



KINGSWAY REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Committed to Excellence

Dr. James J. Lavender
Superintendent of Schools

Mr. Jason Schimpf
School Business Administrator

**If you have questions or concerns about COVID-19 and resources,
Call 2-1-1 or text "NJCOVID" to 898-211 or go to our or click the link provided [HERE](#).**

April 3, 2020

Dear Faculty & Staff,

Thank you for taking the time to participate in Thursday's first-ever district-wide Zoom meeting. More than 360 of our faculty and staff attended and I was happy to address a number of questions raised during the meeting. And, frankly, it was nice to see everyone together! This latest update will reiterate some of what was discussed yesterday, clarify a few points and update you on a few additional items.

To underscore what I said Thursday, thank you all for the work you have done and your commitment to our students. Kingsway is an amazing organization made of caring and dedicated professionals who I am proud to know as friends and colleagues. I hope each of you take the time to relax over the spring recess and I look forward to re-engaging with you again on Monday, April 13th.

We end this week on a high note and I share with you some feel-good highlights and my student message by below.

[Middle School Spirit Week Highlights](#) [HS Teachers Miss Our Students - Pass It On!](#)

[Student Message from Dr. Lavender](#)

COVID-19 Update & School Closing

- Governor Murphy updated the State on Friday, April 3rd, that the number of confirmed cases in NJ has climbed to 29,895 and 646 of our fellow residents have lost their lives. We keep our neighbors and fellow residents in our thoughts and prayers during this crisis and continue to stress the importance of practicing social distancing.
- While we await direction from Governor Murphy, we are prepared to remain in this virtual environment for the remainder of the school year, if necessary. We are looking for direction from the Governor after April 17th.

Home of the Dragons

- **Spring recess** is scheduled for Monday, April 6th through Monday, April 13th. Faculty & Staff will participate in a virtual in-service on Monday, April 13th and students will return to virtual school on Tuesday, April 14th. No work shall be assigned to students over spring recess.
- **Eligibility for Free/Reduced Lunch.** Our dedicated food service department continues to offer school lunches during the COVID-19 school closure to students who qualify for meal benefits. If your household income has changed, we encourage you to submit an application to see if your child qualifies for free meal deliveries. You may request an application to be mailed to your residence by contacting our food service manager, Holly Haynes at 467-3300, ext.4227 or haynesh@krsd.org. For your convenience, you may apply for meal benefits electronically by clicking on the applications below.

[Free/Reduced Lunch Application \(English\)](#) [Free/Reduced Lunch Application \(Spanish\)](#)

Field & Class Trips & Other Events

- **Trips and Events Scheduled for June.** We are highly engaged in conversations with a number of vendors and venues regarding a number of trips and events scheduled in June. We will finalize decisions in the coming days/weeks regarding the status of such events as Prom and Middle School Class Trips. Regretfully, the Kingsway Education Foundation's annual Golf Tournament has been canceled.
- **Senior Trip to Disney.** Discussions surrounding the senior trip continue to be a sobering reminder that many potentially memorable experiences may be lost this year. This week I have worked closely with our students, advisors and travel agent regarding the status of this trip. And, while I loathe the thought that our seniors may lose this trip, we fully recognize that it is incumbent upon us to do all we can to secure refunds if cancelled. Be assured that we are working closely with World Class Travel to secure full refunds for every student, if cancelled; and, my goal is to communicate next week to our seniors and parents regarding the status of this trip. Moreover, be advised that I have seen others push additional insurance on social media, which greatly concerns me as I do not want to see parents spend additional money unnecessarily. I urge tremendous caution and due diligence before anyone considers such an option at this point in the process.

Virtual Learning Program – Version 2.0

- **Adjust Pacing & Expectations.** As instruction continues in our virtual learning program, questions have centered on pacing. Understandably, teachers have a desire to teach all the material. This simply is not feasible in our current environment and we must adjust our pacing and expectations accordingly. Teachers should truncate material to identify critical skills and concepts we want students to learn between now and year's end.
- **Lesson Plans are not required.** We will move toward developing classroom calendars for the duration of the school year to help teachers, and students, focus on big picture critical concepts



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and skills they want to cover between now and the end of the school year. More details to be shared during Monday's in-service.

- **Assessments & Grade Weighting Under Review**. We cannot fairly evaluate our students with our current grading policy. Therefore, administration is presently reviewing grading and weighting practices in an effort to ensure that students are being assessed fairly and equitably. More to come on this topic.
- **CSAs**: All CSAs for the 2nd Semester have been canceled.
- **High School "Letter Days" to be eliminated**. We have heard from our High School SCIP, as well as a number of students, that the high school's letter days (A-D) are confusing faculty and students in our remote environment. Therefore, when we return from spring recess, we will eliminate these days in favor of a simpler schedule. More details about simplifying this schedule will be shared on Monday.
- **Encouraging Flexibility with Assignment Due Dates**. While contingent largely on the work assigned, we expect teachers to be flexible and apply generous time lines with regard to due dates for all students.
- **Instructional Expectations**. Teachers are strongly encouraged to personalize learning by using Google Meet or Zoom to engage in some form of live or recorded direct instruction. Students are not required to participate in live sessions but will have access to sessions when recorded and uploaded into Google Classroom. As a note, we will be opening Zoom and providing pop-up PD on Monday and information regarding our [Digital Tools & Tutorials](#) are presently available.
- **April 13th In-Service**. This day will be self-directed, allowing faculty to choose which virtual "Pop-up PD" they would like to participate in, assemble as a PLT or Team or simply work on classroom calendars. This is your day! Administration will provide you the resources and supports to assist you in preparing for the remainder of the school year.

In closing, I want to wish you all a happy and joyous holiday season and fulfilling spring recess. In this paradoxical world of social distancing, I hope you all find creative and fulfilling ways to celebrate the Passover and Easter holidays with your family, friends and loved ones.

Very truly yours,



Dr. James J. Lavender
Superintendent of Schools

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