



WEEKLY INFORMATION & EVENTS

March 22, 2020

Dear SMPS/SFXP/JPII Students, Families, Faculty, and Staff Members,

Under normal circumstances, you'd look for your "Sunday morning email" to stay up-to-date on all of the busy-ness of school life. You will continue to receive *The Blue & Gold Weekly* email, but as we all know, I write to you under far-from-normal circumstances.

First and foremost, I assure you that we are complying fully with all health and safety guidelines. To my knowledge, no students, staff, or family members have been diagnosed with or suspected of having COVID-19. Should any new information come forward, we will adhere strictly to the Massachusetts Department of Public Health and Barnstable Health Department guidelines and communicate with you as fully and promptly as possible. Furthermore, school is closed to students, faculty members, and all but core, essential staff members and administrators. The maintenance staff has been disinfecting the buildings methodically, with my gratitude. Faculty members, and/or staff members who need to come to school should first contact their building principal.

Currently, school is closed until Monday, April 6. However, I am not alone in expecting this closure period to extend much longer.

From an academic standpoint, we have completed our first three days of remote learning. You have adjusted quickly to this new mode. Of course, there have been glitches and the full range of early-to-late adopters; but overall, I am impressed and grateful for the rich tapestry of engaged learning that has taken place already. Now entering our first full week, glitches will be minimized, people will get the hang of it, and school will continue steadily. I credit the strong student-teacher relationships for this quick transition. These relationships are the glue that will keep it together until we meet again.

I especially wish to thank:

Parents/Families: Your messages to us have been understanding and encouraging. We know and appreciate that you're doing (at least) double-duty. We have great families!

Teachers: It is hard work shifting from in-person to on-line. Thank you for your cooperation, high-standards, and care for our students. Plus, you have families, too.

Students: You realize that we are all in this together, and we count on you and your cooperation to keep school going. Thank you for your decency, responsibility, and goodwill.

Public schools, for reasons of equity and special education law, cannot "count" student

work during this closure period; therefore, such work is assigned for enrichment only. As an independent school, we are free to proceed so that work “counts,” students gain what they ought, and the year is salvaged to the highest degree possible. Yet another reason I love Catholic schools.

We are also in a period of financial uncertainty. Please contact me directly to discuss any hardship you may now be facing. Email ckeavy@jp.dfrcs.org and I will arrange a phone call.

The full implications of extended closure are not yet known. We are all questioning what will happen to sports, dramatic productions, traditions, cherished events, and the like. Right now, none of these are off the table, and should we return to school on April 6, I expect that they will proceed as scheduled. However, public health conditions may force us to modify significantly or cancel events in the months ahead. JP II seniors and SFXP 8th-grade students, who have been working hard toward special culminating events, would be particularly affected. We have little choice but to proceed one week at a time. I promise (a) to communicate with you regularly and honestly about what is happening, and (b) only cancel or modify events when necessary.

One such event, the Oddball 2020 Gala Auction, might well be odd indeed. I will meet with sponsors and auction leaders this week and communicate a new plan shortly. One way or the other, the show will go on!

Toward the end, I offer a word of thanks to my ‘fellow’ administrators -- Dr. Ballou, Mrs. Hutchison, Mrs. Kelley, Ms. Valentino, and Mrs. Warms -- who provide steady leadership for teachers, students, and families while working hard to figure it all out. We count on you. You’re the best.

Finally, as Bishop da Cunha said in his Friday prayer service, recent events have laid bare our dependence on God (“The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away. Blessed be the name of the LORD.” [Job 1:21]). Let us continue in Lenten prayer, gratitude for his gifts, and see an increase in our Faith.

Contact me anytime. Thank you for all you do for St. Margaret Primary School, St. Francis Xavier Preparatory School, and St. John Paul II High School.

Christopher W. Keavy
President

ALL SCHOOL

Lunch Orders

Credits have been applied to lunch accounts for families who had pre-paid orders for March. If you have any questions about your lunch account please contact:

SMPS: Mrs. Fish at lfish@smrs.dfrcs.org

SFXP/JP II: Ms. McGuire at amcguire@jp.dfrcs.org

Enrollment Contracts

Enrollment contracts for the 2020-2021 school year have been mailed. Please return the signed contract by April 1st or at your earliest convenience. *For returning students, it is not necessary to send in a \$175 registration fee.* The registration fee will be applied to your tuition account in June and paid as part of the tuition payment plan.

During this period of certainty, families’ financial lives may be impacted. If you have any questions about your enrollment contract or tuition account, please email

Margaret Keras, Business Manager, at mkeras@jp.dfrcs.org.

Financial Assistance for the 2020-2021 School Year

All families wishing to be considered for school-based financial aid for the 2020-2021 school year must complete an application online with FACTS Management Grant & Aid. Applications are completed online at:

SMPS: <https://online.factsmgt.com/signin/3GHKD>

SFXP/JPII: <https://online.factsmgt.com/aid>

For new applicants, please take a few moments to [view this informative video](#) on the application process.

If you have any questions, please email Margaret Keras, Business Manager, at mkeras@jp.dfrcs.org.