



SAINT MARIA GORETTI

Est. 1941

CATHOLIC CHURCH AND SCHOOL

April 18, 2020

Dear SMG Parents,

Six weeks ago we quickly transitioned to delivering instruction through the various virtual platforms, and the feedback from parents on that transition has been extremely positive. Teachers at all grade-levels have worked tirelessly to provide quality, effective, and engaging instruction each week, and will continue to do so as we continue through the remainder of the school year distance learning from home.

This is a stressful situation for all, trying to balance all the demands on our time while sheltering in place. Many parents have shared that one of the challenges of working and learning from home has been developing a schedule or routine that gives structure and creates a positive learning environment for their students. Our teachers have felt that challenge as well, trying to create structure and routine for their students in this new learning environment.

Last Friday, parents of 2nd – 8th Grade students should have received communication from teachers about the **Virtual Instructional Class Schedules**, which will begin tomorrow, **April 20, 2020**. Virtual instruction is when lessons are taught online with face-to-face LIVE instruction and interaction. As well, students have the opportunity to ask questions, get help with assignments, and stay connected with their classmates and teachers during this difficult time.

The schedules include the specific times 2nd – 8th grade students should log-in to class and meet with their teachers. Core classes and Spanish class will meet at regularly scheduled times, once a week on either Monday or Tuesday. On Wednesdays and Thursdays, teachers will continue to offer tutorials, conference with students, hold discussions, administer tests/quizzes, and be available to students and parents. Fridays will continue to be a “catch-up”/independent learning day. Specials classes for PreK -8 have also been added to the schedule throughout the week. PreK – 1st Grade Core classes have not been scheduled and will continue as they have been since we began distance learning.

Please read the following statements about virtual online classroom Netiquette (the correct or acceptable way of communicating on the Internet) and expectations, for these are very important to create the best learning environment for each student.

- Mondays & Tuesdays are instructional days; **students are strongly encouraged** to attend Core classes during scheduled instruction time, but attendance is not mandatory. However, **teachers will provide positive participation points to 6th-8th grade students who attend and earn them through proper Netiquette**. Please know that the teachers

will be flexible to those who are unable to participate in class. However, we do ask that parents and students notify us ahead of time, if possible.

- Students should **enter the virtual classroom on time**, just like they would in the regular classroom. If they must enter the virtual classroom late, they should do so quietly, volume muted, and not making any gestures (such as waving) that distract the teacher and/or students.
- Students are **required to have the volume muted unless they are responding/discussing**, which will require additional patience from each student. Also, students are absolutely **required to have the video camera on throughout the entire meeting without changing the background** (less distraction) so that the teacher can see students' faces at all times. **This requirement is for the safety of all.** If the teacher has a student who refuses to turn on the video camera or who turns it off without the teacher's permission during the meeting, the teacher will ask the student to hang up/remove himself/herself from the meeting. If this occurs, the teacher will immediately inform the parent and Mrs. Behee via phone call and email.
- Students should **wear appropriate, comfortable clothing**.
- As a general rule, if you wouldn't do it in the regular classroom, don't do it in the virtual classroom.
- Please see the attached ***Zoom Guide for Students*** for additional guidelines.

Please know that the **schedule's purpose is to help** students (and parents), not to cause more stress. We want to make sure that each student continues to receive effective instruction, and that will take equal effort from the students, teachers, and parents. Your student is not going to fail the quarter because they are unable to make all of the virtual instructional days.

If students are unable to meet for a class from time to time due to a lack of available devices, internet connectivity issues, parents' work schedules, etc..., we will be happy to work with you. We do have devices (laptops & iPads) available that can be signed out for students to use at home. If having an extra device available would make attending scheduled virtual classes easier for you and your student(s), please let us know by emailing either Mrs. Daly (jdaly@smgschool.org) or Mrs. de la Pena (jdelapena@smgschool.org) and we will make arrangements to get a device to you.

Thank you for your support as we continue to navigate Distance Learning for the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year. I will continue to keep our entire SMG school community in my prayer for continued healthy and safety.

St. Maria Goretti, Pray for Us!

Blessings,

Laura Behee, M.Ed.

Principal