



DEL MAR MIDDLE SCHOOL
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Principal: Brian Lynch
Assistant Principal: Ann-Marie Skaggs

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Dear Del Mar Families,

We encourage you to read this letter in its entirety as it answers many of your common questions, especially in light of our Superintendent's recent announcement that Del Mar, as well as all schools in Marin County, will remain closed until May 1st. You will find answers to: *What is the staff doing? Will there be changes to our distance learning plan? What if my student is feeling overwhelmed? How are teachers monitoring student engagement? How can I support my child? What if I'm having difficulty with technology? Can school psychologists help out?* In addition, we remind you to reach out and keep in communication with us through email.

What is the staff doing?

Lesson planning, creating, delivering, and assessing are all done in a different format now. Teachers are engaging in a new way of learning and teaching, and this takes time. In addition to conducting office hours, all RUSD teachers are engaged in daily collaborative meetings with their teams. Teacher leaders meet separately with principals and other leadership. We rely heavily on Google during this time for virtual "hangouts," and for shared, live documents and planning purposes. When not meeting, planning, responding to emails and assessing students' work, we are engaged in professional development activities that include: exploring best practices, researching resources, learning new tools, and running home-schools ourselves.

It's natural to assume that when a school facility closes, school employees have a simpler daily schedule, however, we are finding ourselves busier than we ever expected, as we work to run schools and classrooms virtually; something we are sure many of you are experiencing yourselves.

Will there be changes to the Distance Learning Plan?

We are learning of the possibility of extended closures along with you, and are preparing for these extensions. Currently, we are meeting with our grade level leaders to see what professional development is needed for our teachers. As we make revisions, we will continue to communicate this information and appreciate your continued patience and flexibility.

What if my student is feeling overwhelmed?

For students and families feeling overwhelmed by the amount of work, please remember that students are expected to engage in four hours of work a day, at least. Teachers are online from 9:00 - 1:00 p.m. and will inform students of their office hours when students can reach out for additional assistance or questions. It is important that you create a schedule that works for your family. Look at your child's planner. Help them schedule breaks and snacks.

How are teachers monitoring student engagement?

Teachers and admin are keeping a record of student activity in a variety of ways. This

includes email exchanges, virtual check-ins, reviewing progress completed on online apps, as well as reviewing work submitted electronically. Teachers will update ALMA when a student is missing work and will contact the family if it becomes a recurring issue. Admin may also reach out to see if they can be of additional help.

How Can I Support My Child?

Sit with your child each morning or afternoon and go through their Del Mar Planner. Set up a schedule for the day which includes breaks and snacks. Encourage your child to continue using their planner to keep track of assignments. Check in with them to make sure they know where to find this information. In addition, choose one day per week to review ALMA together to look at graded assignments.

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Having Frustration with Technology?

With a higher demand on the internet, we are bound to encounter some frustrations. On Monday, classrooms across the world noticed difficulties in turning in assignments on Google Classroom. Your child was not alone. Please remember that work assigned today will be due by 8:00 a.m. the following day unless specifically noted. If your child cannot turn in the assignment at the time they intended, encourage them to make a note and try to turn it in at a later time when the internet is not so overwhelmed. Please do not flood teachers' inboxes informing them the assignment could not be turned in. Teachers are aware of this problem and will adjust accordingly.

Can School Psychologists Help Out?

Our school psychologists, Dr. Kover and Dr. Gold, are available for both students and parents. Please send an email to dkover@reedschools.org or agold@reedschools.org to arrange a virtual meeting for either yourself or your child. For resources, please visit: [THIS LINK](#)

Notes of Encouragement

As mentioned above, teachers are finding that they are working many more hours than they do when in the classroom. If you are feeling it, a note of appreciation goes a long way.

Reach Out to Your Admin

We are here to help you! If you need support in any way, please do not hesitate to reach out to us. We are going through this with you, homeschool/work and all!

We continue to be incredibly appreciative of family support and patience, as we work to make this transition as smooth as possible for all members of our community. We are overwhelmed by the incredible commitment demonstrated by all RUSD employees to minimize interruptions to student learning, as well our staff's ongoing commitment to each other, their students, and our families.

Sincerely,

Brian Lynch and Ann-Marie Skaggs

