



# MONMOUTH BEACH SCHOOL

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[www.mbschool.org](http://www.mbschool.org)

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Dear MBS Families,

I sincerely hope everyone has been enjoying the Memorial Day Weekend. For those of us that live and work in a beach town, we know this weekend to be the unofficial start of the summer season. Of course, that brings a great deal of excitement and anticipation for the various activities and special events that lie ahead for the next few months. However, I think we would all agree that the Covid-19 crisis continues to impact our thinking and our plans to a certain extent. With that in mind, I need to give you an update on our educational direction for the remainder of the current school year and share some concerns and possibilities for the start of school in September.

From the start of the school closure, the teachers have been facilitating remote learning using a variety of Google tools for education along with various online resources to remain connected with their students and provide them with meaningful educational experiences. At the same time, parents have been working hard to support and reinforce the teachers' efforts and remote lessons. Despite the level of separation and isolation many people have experienced during the health crisis, I believe the level of articulation and collaboration among teachers has actually increased. Similarly, the lines of communication between teachers and parents have expanded to help ensure the students are keeping up with their work as much as possible.

Knowing that there would be many challenges associated with the process of remote learning, I have been holding weekly meetings with the teacher groups to get their feedback and help them work through difficulties they are having. Recently, I have received an increasing level of concern from the staff regarding the issues they are having with students in terms of their participation and behaviors. This is where we need your help. In order for the teachers to make as much progress as possible, it is critical for parents to reinforce the following expectations at home for students:

- Students should join scheduled Zoom or Google meets with teachers from the start for attendance and participation purposes. Students will often be assessed on their participation during a session just as they would be in a classroom
- Students should be dressed appropriately as if they were coming to school
- Students should be in an appropriate location in the home for learning (NOT in their bed)
- In order to limit distractions and be respectful of the teacher and classmates, students should not be using other devices during these virtual meetings
- Unless there is an emergency, students should not be moving in and out of their virtual meetings with teachers
- Students should refrain from eating during their virtual teacher sessions
- In order for teachers to maintain appropriate levels of attention and participation, students should not turn off their cameras during virtual teacher sessions
- Students are not allowed to record sessions, teachers, or other students and share such sessions without knowledge and prior consent given. This is a violation of school policy and a serious offense

I fully understand that there are only a few weeks left in the current school year. However, the teachers will be continuing to work hard to cover the curriculum at each grade level to help prepare the students for next year. Looking ahead to September, there is a real chance that remote learning will remain in place for the start of the new school year. This is another reason I am asking parents to enforce the aforementioned list of student expectations. In order to further prepare for the possibility of remote learning in September, the staff will be conducting a trial half-day schedule on Tuesday, June 2 and Wednesday, June 10 as a way of simulating the type of academic day that may be implemented next year if needed. For those two days, the teachers will run an 8:30 - 12:30 day of instruction that will mirror their actual half-day schedule for live learning as much as possible. The teachers will send out their own messages regarding meet times and lessons for those days.

As much as all of us want to return to live learning in schools, we need to be prepared for the possibility of extending the remote learning experience. The Board of Education, staff and I all have the same goal of providing the MBS students with an educational program that will meet their needs and help them be successful learners. In order for this to happen, the students must develop and maintain habits and routines that enable them to maximize their progress.

I truly appreciate all of the time and effort that the staff and parents are giving to help the students of MB make it through this difficult and challenging experience. During my time in MB, I have always been impressed with the level of support from families, and this is the time when that support is needed most.

Respectfully,

**Michael E. Ettore**

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Principal/Superintendent