

March 25, 2020

Dear Warrior Tribe:

I read a public social media post recently that stated: "And Boom!!!! Just like that... it appears we don't need Hollywood or Professional Sports... Just FARMERS." This is a flattering tribute to farmers in our community and other areas like ours whom we may often take for granted. The empty shelves in our grocery stores and the sudden reduced access to meat and toilet paper helps us realize our reliance on these important people.

Two years ago, the Morrisville-Eaton Central School District restarted an agriculture program after many decades of going without. The visionary, Rebecca Werbela, has built a thriving and popular sequence of courses. My experiences, learning through her teachings, have led to me envisioning some "farming" principles that can be instilled in my own children. As a family, we will experience authentic learning through building our first garden. There are countless life lessons that can come through an at-home experience like this. I encourage all families to take the opportunity in front of them and create original learning experiences centered on family interests and need.

Many of us miss our professional sports and access to Hollywood-style entertainment, among many other American pastimes. The sudden "shutdown of fun" makes us realize how our hobbies define who we are. For our students, school has been the connection to the physical network of humanity. The social interaction established through music, sports, theater, art, and classroom discussion have all but evaporated. Now many of our youth are realizing how much they really did/do love what school was. The celebrations, ceremonies, award programs, athletic seasons, concerts, and the list goes on, have for as long as we have existed, been rites of passage. Now that these have been cancelled or placed in limbo, we realize the degree our school opportunities have been taken for granted.

Mr. Waskiewicz has asked that all elementary families complete the permission form for students to access Seesaw, an online learning platform. We realize that not all students have access to computing devices yet, however, having this paperwork taken care of now will allow us to better transition in the coming weeks. You can access the form by clicking [here](#) or by going to www.m-ecs.org and click on the Seesaw Permission Form link. A picture of a signed form e-mailed to your child's teacher is sufficient. If you don't have access to a printer, please ask your child's teacher how it can be submitted differently.

An unanticipated video-conferencing concern that has been brought up relates to family home privacy. Children who are meeting through video are encouraged to check their surroundings. Microsoft Teams allows for the blurring of backgrounds. This feature is encouraged to be used to protect family privacy. If

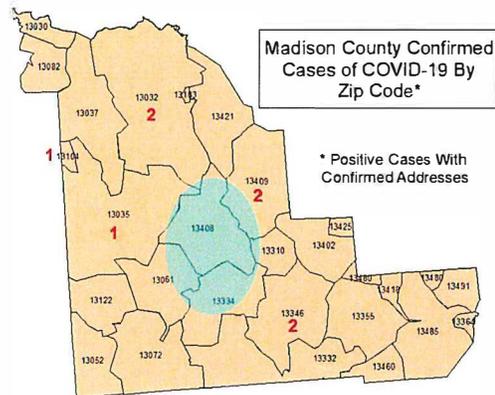
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a situation doesn't allow background blurring, make sure the screen view being shared is appropriate. The mute button is also encouraged to be activated unless the student has something to offer verbally.

This morning, the United States Senate approved a bipartisan stimulus bill that is expected to provide some financial relief to those across the nation, if passed by the House. The bill is over 1000 pages long, so it will take time to confirm details. One portion that is being looked at closely is a full renumeration of salary for those experiencing layoffs as a result of the pandemic. Some of our community may be able to benefit through this concept.

It remains that the Morrisville-Eaton Central School District has zero reported confirmed cases of COVID-19. It continues to surround us though. The following map has been shared by the Madison County Health Department. As you look at it, you can see how close it is to us. It is beginning to surround our district. The blue shaded region denotes the Morrisville zip code. You can access the map as the county updates it twice per day by visiting www.madisoncounty.ny.gov/2479/Coronavirus-COVID-19.



It appears that it is not a matter of if, but when it lands in our community. We are as prepared as possible for when it does. Please be reminded that when we must respond to a positive confirmation, the information that is allowed to be shared is limited. Your understanding of our responsibility to limit the release of sensitive information will be appreciated.

We might look at relationships through a lens of "You don't know what you've got until it's gone." It's not typical to have everyone in society relate to this phrase all at the same time. I see the sadness in my own children about missing school – a look they never had before. Before, the excitement of a snow day and the start of a vacation would energize our home. The end of a weekend and the last day of break would often bring anguish. Now that what we knew school to be is gone, our children want it back more than ever. All of us want it back more than ever.

As parents, we may have taken for granted the nurturing of children that teachers are charged with. We have something great at MECS. Virtual learning will get better as we adapt to this new style and as technology access grows over the coming weeks. When this is all over, our students and faculty will be stronger, possess new skills, relationships will be enhanced, and parents will be more connected to teachers than ever before. We will get through this, together. I miss you all...

Stay healthy and safe! Go Warriors!

Sincerely,


Gregory Molloy

