



# Rochelle Park School

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February 19, 2021

Dear School Community Members,

Another week is behind us and we continue to work feverishly to provide students with an education while addressing remote learning needs, handling the current building crisis, responding to COVID-19 matters, and planning for a return to the building. Our pace steadily continues, knowing that we must continue to put one foot in front of the other to keep moving forward.

Not missing a beat on the academic side, this week and next week an array of virtual assemblies are offered to provide, in part, a heightened focus upon character education. These assemblies include: MLK - Amazing Grace for 3rd-5th grade, The Hill Brothers Assembly/Concert for PreK - 3rd grade focusing on the 6 pillars of character, Dr. Paul Wichansky, a motivational speaker, for grade 6-8 students on the topics of acceptance and perseverance, and John Marshall providing an environmental education assembly for 4th and 5th grade students. Building character includes kindness and care for one self, one another, and the world around us. It is hoped that these assemblies will provide an informative and inspirational platform for the students to build upon.

Speaking of “building”, repairs to the first floor continue on. Major areas of focus for this week have been communications with insurance providers, construction plans, and permits. The building must be closed starting Monday, February 22nd, to commence asbestos abatement on the cafeteria floor. Please do not be alarmed by the phrase “asbestos abatement”. To be clear, the current cafeteria tiles are not of issue. It is the old flooring under the existing tiles that requires the abatement. The timeline for this work, and subsequent required air quality testing, is projected to last through Wednesday, March 3, 2021. Once we have the clearance to re-enter the building the rebuild construction will then start. The rebuild phase is estimated to take six weeks, taking us through the month of April.

Given this timeline we pursued a facility approval from the Bergen County Office of Education to have educational trailers brought on-site. We have been granted approval and the insurance carrier is also supporting this request. At the time of this letter we are processing an order for three double wide trailers. This will provide us with six classrooms. At this time the trailers are expected to be delivered on or about March 8th. Pending set up, electrical connections, sanitizing, and other needs, the trailers are expected to be ready for classroom instruction on or before March 15th.

Starting the week of February 22nd, while the building is closed, lunch/meal distribution will be adjusted as follows:

- Monday, February 22nd, from 12:15-1:30pm a four day meal package will be distributed from Midland School's parking lot.
- Friday, February 26th, from 12:15pm-1:30pm a seven day meal package will be distributed from Midland School's parking lot.
- Friday, March 5th, from 12:15pm-1:30pm a three day meal package will be distributed from either the Midland School parking lot or gymnasium.
- Monday, March 8th will resume the regular meal plan distribution.

Overall, we anticipate being able to return students to classroom learning on or about March 15, 2021. Please know if this can be sooner, we will certainly aim to achieve that. Similarly, please understand that all best efforts are being made to provide for a return to classroom learning, and that some aspects of this are simply not within our control. The COVID-19 pandemic has had an impact on industrial supplies, resources, and work well beyond our reach.

Returning to the theme of character education, a focus at all times but one that had heightened attention this week, brings to mind the character not just of an individual but of a community as well. It is said "A person's true character is often revealed during times of crisis. Make sure you have what it takes to be your best during those times".

A person's character is what brings forth admirable traits, and collectively establishes a team within the community. The ability to sustain good character, admirable traits, and teamwork during times of crisis is most telling. Our community has been showing its true colors; the Maroon and White are strong, the Lions are proud, and teamwork has been consistent. Through this unexpected journey may we continue our teamwork, sustain and create educational opportunities for our students, and emerge stronger.

Thank you. Stay warm and safe, and be well.

Sincerely,

*Dr. Sue DeNobile*

Superintendent