April 9, 2020

Dear Northfield Families,

 I hope everyone is safe and finding something positive to focus on during these trying times. I truly believe that there is a pot of gold under every rainbow, we just have to look harder sometimes. During this much deserved spring break, I encourage everyone to take a minute to “take a minute” so you can relax and unwind. This link [Scavenger Hunt](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MBxxULfUz3o&feature=youtu.be) shares an activity that you might find helpful to let you and your family do just that. We care about all of you and recognize it is important to support your social and emotional wellbeing so please go ahead and check it out if you have time.

 Below are a few items that I wanted to share to keep everyone informed as we continue in our current closure status:

School Closure:

 As communicated in our letter on March 27, 2020, the Northfield City School District school buildings will remain closed until we receive further direction from Governor Murphy. I am aware that there are many speculative dates for a return to our building, but the Northfield City School District will remain closed until further notice. Once we receive official notice regarding the re-opening of our school buildings, we will share the information immediately with our staff and families.

Third Marking Period Grades:

 After careful consideration of what would be the fairest way to grade our students for the third marking period, the Northfield City School District will use the students’ grades as of the first day of the closure (March 16, 2020) as the basis of their final grade for the third marking period. Assignments during the closure status of the third marking period (March 16 through April 9) will receive a “portfolio assessment.” This means that any work that was assigned and submitted during the closure status of the third marking period could only help a student’s grade and not hurt it.

This decision was based, in part, on the reality that our students and their families are currently dealing with unprecedented circumstances that are completely out of their control. The potential of loss of income, illness, and even death is a reality and the impact that these things have on a person’s social and emotional well-being can and will vary from person to person and family to family. Our teachers have been doing a phenomenal job of adjusting to the individual needs of their students, but due to the speed in which we had to transition into a digital learning environment, there has been a learning curve for both students and teachers.

 However, it is important to note that this “portfolio assessment” grading format will only apply to the third marking period. As we (students and teachers) have become better in the digital environment, the fourth marking period grading will reflect an increased accountability for not only the volume, but the quality of work submitted by the students. More detail about the fourth marking period grading criteria will be forthcoming as we obtain more information regarding the status of the closure status.

 I will close by once again thanking all of our families for everything that they are doing. Let’s face it, all of us have been parents, all of us have held jobs while being parents, and as parents all of us have taught our children while holding jobs, but we have never had to do all three at the same time. I applaud you all for the masterful job you are doing, for the support you are giving us, and the strength you are showing your children. Being able to be a small part of that is the pot of gold under my rainbow. Stay safe, stay healthy, and stay home.

Respectfully,



Pedro P. Bretones

Superintendent of Schools