



NMRSD Update Wednesday, April 1, 2020

Dear NM Community,

I hope this update finds you healthy. Unfortunately, this feels more like Groundhog Day than April Fools' Day ... yes, schools are still closed and we are still social distancing. That said, I want our students to know that we think about them and their well-being every day and I also thank our parents and caregivers who are trying to juggle everything at home while maintaining some level of normalcy.

Please find the [attached letter from the Commissioner of Education](#), Jeffrey Riley.

NMRSD Remote Learning Plan

As educators, we fully recognize that the level of instruction for remote learning will not be equivalent to what is taught in the traditional classroom setting and that we need to be more sensitive than ever to the individual needs of our students and families. We recognize that parents and guardians will be in charge of their children's learning, and they will likely have less familiarity with content and teaching skills; thus, students will have less structure, support, and time for learning than they would receive in a typical school day in our buildings. To that end, we have determined that:

- Students will be participating in self-directed learning in alternative educational settings with less structure, no teacher, and lots of other things happening in their lives.
- Parents/Guardians cannot be expected to take the place as instructors.
- Parents/Guardians also may be juggling work or working from home, taking care of young children or family members, and/or dealing with illnesses.
- Learning time will be significantly shorter than the traditional day for students.
- We have provided options for daily or weekly time suggestions to help families determine the best schedule for what is happening currently at home.

Remote Learning Plan for staff and families:

1. Learning activities should support the reinforcement and practice of previously taught curriculum, and may also include enrichment activities. We believe it is important to limit our students' screen time. Please note that many of the activities proposed will offer options to be done without a device.
2. Whenever possible, activities should engage the **independent** learning level, and students should be able to work on those activities with minimal support from parents and caregivers.
3. No assessments or grades will be given, but all students will be required to submit evidence of learning/engagement each week.

*****Beginning Monday, April 6th, student work is required. Teachers will provide feedback to students in order to determine grades, which for the 4th quarter will be as follows:**

- **Progressing/Not Progressing (grades K-6)**
- **Credit/No Credit (grades 7-12)**

Therefore, students must, to the best of their ability, engage and submit the required tasks each week. Individual teachers will provide guidance for this requirement that is appropriate for the grade level/course/content area.

4. Timewise, the following guidance has been determined:

Level	Content areas	Time
PreK	Choice boards	Optional
K-2	Remote Learning boards ELA and Math (4-6 tasks provided) and 1-3 tasks required over the course of the week (determined by length of the task) Science, SS, Unified Arts/Specialists	Up to 30 minutes daily for each content area (ELA and Math) or 120 total minutes per week. Choice Boards with approximate minutes per task (optional)
Grade 3-4	Remote Learning boards ELA and	Up to 45 minutes per content

	Math (4-8 tasks provided)- 1-3 tasks required over the course of the week (determined by length of the task) Science, SS, Unified Arts/Specialists	area (ELA and Math) daily or 150 minutes per week total. Choice Boards with approximate minutes per task (optional)
Grades 5-8	Core Courses (ELA, Math, Science, SS, and Reading/WL) - 1-3 tasks required over the course of the week (determined by length of the task) Unified Arts	Up to 35 minutes daily or up to 3 hours total across a team. Choice Boards with approximate minutes per task (optional)
Grades 9-12	Monday AB Tuesday CD Wednesday EF Thursday GH Friday Office hours (required sign-up) 1-2 tasks required over the course of the week and length of assignment	Up to 1.5 hours per day per block. Time includes the required tasks.

5. Moving forward, the first point of contact with families will be the classroom teacher. All communication will be by the classroom teacher regarding tasks. Optional and enrichment activities will continue to be available on the website at <https://www.nmrtd.org/Page/1430>. Specialists, service providers, counselors, etc. will be providing additional resources as appropriate.
6. Parents should only be expected to provide the same level of support they would provide for homework. Please contact your child's teacher for help, guidance, and support if needed during daily office hours.
7. Assignments/activities should be given on a regular schedule and determined by each teacher.
 - a. Examples/ Teachers may post assignments every Monday morning with the expectation that students work on them a little bit every day that week, including explicit suggestions for how students can break large tasks into manageable daily sections. Others may have daily activities that can be submitted when complete.
 - b. Staff could give students a menu of options for possible activities and suggest they complete a certain number of tasks each week.

