

## **Week of 03/23/20**

*"The secret of change is to focus all of your energy,  
not on fighting the old, but on building the new." -- Socrates*

Hello SMS Families...I hope this newsletter finds you all safe and healthy. I recognize we are all facing an unprecedented level of change in our daily routines and day-to-day existence. One positive that has come out of this situation is the sense of community I have witnessed (and personally experienced) in these first few days of this "new normal". That same level of commitment to our families, our neighbors, our community, will provide the resolve needed to successfully navigate the days ahead.

The sole purpose of this weekly communication is to help and support you and your family by providing regular updates to important information regarding the middle school. I promise to keep it "short and sweet" - so you all get the information you need in a brief amount of space. If you have any suggestions on how to improve this communication, please send them along...[ksmith@suffield.org](mailto:ksmith@suffield.org)

### **1. Quick Reminders:**

1. As shared in the community conference call last Friday (03/20), breakfast and lunch are available at no charge for all Suffield students. Please go to <https://forms.gle/bZ5KXNrLMtvvs8wL6> to request meals. Meals can be ordered for the following week any time after 9:00 a.m. each Friday.
2. SMS administration and staff will be meeting this week to discuss a new end date for the Third Marking Period (*originally scheduled to end for April 3, 2020*). We will be also discussing this situation with our colleagues at SHS - so we can best coordinate marking periods 6-12.
3. All Spring athletics are postponed - and a return to the fields is very much up in the air. Here is a link to the [CIAC press release](#).
4. At the current time, the SPS Technology Team is not planning any additional physical distributions of technologies. If you have any questions, please contact the SMS Assistant Principal, Dianna Kolodziey, via e-mail: ([dkolodziey@suffield.org](mailto:dkolodziey@suffield.org)) for support or questions.
5. Our SMS Student Support Team is available to all students needing support as we navigate this new approach to learning. Please contact your respective School Counselor - **Mrs. Scatolini** (students last name begins with A-L) or **Mr. Kadamus** (students last name begins with M-Z) to start the process of accessing that support.

### **1. Suffield Middle School and the Continuous Learning Plan (CLP):**

1. Based on communications from Michelle Zawawi (e-mailed: 03/22) and discussed at last Friday's community conference call, this week SMS students should continue to engage in the identified grade-level [learning packets](#) established on the district website.
2. Starting next Monday (03/30), SMS teachers and staff will be actively engaging in this new approach to teaching and learning. Below, are listed the highlights to this new approach:

1. By this Friday (03/27), teachers will be communicating with students to introduce them to this new learning plan - including accessing their respective Google Classroom pages.
2. Starting the next Monday (03/30) by 8:00 a.m. - and each day following - teachers will be posting daily learning experiences (and corresponding assessments of that learning) using the specific Google Classroom page (to which your child already belongs).
3. During this first phase of the Continuous Learning Plan (CLP), SMS teachers and staff will be available between the hours of 8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. to monitor student engagement in the learning experiences, provide feedback, and respond to student/parent questions. Please be patient with expectations with direct interactions with staff as we are all still learning this new approach to learning.
4. The assessments associated with the students' learning experiences (during this first phase of the CLP) will not be "graded", but rather, they will be reviewed by the classroom teachers and then teachers will provide direct feedback to students. If this aspect of the CLP changes (as our practices evolve), parents and students will be notified.
5. One of the benefits of this new approach to learning is that students will have some flexibility about how and when they engage in their learning. For those individuals requiring a little more structure in their day, SMS staff is currently working on a draft of a possible "schedule" - which will be shared out as a component of the classroom teachers' "welcome" letter coming out at the end of the week.
6. There is an expectation of daily participation in these learning experiences. If it is noticed that your child is not regularly engaging in the prescribed learning, members of our school Student Support team will be reaching out to your family to see how they can help you and your child.

### **Important dates to remember:**

03/23	SMS Students continue prescribed Interim Plans (on district website)
03/27	SMS Teachers will have shared "Welcome" letter to students
03/30	SMS Continuous L. Plans begin - posted on teachers Google Classrooms
04/10	No School: <i>Good Friday</i>
04/13-17	No School: <i>Spring Break</i>