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March 27, 2020

Dear Northfield Families,

I hope this letter finds everyone healthy and positive as we continue to collaboratively work through these very different times. We have been communicating regularly with our families in an attempt to keep everyone informed and up to date on all facets of this international pandemic emergency. These communications are occurring through your teachers on a daily basis, building principals, technology support, and myself. We remain sensitive to the potential of overwhelming our families with emails, but feel that it is better to be informed during times such as these. We will continue to try to refine this process as long as we remain in the current closure status.

Today, March 27, 2020, all school districts received a memo from Commission of Education Repollet informing us of the following:

“We understand that some school districts have been advising families of anticipated dates for reopening. However as noted in the Governor’s daily press briefing today, the decision to reopen schools lies squarely with Governor Murphy. We do not intend to assess the reopening of schools until at least April 17, 2020, at the earliest. As Governor Murphy stated, “the decision to reopen will be based on careful discussion with our public health and safety experts, and with our educators and districts, and will be guided by the facts on the ground.” Therefore, we ask that school administrators refrain from speculating or announcing school reopening dates unless directed to do so by the Governor.”

To this end, we want everyone to know that the administration is working daily with our teachers to ensure that we are prepared to continue to support our district mission of meeting the needs of every child. To achieve this, we will need your continued support, a constant flow of information and communication to effect any change needed during this time. In response to the social and emotional needs of our community, some of the work has been to develop activities and resources to support our students and families outside of the “classroom.” One such activity is the NCS Quiz Night, which saw over 280 families participate. Other activities saw our students writing thank you letters to the Health Care workers who are on the front lines of our battle against the COVID-19 virus. Additionally, we are planning virtual “parent academies” to help families navigate the remote learning environment we are currently in.

Below are answers to some questions you may have regarding recent decisions and upcoming events.

* Board of Education Meeting – Our April Board of Education meeting will take place on April 27, 2020 at 7:00 PM. In the event that we are still under the current closure status, we are prepared to conduct it remotely. Notice and instructions to participate in a remote meeting will be forthcoming as needed. The public presentation of the 2020-2021 Budget will take place during this meeting.
* High School Course Selection for 8th Graders - Our guidance counselor has been in contact with the Mainland Regional High School Freshman Counselor and has been working with her to reschedule course selection presentations and appointments for when schools re-open. In the event of a longer health-related closure, information on the process for making course requests online will be provided.
* Spring Break - Northfield City Schools will remain closed during spring recess from Friday, April 10 through Friday, April 17, 2020. During this time, students will not need to participate in virtual instruction/schooling.
* Standardized Testing – By order of the New Jersey Department of Education, New Jersey will not be administering the New Jersey Student Learning Assessment (NJSLA) in Math, Language Arts, and Science for the 2019-2020 school year.

As you can see, there is much information to be shared throughout this process. Many of you may hear stories or rumors that may or may not be true. I encourage you to visit our district webpage (click here: <https://www.ncs-nj.org/domain/112>), which contains many resources and the most up to date information pertaining to our schools. You can also reach out to any of us at any time through email. We are all still working and would very much appreciate the opportunity to communicate with you personally to help provide you with any support that you may need. Be well and know that we are here for you.

Respectfully,

C:\Users\pbretones\Desktop\signature.jpg

Pedro P. Bretones

Superintendent of Schools