

May 1, 2020

Dear MCS Family,

As we continue to lean on each other, I hope that you and your family are doing well. I also hope that you feel you can lean on us, collectively the 1,200+ MCS employees who are here because we care about you. As I've heard in this community many times, "when you're here, you're family."

To that end, I want to share a few quick updates and then ask a favor of each of you.

Access to Technology

Our intent has been to support every student who needs access to technology. To date, we have distributed 3,247 Chromebooks and 721 hotspots. If your family still has a need, please email techhelp@marietta-city.org, call 678-695-7215, or come to the MCS Central Office (250 Howard Street) each Wednesday between 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. We are here to help your child stay connected.

Schoology:

The benefit of technology depends on your ability to use it to access Schoology and other learning resources. Otherwise, we are wasting resources – and your child is only falling further behind. If you have any trouble navigating Schoology or other learning resources, please contact your child's teacher. If you need help with your Schoology login, please email schoologysupport@marietta-city.k12.ga.us. We are here to keep your child learning.

Meal Delivery:

Thanks to our school nutrition staff, bus drivers, and countless volunteers, we have served more than 150,000 meals over the last six weeks. Their efforts are truly heroic. Across the country, today is recognized as "School Lunch Hero Day". I invite you to view [this short tribute](#) to our MCS heroes. Our meal delivery program will continue through May 22 across 81 bus stops and 18 routes in Marietta. As we look ahead to the summer, we will be providing food to various programs through community organizations. Please know, we are here to keep your child fed.

Report Cards:

As our staff continues to make every effort to virtually personalize learning and assessment, we also want to provide you with an update regarding your child's grades. Given the ebb and flow of learning between March 16 and May 22, we decided not to formally post progress reports (as we would have done in late April had we been in "normal" school). Instead, our staff will post final grades May 29 for K-8 and June 2 for 9-12. When final grades are available in Aspen, you will receive an email with specific directions on how to access your child's grades. As you have specific questions, please contact your child's teacher(s).

And now for my favor of each of you...

As we look ahead to the future, there are at least two scenarios I can imagine regarding schooling. One scenario is exceptionally positive and encouraging: I can see the day where we resume normal school and are more intentional about leveraging technology to support student learning at home. Through a Chromebook (or other device) and Schoology, our students would have the opportunity to make their home an extension of the classroom. In other words, your child would access digital resources to complement what occurs inside their classroom during the school day.

The other scenario is not so positive or encouraging: it is possible that another outbreak of COVID-19 could cause our schools to close for some period of time. I can't predict if or when; I just know, based on medical experts, that this scenario is within the realm of possibility.

Either way, whether we are planning for normal school or future school closures, we must learn from this current experience. If we are faced with school closures in the future – be that for weeks due to COVID-19 or a single day due to snow – we have an opportunity now to make digital learning more effective the next time.

To that end, I want to offer all MCS families an opportunity for me to listen and learn. I need and want to hear from you about your student's and your family's experience during the MCS closure.

Families have the opportunity to provide feedback in one of three ways:

1. Small-group Zoom call: Join me for one of 28 Zoom sessions between May 11 – 22. I will respond to your questions and suggestions. Use [this link](#) for details and to reserve your spot in a session. Participants will be grouped by level (elementary, middle, and high school) and limited to 40 participants per session.
2. Survey: A three-question open-ended survey that gives you a chance to quickly tell me what you liked and how we can do better. The survey will be open until Friday, May 22 at 6:00 p.m. and can be accessed through [this link](#).
3. Email: If you prefer to simply send an email – go for it. Tell me whatever is important you.

Regardless of whether you choose Zoom, survey, or email, please know your feedback is important to me in our efforts to keep what works and address what doesn't. No need for you to do all three options – pick the one that works best for you.

Lastly, please know that our school principals will be soliciting similar feedback from our staff and students. Together, we will make the most of this moment. And I know, with absolute confidence, we will be stronger because of it.

In this together,
Grant

Grant Rivera, Ed.D.
Superintendent
Marietta City Schools