

April 1, 2020

Dear Helen S. Dunn Students, Families, Staff and Community,

This Thursday, due to the recent announcement by Governor Mills, all Maine residents are asked to stay at home except for essential needs. In addition, Governor Mills has extended the timeline for refraining from on-site classroom based instruction until at least May 1<sup>st</sup>. Our teachers have been providing instructional materials and assignments since our initial shut-down was announced, and will continue to do so during the weeks to come.

I do not know when we'll be able to return to school this spring but we will resume school as soon as it is deemed safe to move freely again in Maine. Rest assured that even though we may not have the traditional spring sports season, we will work to provide the opportunities our students need to improve their sports skills.

Our students were in good standing to move to the next grade when we were forced to close our doors and even though we expect to need to make up some academic ground when students return, all students will move along to the next grade just as they would have while here in person. It is vitally important, however, that all students take this time seriously and work hard to complete assignments and progress in their skills.

I want to especially assure our current 8<sup>th</sup> graders that you will still have your opportunities to participate in your graduation ceremony and celebrate all your hard work. You have earned your special events and plans. We will all work with you to make sure those still happen, even if the times and dates are adjusted.

Our breakfast/lunch program will continue to operate for as long as we are allowed to be on the road making deliveries, and I encourage you to take part in this program. We will also continue to make academic drop-offs and deliveries even though it is my hope we can receive more devices and internet access from the state for those who still need it.

Parents, if you have any concerns with how your child is doing emotionally, the NAMI Maine Helpline is there to assist you. Call 800-464-5767, and press 1 or email them at [helpline@namimaine.org](mailto:helpline@namimaine.org). In addition, if you need the services of DHHS, their number is (207) 287-3703. General information regarding the Coronavirus is available by calling 2-1-1.

All of this will eventually come to an end and we will return to life as we know it. But let's never forget the lessons we're learning right now. We are strong and resilient. We are a caring community and we look out for one another. And, we'll be even stronger for having endured something so uncertain. But you have everything inside you to do well. Take good care of yourself and your families. It will be a joyous day when we can all be together again!

You are Missed!

Gwen Smith, Helen S. Dunn School Administrator