

Good evening Merrimack Families~

Despite the weather, today was as bright a day as we could make it for our students and their families as we continued with our remote learning initiative. The ramp up for this initiative has included, among other things:

- Continuing to assess the need for, and make available, Chromebooks and other electronic devices to our families who have expressed a need. The district continued to intake requests and deploy devices throughout the day.
  - We understand that connectivity has been a real challenge for some of you. This is understandable given the unprecedented draw on platforms like Microsoft, Google and Facebook during this health emergency. We are by no means the only community experiencing this and we have received assurances from providers that they are aware of and working on this issue.
- Today, families continue to be greeted on their arrival at our schools by educators and administrators providing them with school work to be completed as part of our remote learning initiative. These continued connections, even at a distance, are providing some comfort and normalcy in very uncomfortable and abnormal times. We continue to thank our educators and our families for working together to maintain those important connections. It is very affirming for our students to observe these interactions when they can occur.
- Our food service personnel distributed over 250 lunches today—170+ through pickup at our high school location and 80 through home delivery.
- School and district administrators gathered today to continue to define and refine the roles and responsibilities and of our educators during this period of remote learning. This refinement is necessary in order to provide clarity to our employees during these very unusual days; the question has been and continues to be how we can maintain our operations in the service of our students and their families while at the same time maintaining employee safety. What needs no refinement or clarification is the demonstrated commitment of all Merrimack School District employees to their work. We are grateful to each and every one of them for their dedication. Over the days ahead, we will continue to work to provide clarity about expectations in the context of flexibility and safety.
- We continue to develop planful supports for our special education population and expect that these efforts will continue to ramp up next week. This is critical and complicated work and it is better to get it right than rushed and so we appreciate your patience as we seek the best methods of delivering those very important services.

Tomorrow I will share additional information regarding what you can expect next week, which will be our first full week of remote learning. Additionally, I encourage families to be on the lookout for communications coming directly from your home school(s) as well, as they are truly your best source of information about what is happening in your neighborhood school community.

Finally tonight, in the midst of so much uncertainty, it is very nice to reflect on the things that we really can count on; the strength of this community is one of those things.

Thank you and stay well.

Sincerely,

Mark McLaughlin  
Superintendent