



Rockville Centre Union Free School District
SOUTH SIDE HIGH SCHOOL



William H. Johnson, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

John Murphy
Principal

April 1, 2020

Good Afternoon South Side Families,

In the event you have not heard it enough, the teachers and faculty miss you terribly, and look forward to the time when we return to the high school together. The efforts of students and teachers to continue learning have been extraordinary; thank you for doing your part.

While our thoughts and best wishes extend to all of you, we are especially mindful of our seniors, who have been deprived of one of the more exciting, eventful, and memorable times in their high school careers. Our hearts go out to you knowing that your final semester at South Side has been so profoundly impacted by the restrictions placed on the social aspect of your final year. While it isn't clear yet when we will return to the building, rest assured our team is thinking of ways to correct this situation for you once we return. It is very important to all of us that your final memories are positive and memorable.

We all have been faced with difficult decisions and circumstances, and changes are being made on a daily basis. The online platform continues to evolve, and teachers have modified and updated the workload and means of engagement. Teachers continue to explore and implement different means of instruction, from interactive discussion boards in Google classroom to the use of multimedia lessons using Educreations that more closely resemble a classroom experience.

The main priority for the online platform continues to be engagement- to continue learning, receive timely feedback from your teachers, and to stay connected. Despite the best efforts of teachers and students, factors beyond their control compromised their ability to maintain the standards you have traditionally set for yourself. The emotional and psychological impact this has had on many of you is our primary concern. Familiarity with the online platform, submission issues due to internet access and the response time of several sites, and the day-to-day struggles many of you have experienced compounded the issue. Many students missed the final day or days of classroom instruction, and could not submit assignments that were due before March 13. Due to the labor-intensive nature of online learning, we did not want to compound your workload by adding this to your plate. It is for this reason that we have asked teachers to give students credit for all assignments submitted after March 13, be flexible with due dates, and offer feedback without traditional grades. We have also been in contact with outside agencies, especially colleges and universities, to ensure that the recent

events do not negatively affect your future plans. It is for these and other reasons that we have decided to issue Pass/Fail grades for the third marking period, with comments. This applies to the 3rd marking period only; a decision on the 4th quarter will be made when we have a better idea of our return date.

No decision has been made yet on the June Regents exams; we will share this information when it is available. A condensed version of the AP exams will be made available in May. Ms. Levy and I will send more information and materials to you by the end of the week, to supplement that which has been provided to you from teachers. For IB classes that would have ended in a May exam this year, we are in the process of submitting all 'internal and external' assessments students have completed, which will be graded and used to issue IB results in July. The latter is an extremely labor intensive process, and teachers deserve our thanks, appreciation and gratitude for their selfless efforts.

Love,

John Murphy
Principal