April 2, 2020

Dear Families:

As we settle into our ‘new normal’, the MTSD leadership, faculty and staff continue to work together to plan and provide for our students in countless ways. At the sametime, we want to acknowledge and commend the efforts of all our families. You are balancing new and challenging responsibilities as it relates to all aspects of life in COVID-19, including the education of your child.

Please remember, we are here to support one another. We are amid a global pandemic; this crisis will have a wide ranging impact - including the loss of life. The range of emotions you may experience or see each day may vary and be unexpected. Patience, understanding and support without judgment is so very important now and in the future as we all weather this storm. We know that every day, every person is doing the best they can. We are here to help. Do not hesitate to:

● Reach out when you have questions, need to give us feedback and/or need our support
● Take a break when you need it - you and your learners

The purpose of this memo is to provide you with updates on a few topics that continue to be of the utmost importance to the MTSD Community.

● Continuity of Learning
● April Break & Meals
● Childcare for Essential Persons

**Continuity of Learning:**
On March 26, Governor Scott extended school closure for students for the remainder of the year
● Maintenance of learning was extended to April 10
● Continuity of learning is to begin April 13
Here is the full [COVID19 School Closure Timeline](#)

In accordance with Governor Scott’s Executive Order,

● The Governor states, “Remote learning will not and cannot replace the in-person instruction or communities that support students. However, the Vermont education community can pull together to both support the wellbeing of our students and continue their learning over this extended period.”

● Each school district or supervisory union must use the required template and submit a Continuity of Learning plan to the VT Agency of Education for approval
● Continuity of Learning plans are due April 8
● This new model of teaching and learning begins April 13; it will look and feel different

During the Continuity of Learning phase, the MTSD focus includes:

1. **Equity** - providing multiple ways for students and families to learn from home
2. **Social Emotional Well-being** - connecting with students and families in ways that support their wellness and reduces stress throughout the closure
3. **New Learning** - Narrowing learning expectations and focussing on the areas that will have the greatest impact on each learner’s developmental trajectory
As district and building administrators work with their staff in drafting the MTSD Continuity of Learning plan, please know:

1. There will be 1 location/portal for students and families (PreK-12) to access all information, resources and support related to the Continuity of Learning. The link to this portal will be on the MTSD website.
2. Detailed communication about when and how to access the portal, expectations for attendance, connecting with teachers….. is forthcoming.

**April Vacation and Meals**

1. In accordance with State Statute and guidance from the VT Agency of Education, school districts and supervisory unions will adhere to their state approved school year calendar. This means that MTSD students and school year staff will not be in session from April 20 - April 24.
2. Due to the COVID-19, the MTSD will continue with the current meal provision schedule during the April break.

**Childcare**

In accordance with Governor Scott’s Executive Order childcare is an essential service for families who have been identified as essential persons and who are in need. The directive changed over the last few weeks so that if school districts are able to provide childcare, then they may do so on a voluntary basis in accordance with the guidelines set forth by the Vermont Agency of Education.

MTSD reached out to families and had a number of responses expressing need for care. Due to the nature of the parameters around social distancing and the limited number of staff who were able to provide this care, we found that we were unable to provide child care to families.

The governor has shifted the responsibility of providing childcare from schools to the Department of Children and Families. Families can access this assistance by calling Vermont 211.

If you have specific questions related to

- Meal Provision - please contact Anissa Seguin (aseguin@mymtsd-vt.org) or call 893-5500
- Continuity of Learning (after April 13) - please email or call your child’s principal or teacher

Sincerely,

Amy Rex
Superintendent