

DRIVER MIDDLE SCHOOL, MARCELLUS NY

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DMS is Dedicated and Motivated to Succeed!

Dear DMS Parents,

Hello, it is hard to believe we are wrapping up our third week of online learning. As we wrap up this week, we felt it was a good time to send a more formal update. We have posted a new video on the middle school website with much of the same information in this letter.

We hope you and your families are well and staying healthy. In those families who may be facing the COVID virus either in an immediate or distant family member, we pray for a full recovery. For those who are facing other challenges because of this crisis, we are sending thoughts and support. The message, "We are all in this together" continues to grow as a meaningful mantra that will help us get through these difficult times.

We have been faced with many obstacles and we continue to be proud of the Marcellus community that rallies together to make the best of any situation. It is still challenging to balance all the nuances with which we are now faced. Mr. Durkee shared this analogy with me. He said, he likens this situation to moving to a different country, where the language and way of life are very different. It takes time to acculturate and understand. We spend much of our day learning how to learn in the new environment. This is so very true and on top of that, while this is going on, we know students and families are experiencing different stresses. We are confident we will continue to work together to find the balance, to manage our stress, to support each other and remember what is most important during this time.

Just a few logistical things we wanted to mention. While the marking period was due to end on April 3rd, we are keeping our grade books open through next week. The intent is to give students whatever extra time they need to try and get caught up and complete any assignments they have not been able to complete. Teachers will be giving a lighter load of work next week and reducing the amount of "face time" with students knowing that we want students to focus on what was presented in the last three weeks. Work given during next week will be more in the form of review, practice and/or some preview of the new content that will begin after spring break as we start the 4th marking period.

As our Superintendent, Mrs. Brantner mentioned in her letter that you should receive this weekend, the end of the 3rd quarter will be considered a “Hold Harmless” time. Students will receive a grade no lower than their average on March 16th. The work during the closure can only raise a student’s grade, not lower it. Those who have worked hard will benefit, those who have had considerable problems will not be punished. If you have any questions about your child’s grades and/or assignments, please reach out to the classroom teacher first as the teacher will be the first line of communication to help resolve any problems or concerns.

Since our current state is changing almost daily, it is too early to determine how we will tackle 4th quarter content and grades. We will continue to provide content, assign work, present opportunities for support and help, and assess student work as we have been doing until we receive guidance from the state. Our hope is to continue to engage students, support students, and provide feedback for their learning.

We have made a decision not to print and mail report cards this marking period. Parents and students will access report cards online through Schooltool. We will be posting a cheat sheet for parents and a video for students next week. The student video will be posted in the student classrooms. If you need a paper copy of the report card, you can email us or contact 315-673-6319 (leave a message) and we will be sure to get one in the mail to you.

If we continue with our remote learning after break, the most important thing to remember is to stay connected. Stay connected with teachers! Stay connected with us! Here are three ways to stay connected: First, go to the school district web page, the COVID webpage and the middle school webpage. Also, you can visit the student classrooms with your child and see information we post for students. Finally, email us. We are here for you. We are trying our best to remain connected with you and your child. If there is something we can do to help with this connection or support you in any way, please reach out to us.

We miss you and your children and we look forward to the opportunity to get back to “normal” and be back in DMS! Stay healthy, stay happy and remember to take care of yourselves and each other. Enjoy a little “down time” next week!

Sincerely,

Janet O’Mara

Katie Cook