



FLORENCE M. GAUDINEER MIDDLE SCHOOL
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Mr. Timothy Kielty
Principal

Mr. Matthew Lynch
School Supervisor

September 4, 2020

Dear Parents and Guardians,

I wanted to send out a letter with the most up-to-date information as we move ever closer to the beginning of school. First, let me say, I truly miss the sound and feel of a vibrant Middle School that I had grown accustomed to for the past seventeen years. Sadly, circumstances have made us all rethink, rework, and reimagine what the process of teaching middle schoolers looks like. I know that EVERYONE is nervous and anxious about this new endeavor. Believe me, all of your fears are only surpassed by my own. However, our team has worked tirelessly all summer to put together the best possible plan and schedule to address the unique needs of Middle School Students. From last March to today, the one constant in education has been significant change. Our goal in creating this model was to be able to provide structure, real time interaction, while keeping flexibility to adapt to sudden changes without losing educational progress and momentum.

This morning, student schedules were made available through OnCourse. What you see is the traditional middle school schedule as if we were in-person with no restrictions. This is our base model and serves as our foundation as we develop a plan to meet any changes that may be encountered in the future. I am attaching sample student schedules that will show you how students are scheduled for remote instruction. The school days will run from 7:45am through 2:30pm on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays, while Wednesdays will be from 7:45am through 12:13pm. Students will receive an hour lunch break at 11:40 am. Students will be required to log in to specific classes (Zoom) throughout the day according to their schedule. This schedule addresses the major concerns shared with me from parents, students, and staff. There is significant amounts of direct instruction, student to student interaction, social emotional learning time and staff development. I feel this was the best model I could develop given the circumstances we are all faced with. With that being said, we will continue to evaluate and make adjustments as needed. Good enough is not good enough when better is possible.

There is an immense amount of information for me to distribute, so please be on the lookout for updates later today and throughout the weekend. I realize there is an incredible amount of information to take in, so I will try to streamline it as best as I can. There are a few pieces of information that I can share now; however, I will be forwarding more information when we finalize some of the last details. We have set up the sixth graders to receive their

laptops on Tuesday, September 8th and on Wednesday, September 9th in the morning. The exact schedule will be sent later today. Besides the laptops for the sixth graders, materials will also be provided for all grades such as novels, texts books, etc. during these two days as well. The first two days of school, September 10th and 11th, will be early dismissal days for students. We are developing a schedule for those two days only, to make them the most productive and meaningful as possible. I want to ensure that every student sees all of their teachers on those two days. I will be forwarding these schedules after I get input from the teachers on Tuesday, September 8th.

Some of the other pieces of information that will be forthcoming is a sixth grade welcome / orientation, Student expectations guides, expanded student handbooks to include protocols and procedures for the remote and hybrid models of instruction and an FMG parent resource guide to help explain all of the tools, protocols and new vocabulary you will be experiencing.

As we continue this journey, I want to stress that we are striving to recreate the middle school in a virtual world as best we can. In trying to create the best experience for the students, we will be utilizing a variety of strategies and tools to increase the meaningful contact and engagement opportunities for all. Most research is calling on schools to blend the use of synchronous and asynchronous learning. The best way I have heard to explain this is blending “live television” with “on demand programming”.

As you can see, there is a lot happening at Gaudineer. I would like to thank you for your patience and trust as we develop this entire process together. I started this letter citing my nerves and anxiety, but failed to mention my excitement. This is truly an exciting time to be in education. Nothing significant was ever established without obstacles and difficulties. We will work through the obstacles and learn from the difficulties. Failure is not an option. I look forward to leading FMG through this very unique journey. Be safe. Stay well, and I will forward all information as I finalize the plans.

Sincerely,

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