May 4, 2020

Dear Colleagues:

The May 1 Executive Order from Governor Andrew Cuomo keeps school buildings closed through the end of the current academic year. As we conclude the 2019-2020 school year under unique and less than optimal circumstances, my message to administrators, staff, students, and parents remains the same as always – finish strong! Buildings are closed, however, school is still in session. Learning must continue, and in the absence of physical presence, strong interpersonal connections are more important than ever before.

Consider this message as encouragement for you to expand into new frontiers. For instance, your sharp adaptation to remote teaching and learning – all with a keen eye on the whole child – has been extraordinary.

I know that many of you are feeling sadness because you crave the normalcy of our in-school routines. The ability to look at your students’ faces, judge their moods, and sense what they might be experiencing at any given moment is an intuitive and empathetic skill that may elude you in this new virtual world. I implore you to reach deep into the treasure trove that every teacher has to forge new relationships with your students. Continue to reach out, give that virtual high-five, and in the midst of teaching and learning, check on how your students are faring in their hearts. Ask them how they feel and what they wish for.

I like the phrase, “The stars come out at night.” Stars are always in the sky, but in the dark, they are given the opportunity to shine even brighter due to the stark contrast. Though we are experiencing a period of tremendous adversity, this is a time for our character and resilience to shine. Who we are is revealed. That’s where we are now, colleagues. You are talented people, and your students are galaxies of bright, budding points of light. Be your children’s lodestar in these dark times, and guide them through as only you can.

On behalf of our children and families, I truly appreciate and thank each of you.

Dr. Kriner Cash
Superintendent

“Putting Children & Families First to Ensure High Academic Achievement for All”