

News & Notes from the SBRSD Superintendent

March 15, 2020

Dear SBRSD Families,

I hope this finds you all happy, safe, and well. I want to thank our students and families for all the work you have done to complete remote learning packet #1, and it is nice to receive all the positive feedback being shared with us. The Administrative Team has expressed our appreciation to the Faculty and Staff for their flexibility, willingness to try new ways to deliver instruction, and their on-going dedication and commitment to our students and families. Our goal remains to continue to enrich our students' educational experiences as we move through these unprecedented times. As life long learners, I think we will all learn from this experience about what we should stop doing, what we should change, or what we should do more of when school as we know it resumes! I wanted to share the following things with you ~

On Monday evening, the School Committee voted to change the 2019-2020 School Calendar to incorporate Tuesday, April 21st through Friday, April 24th, 2020 as school days instead of the previously scheduled April break, and to change the last day of school to June 15th, 2020. The intent was to continue to the forward momentum of SBRSD's Remote Learning Plan without interruption, and to allow us to close the school year four days earlier than planned. Monday, April 20th will remain a non-school day in observation of Patriot's Day.

Friday, April 17th, will be the next delivery date for Remote Learning Packet #2. We also will be picking up any work being turned in from Packet #1, or work can be returned by families at the UME entrance any weekday between 11 and 1, the meal program pick-up time, and put in the appropriate boxes labeled for secondary and elementary. A similar plan can be worked out for New Marlborough Central and South Egremont. Mr. Miller will address this in a follow-up message for those locations.

Many are asking what is status of the school closure? On Tuesday's Superintendent's Conference Call with Commissioner Riley, he stated that he expected the Governor to make an announcement early next week. He said he would try to give us a heads up, but it probably wouldn't be much earlier than Governor Baker's decision out of courtesy to him. All MCAS testing has been postponed for this year grades 3 through 10, and the Commissioner said that he expects to provide schools with more guidance on how best to get students across the finish line this year for graduation as a result of this decision. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education is in the process of thinking through a variety of scenarios as to what the return of school might look like whether it is later this year, or for re-opening in the fall, and the Commissioner expressed a desire to offer summer learning opportunities as an option as well. For right now, he said we are at the mercy of this virus and time will tell us what our next steps can be.

SBRSD is really looking for ways to honor our seniors as this is a really difficult way to celebrate the culmination of their K-12 careers! Mr. Carpenter and team have reached out to seniors to create a Senior Shout Out video or picture that we can share on social media for the school community to see. The hope would be to allow the community to support and congratulate each one of our seniors in a special way! We would love participation from everyone, and encouragement from our school community is always welcome!

As a way to keep our school community spirit going, the Administrative Team wanted to reach out to our families with the message below:

Dear Families,

There is a saying in schools that sharing is caring. During these isolating times, we are inspired by the way our community members are staying connected, shining a light on our collective strength. Starting this week, we are inviting any families to share what remote learning looks like at home by sending your pics to sbrsdathome@sbrsd.org. After we have collected a bunch, we will post them to our [Facebook page](#) or Instagram account. In order to help you, we have provided the following themes below. Naturally, we are open to any pictures of remote learning you are willing to share!

Missing you all,

The Admin Team

Themes

- **Week 1** : Community Thank You: There are so many people who have been working tirelessly to keep us safe and healthy during this time, and this is an opportunity to send a message of thanks to those who have been there to help and support you. Send in a thank you picture in appreciation for these special people.
- **Week 2** : Learning Small Wins: An important part of getting through this together, is recognizing the small wins along the way. This could be as simple as completing a project at home, or getting to see your classmates virtually. Send in a small win picture.
- **Week 3**: Embracing Failure: Remote learning can be challenging and there will hurdles along the way. At school, we try to teach our students that failing is an opportunity to learn, and that making mistakes is an integral part of the process. Send in a funny fail picture.
- **Week 4** : Outdoor Education: Spring is here, and just because we are all home doesn't mean we have to stay inside! The natural world is filled with wonders and outdoor learning opportunities. Send in an outdoor learning moment picture.

Looking forward to keeping connected and finding ways to stay in touch! As always, please reach out with questions or concerns.

Best,

Beth Regulbuto, Superintendent of Schools