

BOARD OF EDUCATION
SUSSEX-WANTAGE REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

27 Bank Street
Sussex, NJ 07461
973-875-3175
FAX: (973) 875-7175

MICHAEL GALL
SUPERINTENDENT
E-mail: mgall@swregional.org

CHRISTINA M. RIKER
BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR
E-mail: criker@swregional.org

Brenda VanWarner
Administrative Assistant

Nancy Sisto
Administrative Assistant

June 8, 2020

Dear Sussex-Wantage Families,

I know that the last few months have been challenging to say the least and I would like to express our continued gratitude to our students, parents, staff members, and community members for their efforts in supporting the needs of all learners during this period of closure. These are unprecedented times, and we have all done our best to support our students, families, and community while coping with the stress and anxiety related to this crisis. I also want to update you on the following important end of year information:

SMS Lockers/Pick Up of Personal Student Items-

At SMS we are preparing to remove your child's personal items from their lockers and bagging them for pick up along with other important end of year items. This process will be overseen and coordinated by administration. Parents and guardians will be asked to pick up items on the designated schedule below while adhering to social distancing guidelines.

Schedule for 8th Grade Pick Up at SMS-

All pick-ups/drop-offs are scheduled from 9:00 am - 3:00 pm as follows:

June 17th: A-L

June 18th: M-Z

June 19th: Anyone who missed above dates

Schedule for 7th Grade Pick Up at SMS-

All pick-ups/drop-offs are scheduled from 9:00 am - 3:00 pm as follows:

June 15th: A-L

June 16th: M-Z

June 19th: Anyone who missed above dates

6th Grade Pick Up at SMS-

As you may be aware, many 6th graders have their own personal locks on their lockers. Therefore, we will not be able to return these locker contents until such time as Governor Murphy permits students and/or parents to enter our schools.

Directions for 7th-8th grade Pick Up:

Please pull up to the front entrance of SMS.

Please do not get out of your car unless it is absolutely necessary. Please leave your car windows up the entire time. Behind your closed car window, display the student's first and last name of property you are claiming on a piece of paper in large, bold letters.

Pop your trunk. If you are returning items that belong to the school (textbooks, library books, calculators, etc.) please have those items in a sealed bag in your trunk with an attached piece of paper that clearly identifies your child's name. Do not return your child's borrowed Chromebook if they do not have access to another device. They can be returned during the following week. We will take the sealed, labeled bag of returned school items from your car. We will then place your child's hall locker contents in your trunk (in a clear plastic bag). Please understand that we can not permit access into the school building. We then respectfully request that you immediately depart.

CEL & WES Pick Up of Personal Student Items-

Pick up of personal items and yearbooks for any students who ordered them will extend into July with a focus on 2nd and 5th grade students. We have no intention of keeping anyone's items. However, items that are not necessarily critical may not be returned until September. For any students/families who are moving or need a critical item such as glasses, please contact your child's school. Nurses will contact parents directly for any medical supplies that may need to be returned. Please be aware that there has been a delay at the production facility for CEL & WES yearbooks. We do not anticipate these coming in until the very end of June.

Drop Off of Other Items-

Drop off of Chromebooks, library books, and all other items for all three schools can occur the week of June 22nd daily from 10:00am-1:00pm at Sussex Middle School if you had not already dropped them off. You do not need an appointment.

SMS Virtual Graduation-

Please understand that the process for preparing for end of year celebrations has been challenging because we received guidance that changed on a weekly or even daily basis. At this time, we will be publishing a pre-recorded virtual/video graduation presentation on June 19th at approximately 5:00pm, the last day of school. We understand that graduation ceremonies represent milestones in the lives of students and we are deeply heartbroken that we are not able to have a traditional graduation for our 8th grade students. Please know that we are working to include your child's yearbook photo along with some other candid photos in our virtual graduation ceremony. We ask that you please email hwatson@swregional.org by Wednesday, June 10th if you do not want your child's picture to be included in the virtual ceremony. We anticipate including your child's diploma, yearbooks (if purchased and shipped to the school), program, etc... with their personal belongings. I know many of you may have seen Governor Murphy release information about "in person" ceremonies. Please understand that those in person ceremonies come with significant limitations and can not occur prior to July 6th. With that in mind, we will continue to keep abreast of the Governor's guidelines for further information.

Grading During the 4th Marking Period-

Please be aware that grades for the 4th marking period will be Pass/Fail. There were several factors that were considered in making this decision including being equitable, the ability of our online grading system, and our survey results with parent feedback which overwhelmingly supported this option. For those parents who took hard copy packets, you can drop off your packet this week at SMS daily from 10:00 am-1:00pm and they will be scanned to your child's teacher. If you choose to drop off your hard copy packet, please label the cover with your child's name, grade, and teacher. As with traditional school, if your child were in danger of failing, you would have already had meetings with your child's principal.

Summer Instructional Programs (Extended School Year/Summer Step Up)-

At this juncture, we have been advised by the NJDOE to prepare a virtual experience for our summer instructional programs for those students who wish to participate.

Summer Care Program-

Unfortunately, at this time, we do not perceive that we will be able to offer our Summer Care Program this year. I know many of you have seen announcements that daycares may open. Unfortunately, we have reviewed this with the NJDOE via the County Office and we are still obligated to adhere to an indoor gathering size of only 10 people. Under those constraints, we are not able to offer the program. At this time, we encourage parents and guardians to examine other opportunities.

Kindergarten Information-

Unfortunately, we were unable to host our traditional in person kindergarten screenings this year. We will therefore also be unable to offer our Transitional Kindergarten Program for the upcoming school year. We are in discussions to consider a Transitional First Grade Program for the following school year. A Kindergarten Orientation presentation will be published on our website in the near future.

As I've said before, we continue to miss each and every one of our students and families. It is our sincere hope that you, your families, and loved ones are staying healthy and safe while practicing social distancing. Please know that we have appreciated your patience and are here to help in any way that we might be able to. We will continue to do our best to keep you informed with any updated information as it becomes available.

Important Dates:

*Please see the District Website for links to the following events as they are posted.

Sussex Middle School Virtual Activity Awards: Friday, June 12th @ 5:00 p.m.

Sussex Middle School Virtual Academic Awards: Friday, June 12th @ 5:00 p.m.

Sussex Middle School Virtual Graduation Ceremony: Friday, June 19th @ 5:00 p.m.

Wantage Elementary School 5th Grade Virtual Awards Ceremony: Thursday, June 18th @ 5:00 p.m.

Sincerely,

Michael Gall
Superintendent of Schools/CEL Principal