

April 21, 2020

Dear SCVTS Educational Community Member,

I hope this communication finds you well and your spring break was energizing despite the isolating and threatening circumstances.

This week, SCVTS is continuing to educate students using our remote learning platforms. Both teachers and students have been demonstrating an impressive adaptability to our new educational reality.

The most recent information provided by Governor Murphy indicates that **schools will remain closed until May 15th with the possibility of an extension** based on future health data. All schools in the State will be relying on the best-known health data and the Governor's advice regarding whether or not we open schools prior to the end of this school year. Also, all summer programs will be affected by this information.

As you know, any school opening will come with unique challenges if we are to continue to implement social distancing and even cursory health related protections. So planning for every scenario is happening at the district, county and State levels. We will share these plans as they become relevant. We are also working on matters of interest such as; grading in the fourth quarter, make-up timelines for academics and CTE certifications, calculations of GPAs, graduation, scholarships and awards, admission processes and other events, all of which will look very different this school year and possibly in the 2020-21 school year.

We were all thrust into this emergency mode of education and although we can point to many successes, we are committed to resolving difficulties as they arise. One such matter concerns students using their cell phones to video or take pictures of teacher developed lessons and sharing out this "private" information. This is prohibited by our Policy #5516: ***Use of Electronic Communication and Recording Devices***. Please remind your child that non-compliance of this mandate could become a disciplinary matter and we ask that cell phones not be used while learning remotely for this purpose, just as we would ask in a regular classroom.

Governor Murphy has been extremely forthcoming with what is known about this relentless COVID19 virus and how it is effecting our communities. There are many families in New Jersey directly effected by the virus and our hearts go out to those families and friends across the State and beyond. Economic factors and how our futures will be shaped, weigh heavily on our minds. In addition, we cannot underestimate the disappointment many students are feeling especially our seniors who feel a sense of loss for the many milestones that are either unattainable or irreplaceable.

There is no doubt that everyone is missing out on something, and while we are learning about these new ways of life, it is critical to our survival that we remain physically healthy and most importantly, mentally positive. Students in particular have shown resilience as they use social media as a way of remaining socially connected. Nevertheless, parents may need to be more vigilant in monitoring their adolescent's activities and intervening to ensure good judgment and healthy interactions. If you or your child is experiencing difficulties with the changes that have confronted you, please reach out to a counselor, teacher or administrator for help. We remain committed to working together and getting safely beyond these difficult times.

In closing, I want to thank you for your cooperation and patience as we continue to reinvent the teaching and learning process. We are all looking forward to getting back to school (and life) and interacting in person with each other.

Best regards,

Chrys Harttraft, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools