opportunity to observe their children's progress and, more importantly, to support their learning at home. But we also know this transition has not been easy for everyone. No student will be adversely affected due to school closures. We are here to help in any way we can. Please continue to reach out to school administrators, teachers and support staff if your child requires assistance.

While we will not be able to host graduations this spring as we have in the past, please be assured that graduation ceremonies will be held at a later date when it is safe to do so. These celebrations are important to students and families, and they are important to us. Elementary and secondary schools will share more information with you as plans evolve.

Take time for relaxation and recreation this long weekend. Enjoy a well-deserved break.

Stay safe,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Norm Blaseg".

Norm Blaseg
Director of Education