SMETHPORT AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

Home of the HUBBERS

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EOE

April 1, 2020

Dear Students, Parents, Guardians, and Community Members,

Today, the Smethport Area School District will begin an extraordinary effort to bring education to the homes of our students as we begin Phase III of our SASD Educational Plan! Due to the pandemic situation, school closures in the State of Pennsylvania have been extended until further notice and we have decided to proceed calling our teachers and educational staff back to work and providing learning activities for our students through this challenging time period.

I hope that everyone in your home is well and taking care of themselves! I want to stress to everyone that staying home, social distancing, limiting gatherings of people, limiting travel, working in isolation, hand washing and other preventive measures, all work to prevent and slow the spread of the virus. As we provide education for our students these next two months, the health, safety and welfare of our students and families will be our priority. We will continue to provide meals for our students according to the current MWF schedule.

We have received guidance for our educational plan from the PA Dept. of Education and the US Dept. of Education. The SASD is no longer held to the 180-day requirement for students so our school year for students will end on June 5, 2020. This date is a firm date and will not change. This will be our date for graduation. The pandemic situation will dictate our ability to have traditional academic ceremonies for awards and graduation. We all remain hopeful that the pandemic situation improves.

In Phase III of our Education Plan, the Elementary students will be participating in "Review and Enrichment" activities. The activities will be directed by the teachers at each grade level. As we begin the process, our elementary students will be using the educational resources featured on our website under <Smethport Elementary School Releases Enrichment and Review Activities>. These activities were also mailed to all of our students. Teachers will begin personal contacts with students and families. We are hopeful that all of our students participate in the review and enrichment. After two weeks of working with these activities, our teachers will begin cycles of two weeks ELA, then two weeks of MATH, specific review and enrichment. Cycles will continue until June 5, 2020. Our teachers will be working from home, tracking student participation, assessing activities and providing feedback as best they can via computer assisted technology, classroom apps, phone calls and discussions with students/parents/guardians. Any grades that are issued will be pass/fail. Any pass/fail grades issued will not factor into official academic performance. Please review the letter from Elementary School Principal, Ms. Zona, for more details.

Jr./Sr. High School students will be participating in "Planned Instruction" in the four core areas of, math, science, social studies and ELA. Teachers will be working from home, conducting lessons via computer assisted technology, phone calls and conversations with students. Students will be expected to participate and every effort will be made to ensure that students without internet access at home receive the materials that they need to complete the planned instruction. Students should attain at least 2 points of participation with each of their teachers each week. Teachers will be assessing and providing feedback for the work completed. All grading for planned instruction will be pass/fail. "Review and Enrichment" will continue for selected elective classes so that students can complete a nine weeks of valuable class information from these offerings. Pass/Fail grading for "Planned Instruction" will be used for academic decisions but the pass/fail grades will not count in class rank. Please review the letter from Jr./Sr. High School Principal, Mr. Benson, for more details.

Through the entire phase III learning process, our Special Education Department and learning support teachers and aides will be working to deliver services and support to all of our special needs students. Please take the time to review the letters provided by Mrs. Anderson regarding continuity of individualized learning plans and ADA Section 504 service agreements. The SASD will also continue with our English Language (EL) learner program for our students in this program. Our counselors, social worker and school psychologist will be working to check on students and help students process the pandemic situation. If you would like a contact from one of these people, please contact the Special Education Office at 887-2991 ext. 2209

We know that our extraordinary effort to bring an educational program into your homes will meet many challenges in regards to technology, communication, time management, resources, educational materials/packets and the pandemic situation. Our educational leaders have plans to address those areas. We are requesting that parents communicate their needs with district principals via calling the elementary 887-5012 ext. 3300 and high school 887-5545 ext. 2200 offices. One by one we will work to remove any barriers to participating and succeeding in this program. We are requesting your patience and understanding! We are requesting that you, welcome our teacher contacts and phone calls, encourage your child to participate and help your son/daughter to be successful. Teachers can help you resolve many concerns that you may have. Questions for my office may be directed to 887-5543 ext. 4400 or sasd5543@hotmail.com

The goals for Phase III of our plan are the same as our current shared goals for the district. Through this experience, "We want all of our students to learn!" Student participation and teacher/student/parent communication will be keys to our success. Through the Phase III plan we will be promoting that learning is essential and important. Development as an independent life-long learner is a key skill. Learning gives our students a sense of normal and routine in uncertain times. Contact with our teachers communicates caring and dedication. We hope that our students and families value this opportunity to achieve these goals.

Challenging times require an extraordinary effort and an extraordinary response to rise above the circumstances and succeed! Please join us in this effort with your response. Thank you for your consideration! Please stay well.

Sincerely,

David London, Superintendent