

April 2, 2020

Dear Somis School Families,

I hope that this message finds all of you safe and healthy at home. I know how challenging the last few weeks have been for all of us. There is so much stress about our health and the health of our community of family and friends. On top of that, there are financial worries, questions about daycare, how school will work, and all of the other unknowns. But in the midst of these challenges, there are amazing stories of perseverance, kindness, humor, creativity, and resilience. Please know that the Somis School Staff are here for you to help in whatever way we can. We will get through this together, like a family, because we are family.

Following Governor Gavin Newsom's press conference today, and after a meeting among all Ventura County superintendents, all Ventura County public school facilities will remain closed to the end of the 2019-2020 school year. **However, all learning will not stop this year. Our teachers and staff will continue to implement the Distance Learning efforts they have begun using to deliver instruction directly to our students while maintaining the social distancing guidelines.**

This move generates many legitimate concerns and difficult ramifications. Questions will range from how will we enroll new students for next year and what will be the impact on our students' grades and what will promotion look like for our 8th graders. These and many other questions are already being considered. We know at this time that there are more questions and problems than answers. We are working through the many issues and making decisions, which we will continue to share with you along the way.

DISTANCE LEARNING - By this time, all of our parents/students should have received notifications from their schools and/or teachers about the Distance Learning efforts. I wish to make clear to our families that the type of learning happening now is not meant to replicate what a teacher usually achieves with his or her students in a typical in-person classroom. Our students can and will progress with Distance Learning, and the longer we use the techniques and tools involved, the more successful our teachers and students will be. Especially in these early days, we ask for your continued support with your children. To the best of your ability, given work and other commitments, having parents monitor and reinforce what our teachers are asking students to do is the best way to ensure their growth and engagement. As I have also told our teachers, I know that you will do the best that you can do considering your challenges.

If your child is in middle school, it is vital that you have them regularly check their district email account! Mr. Mitchell and Dr. Gass are reaching out directly to their students through these email accounts. If you have any questions at all about the process, problems to solve or anything else involving Distance Learning, please reach out directly to your child's teacher(s) or to me. Most issues and questions can be resolved by them and they are responding.

BREAKFAST/LUNCH PROGRAM Please visit www.vcoe.org/meals for locations where you can pick up Grab and Go meals for your children – The meals are free.

As I said earlier, we will get through this together. Our first goal is the safety and wellbeing of our families and our community. We can do this.

In Your Service
Dr. Robertson