



Montgomery Township School District

May 8, 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians and Staff,

Happy Friday and Happy Mother's Day Weekend. Thank you for the beautiful messages and videos from the children and parents sharing their appreciation for our MTSD staff in recognition of Staff Appreciation Week. We certainly miss the personal contact with our students; however, we are blessed to have the technology and other supports that have kept us connected.

Although we understand the necessity of the closure of schools through the remainder of the school year, we empathize with our seniors and their families' disappointment. There is no doubt we have a resilient community, nonetheless there are many end of year celebrations and milestone moments that will not be able to occur in person. The high school administration has been working on a plan to celebrate and recognize their seniors. They will share that with the senior students, parents, and guardians once it has been finalized.

All of the principals will be sharing important information in the near future with their families about how to pick up student belongings from buildings, return borrowed materials, and other end of the year items. This will be disseminated in separate emails by the respective building administrators. While these final plans are coming together we are working on possibilities for our summer programs. Our teams are discussing multiple scenarios and until we know more relating to the eventual re-opening of schools, we remain in a holding pattern.

May is Mental Health Awareness Month. All of our schools are acknowledging this with various activities and messages sent to the students and staff surrounding the theme of wellness. OHES and VES are sending weekly messages to their families that include a reminder of the counseling resources website: [May is Mental Health Awareness Month](#). They are also working with a local therapist to provide a webinar later in the month. At LMS counselors sent an email to parents listing the following resource: [Brain Health](#). The counselors and school nurse have compiled a series of mindfulness activities included in the LMS morning announcements. UMS is continuing its PAWS FOR A CAUSE practices, which emphasize the core competencies of empathy, respect, and resilience. MHS school counselors have created a slideshow for students and parents on ways to destress: [MHS Mental Health Awareness Month](#).

The MHS Trauma Informed Leadership Team created the Cougar Community that provides educational and mental health resources. The current areas of focus include:

- Daily themed activities
- Mindfulness for children and adults
- Guided meditation
- Virtual yoga
- Virtual field trips and vacations
- Free educational resources for children of all ages



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- Activities for the whole family
- Trauma-informed resources

Please visit our website at: [Cougar Community](#).

Each year the second week of May is designated as Special Education Week in New Jersey (N.J.S.A.18A:36-5). In observation of this week, which takes place May 11-16 this year, we would like to recognize and celebrate the achievements of all of our students and commend parents and educators for their dedication to ensuring quality education for all.

Sincerely,

Mary and Joanne

Mary E. McLoughlin
Acting Superintendent

Joanne Tonkin
Board of Education President