



MOUNTAINSIDE SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Mrs. Janet Walling
Superintendent of Schools

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Mountainside Families,

Welcome to our 3rd week of distance learning and I hope that you and your children are adjusting to the new routines. Throughout this week you may notice changes and expansions to some of our instructional delivery models. This intentional shift is occurring in order to continue making our instruction even more targeted to meet the educational needs of all of our students. With the realization that distance learning will be our mode of instruction for the foreseeable future, the staff is diligently expanding lessons to incorporate added material, concepts, and technology in ways that are both meaningful and impactful from a distance. We appreciate your understanding and patience with these changes, and understand that with technology changes there may be some glitches. Please continue to communicate directly with your teachers, principals, and others in order to provide feedback or ask for assistance.

I would also like to take a moment to address our upcoming spring break. A few parents have contacted me about the potential of canceling or postponing spring break and I am aware that Berkeley Heights has sent out a survey regarding this as well. While there are many factors that play into these types of considerations, I would like to let you know that we have made the determination that spring break for Mountainside Schools will remain as scheduled and take place from April 6 - April 10. One of the primary reasons that we will not alter spring break is that if we are able to reopen our buildings, we believe that it is vitally important to take advantage of every possible moment of face-to-face instruction with our students as well as provide them with the opportunity to participate in many special end of year activities that are planned. While we are aware, that as a district, we must plan for the possibility that our school buildings will be closed until the end of the school year, we remain hopeful and prepared to return as soon as we are permitted.

We understand and recognize that some parents may want to continue utilizing strategies and programs to engage students, or to maintain a routine, during our spring break. To assist with this, we will be creating a "Student Enhancement" tab under our Distance Learning Resources section of the district website. This will serve as a location to find links to many free educational and non-educational enrichment and enjoyment activities that parents may choose to use. More information will be sent about this later in the week.

Finally, I would like to share that last week the State of New Jersey was granted a waiver regarding the use of standardized testing for this year. As a result, our students in grades 3-8 will not be required to participate in NJSLA testing this year.

Thank you again for your continued support of your children and the staff of Mountainside. Please take care of yourselves and be well.

Janet Walling