

May 4, 2020

Dear Parents:

May will be a better month right? Who would have thought this would be us in our Blessed Mother's month? It is so easy to be discouraged, especially when all around us is so static. However, we are moving forward and finding success in our students and our personal growth curve is soaring. I have a new respect for my staff's innovation, technological ingenuity, and ability have faith in these challenging times. I have a renewed appreciation for our parents, going above and beyond- finding somehow to make this all work! St. Monica School is pretty amazing!

The staff has spent the last few weeks going over the State's Standards for Instruction, taking a full inventory of what gaps may surface moving forward so we can work proactively while planning for our entry in the Fall. Although initially we may have had some "growing pains" and needs for adjustments- we have been actively learning for the past six weeks. We are aware that some aspects of the classroom, and social engagement that are so valuable for educating the whole child -cannot be synthesized- these are some of the areas we need to focus on when planning for the Fall. In addition, all grades will have a detailed inventory of what concepts were introduced, practiced and mastered. We are aware of the academic attrition that happens each summer in between grades, and our teachers will be prepared for the Fall and ready to meet the students where they are and move them forward from there!!

As I write this, administrators across the state and diocese await the guideline being developed by the Mass Department of Education and Massachusetts Department of Health. From there, district leaders will put together a plan for a healthy entry into the 2020-2021 school year. As a Catholic school serving children from multiple cities and towns, we are faced with the unique challenge of balancing the various guidelines and phases to meet the needs of the St. Monica School community. I am confident St. Monica School is up for this challenge. I will continue to keep our families and stakeholders aware of our plans as they develop.

Parents to the Rescue Again!

I am so grateful for our families' generosity – Because of the extensive cleaning that has been done in and outside of the classrooms- we have had to use the disinfecting wipes in classrooms. We have been unable to order them since March. They have and will continue to be used as needed. These were donated for the cleanliness of your classrooms to protect the students and their work

space. This is an appropriate use of resources we have available and we are so blessed to have them available during this time!

End of the Year Schedule/Tentative Start Date for Next Fall

Our last day for remote learning will be June 5th.

Students can keep all consumable workbooks etc. Parents will be asked to return all hard cover text and such the following week (Mon- Wed). At that time students belongings will be bagged, labeled and ready for pick up. Mrs. Tully will be coordinating a pick up and drop off schedule that aligns with all safety protocol. We will not roll that out until we get further along in May. Just want you know we have a plan!!

We are tentatively planning that September 1st will be the first day for Grades 1-8. PreK and K will begin the Tuesday after Labor Day. This will all be finalized once we are notified what the entry plan will be for schools from the Department of Education and Department of Health.

End of the year Activities:

This Friday, May 8th we will hold a **VIRTUAL FIELD DAY**. I am attaching a link to with all the information. It is national event with an opening ceremony on Wednesday night! I learned about it from a colleague on Saturday night and looked at it. It looks like fun and it will be great to see our students' pictures posted on our FB pages as well!! All students receive a certificate of participation. I thought if they wear their gym shirts – they could earn extra points!! Please encourage your child/children to participate. It should be a fun time. It's all on the honor system. Our school is already registered. Please take pictures of your child participating and post them to our Facebook page!! Here is a link of the events - <https://openphysed.org/fielddayvideos>

Don't forget we are celebrating Teacher Appreciation this week! With your help, we have a number of surprises planned for our great team!! Please remind your child to say a kind word, a thank you to help our teachers feel appreciated!

We invite everyone to "Like" our Facebook page, **St. Monica School Methuen**. Please **share our posts** so that we can get the word out about what is happening at St. Monica School. Please engage with that page (like posts and comment on posts) as it is a great way to advertise our school to the public. Our private Facebook page is just a way to keep in touch with each other during this time of remote learning. That page will end when we are back in school.

As details develop, as things falls into place- I will keep the lines of communication open.

During this month of our Lady, please ask for her intercession, pray the rosary, and most importantly, PRAY FOR ONE ANOTHER.

Have a great week!

Mrs. Henderson