

Dear Merrimack Families~

I am writing you with a brief update to inform you of the work we have been doing today to prepare to begin remote instruction with Merrimack students on Wednesday, March 18<sup>th</sup>. As you are no doubt aware by now, events seem to be unfolding by the hour, and so I am mindful that whatever I share with you as of 5:30 this evening may well be outdated very soon. However, despite the uncertainty of these times, we have to act according to the latest guidance we have received, and so it is in that spirit that I share the following information.

Today, Governor Sununu and Education Commissioner Edelblut reaffirmed their expectation that all schools will begin remote learning for students by next Monday, March 23<sup>rd</sup>. They also affirmed that teachers should continue to report to work for the purposes of planning and delivery of this remote instruction model. Merrimack Public Schools are prepared to launch remote learning on Wednesday, March 18, 2020, ahead of the state's expectations. I will share more details tomorrow about how we plan to roll out this remote learning model, but for now please understand the following:

- School and district leaders met today to prepare for the arrival of teachers back to their schools tomorrow, with specific directions as to how they will use tomorrow to finalize plans for the roll out of our remote learning model.
- Our plans include a scaling up period that will gradually increase our use of and reliance on technology for instructional delivery. However, in the meantime, the early rollout will likely consist of more traditional delivery models (paper based). We thank you in advance for your patience during this period of scaling up.
- Administrators and educators are working and planning, as well, to provide a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) to all of our students and ask for your patience as we work to achieve this requirement, particularly for our special education population. Special education teachers and administrators have been working since last week to prepare for the possibility of remote learning, trying to determine how best to meet the needs of students under these extraordinary circumstances. More details will follow in the coming days regarding ways in which we will support your individual child's needs.

Tomorrow will undoubtedly bring more information. We will continue to reflect that updated information in our decision making and will share that with you as soon as we can. Tomorrow afternoon I will write with specific information for families about logistics of the Wednesday remote learning rollout.

Thank you.

Mark McLaughlin  
Superintendent