- i. NMRSD will continue to house K-8 Unified Arts Enrichment activities at NMRSD.org, all other tasks will be sent directly by teachers.
 - ii. Work does not need to be graded and will not count towards report cards, but feedback can and should be given for any submitted student work. Evidence of learning will be documented by the teacher to determine progressing/not progressing (elementary level) or credit/no credit (high school). Final report cards and grade calculations for the year are to be determined with guidance from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.
8. Regular communication with students will help maintain a sense of classroom community and is required weekly. Communication can take many forms including group emails or posts to Google classroom, written feedback on students' work, check-ins with students using a video chat platform, or other options as appropriate. ***Students who utilize a video chat platform will be held to the same behavioral standard as their regular in-person class. Any parent or caregiver who does not want their student engaging with their teacher or classroom through a video chat platform MUST contact their building principal so a separate plan can be developed.***

The most important outcome is for students to feel cared for and supported by their teachers, and to be meaningfully engaged in learning activities for some portion of each day. We want teachers to stay in touch with students and their families during this difficult time, providing guidance, support, and encouragement along the way.

NMRHS Prom & Graduation

As I mentioned in my last update, we are committed to doing everything we can to preserve these opportunities for our seniors.

I will be working with the high school administration and class advisors on a back-up plan for prom, should our current situation force a cancelation for the planned date.

Looking ahead, with graduation planned for Friday, June 5th at Fitchburg State University, we have secured an alternate date of Friday, June 26th should the original date not be possible.

We will readdress this should social distancing and Governor Baker's assembly order (prohibiting gatherings of less than 10 people) and stay at home advisory remain in place.

Grade 8 End of the Year Activities

For North Middlesex's 8th Grade End of the Year Activities, both NMS and HBMS will do everything possible to preserve those events. However, much of that will be determined on our return to school. In any event, know that the importance of these traditions have not been forgotten.

MIAA Update - 3/30/20

Here are some key updates regarding spring sports:

- The spring season will begin no earlier than May 4, 2020, and have completion of the regular season and tournament games by June 27, 2020, with consideration of June 28, 2020, for weather and facility needs
- The MIAA will waive Rule 58.1 on Academic Eligibility, and allow for each principal to individually determine their own local academic eligibility standard for the 2020 Spring Season.
- The first team competition may not start until after the seventh calendar day after the start of the 2020 spring season.
- The maximum number of competitions for tournament qualification is twelve (12) games and the minimum number of competitions is eight (8) games.

Food Distribution

Beginning next week, April 6th, food pick-up will only occur on ***Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday*** to limit interaction of employees. This will allow for families to pick-up multiple days of food at a time. The pick-up time will be from 9 am to 11 am.

It is imperative that families order by 9 am the day before the intended pick-up.

Families who do not order following the above guidelines will be asked to wait until the end of pick-up to ensure that all those who ordered in advance have picked up their orders.

Food distribution will not exceed 10 people at a time in close proximity to each other and all workers and others will maintain the recommended social distance of 6 feet.

Please keep in mind that food will not be offered during the April vacation (April 20th-April 24th).

Advanced Placement

The College Board is offering free, virtual classes for Advanced Placement (AP) students in addition to at-home AP testing. (The exam will only include topics and skills that most AP teachers and students have already covered in class by early March. Information about what will be covered on this year's AP Exams is listed on AP Central) Students and teachers can attend free, live AP review courses, delivered by AP teachers from across the country. These mobile-friendly classes will be recorded and available on-demand so teachers and students can access them any time and will focus on reviewing the skills and concepts from the first 75 percent of the course. There will also be some supplementary lessons covering the final 25 percent of the course. The AP exams will only be given remotely this year, and the College Board is working with partners to address any barriers to technology that students might face.