

Dear LMS Families,

We hope that you and your families are all well. In the midst of an unprecedented summer, our wish is that you found time to unplug and connect with each other in safe ways. We are excited to start our new school year even if it is in an untraditional way. Sometimes being pushed out of your comfort zone forces you to rethink how things have been done and look for innovative and inspiring alternatives. This is a timely challenge as we critically examine and end the role public education has played in the systematic disenfranchisement of particular groups in our society.

Last Spring we abruptly moved into distance learning when schools closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. What we initially thought would be a two-week closure lasted until school closed. Through that experience, we learned a lot about what would be best for our students. We surveyed LMS students and parents and received feedback through our district-wide survey of parents and staff. Below are the most common feedback areas and how we have addressed concerns and adjusted our fall distance learning program.

Major Shifts in Distance Learning: Spring to Fall

Area of Concern	Spring 2020	FALL 2020
Distance Learning Schedule	❖ Content Area Block (60 minutes)	★ Period by Period Block (80 minutes)
Grading	❖ Credit/No Credit	★ Letter Grades
Workload/Virtual Class Meetings	❖ Optional live sessions ❖ Predominantly asynchronous learning	★ Required live sessions ★ Daily synchronous learning
Feedback/Communication	❖ No required weekly communication from teacher to parent ❖ Illuminate infrequently updated due to credit/no credit marks	★ Required weekly email update from teachers ★ Illuminate updated every two weeks ★ Scheduled surveys to families to get regular feedback
Social-Emotional/Peer Interaction	❖ Lack of uniformity in peer to peer interactions	★ Built-in time for community building and social-emotional support

Distance Learning Schedule: In the spring, the distance learning schedule was by content block. This limited teachers' ability to have a reasonable number of students in each virtual class meeting. In some cases, teachers were reluctant to host a virtual class due to the high numbers. For fall, we will have a period by period block schedule. Students will see their

teacher with a grouping comparable to if they were on campus. Visit <https://www.smmusd.org/cms/lib/CA50000164/Centricity/Domain/4157/DistanceLearningSchedule.pdf> to see the distance learning schedule.

Grading: A decision was made at the district level to pause with letter grades and move to Credit/No Credit for the final marks Spring Semester. Some parents and students felt this minimized accountability and student motivation to work hard. For fall, traditional letter grades will be issued.

Workload/Virtual Class Meetings: While as I'm sure you can imagine, the perception of the workload from our students and their parents was completely different. The majority of student respondents felt the workload was "just right" (52.2%) or "too much" (39.2%). Of our parent respondents, 57.7% felt it was "not enough" and 32.4% felt the workload was "just right" when surveyed. For fall, students will need to be in their class meetings the entire period and the teacher will be present. Attendance will be taken each period. The virtual session will look more like what an in-person class would be although the limiting factors of virtual learning prevent it from mirroring it exactly. Students reported that the virtual sessions they did have were an effective component of spring distance learning and parents reported wanting more of them. Students will see their teachers/classmates live every time the class meets. Teachers will leverage breakout rooms and other features to replicate some of the small group and peer to peer learning opportunities that are common when we are on campus.

Feedback/Communication: Parents reported difficulty in supporting their students and holding them accountable when they didn't know what their child was supposed to be doing. Some found navigating GoogleClassroom daunting. A positive practice of some teachers that students and parents noted were weekly communications from the teacher that summarized what the class was covering that week. This is being scaled to a schoolwide practice. Each week, teachers will send group communication to their families letting them know what is happening. Since your students have multiple teachers, you will have multiple emails in your inbox. However, we hope you will find it helpful with keeping your teenager on track. Another issue in the spring related to the lack of grades in Illuminate. The expectation for teachers is that Illuminate is updated at least every two weeks so parents/students can monitor academic progress. Students will also get direct feedback from their teachers during class and through comments on their work in Google Classroom.

So what now?

As we all prepare for the start of the 2020-2021 school year remotely, we would like to invite all students to sign-up for an appointment to come to school to pick up Back-to-School items/textbooks, necessary technology, and to have their school picture taken for their LMS Student ID and yearbook picture. Please sign-up by 10:00 am on Monday, August 17th. Bring your PTSA ALL-In-One Form if you would like to make your donation via cash or check. Copies

of the form will be available on site or you can print your own https://mspts.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/all-in-one-july_28-2020.pdf Prefer to make a donation via credit card? Online donations can be made at <https://mspts.org/support/>.

Please note, online digital textbooks are available in core content area classes, with the exception of Spanish 1 and Lit Support, so you do not need to pick up textbooks unless you would like hard copies. Students will need to know which math class they are in to pick up appropriate workbooks/textbooks. Math classes are either Math Core 6, Math Core 7, Math Core 7/8, Math Core 8, Algebra 1, or Geometry.

Remember to dress appropriately for pictures and to bring a bag to take items home! (You will be receiving a separate email from Cornerstone to purchase pictures online. No orders/payment will be accepted on site.)

Additional information:

- If your child needs to check out a laptop and/or WiFi Hotspot for distance learning, be sure to request those items needed in your sign-up if your child does not have access to a computer at home and/or you have no home internet access. You can get on the tech waitlist if you would prefer a school issued device but can start without one. <https://forms.gle/WSqVEYHVukMKMvRc9>.
- Any seventh graders who need to turn in immunization paperwork should bring the documents with them; be sure to indicate so in the sign-up. Nurse Jackie will be there to answer any questions.
- Pre-ordered 2019-2020 yearbooks that were not picked up last spring will be available.
- Students who still have textbooks/library books from last year should bring these to return. (Watch [this video](#) to learn how to view your library account for any outstanding items and/or cost of items. If you need to pay for any lost materials, please bring a check or exact cash amount).

At the appointment time, students will:

Step 1: Check-in at the library entrance on 14th Street.

- Pick up a Lincoln Binder Reminder (Student Handbook/Agenda book) and workbooks.
- If applicable, pick-up a pre-ordered 2019-2020 Yearbook here.
- 7th Grade Only: Turn in immunization paperwork as needed.
- Take student school pictures and pick up student ID cards.
- If no additional items needed, exit through the amphitheater gate.

Step 2 (only if needed): Pick-up requested Chromebook, headphones, WiFi Hotspots, and any textbooks needed in Room 504 in the 8th Grade area, next to the field/track.

- Laptops must be requested in advance through the sign-ups below.

- We encourage students to use the online digital textbook if they are able to access it and do not need to check out a textbook. **Remember, all students taking Spanish 1 or Lit Support **need to pick up a physical textbook**.*
- Exit through 14th St. Gate.

The following guidelines must be adhered to when on campus:

1. All campus visitors must wear a face covering. No one will be allowed on campus without a face covering.
2. Stay 6 feet away from other students and staff at all times.
3. Stay home if you are sick with a cough or fever. Visitors will not be allowed on campus if they show symptoms of COVID-19. Refer to the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health FAQ for the most current reported symptoms of COVID-19 and when to stay home. <http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/Coronavirus/docs/about/FAQ.pdf>
4. Clean your hands with soap and water or hand sanitizer after contact with frequently touched surfaces.
5. One student or parent per appointment time only to limit the number of people on campus at a time.
6. Follow the directives of the adults on campus with regards to where you should enter/exit campus and where you should stand while on campus to maintain appropriate social distancing.

Sixth Grade on Tuesday, August 18th

6th Grade Sign Up: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30E084AACAC2DA6F49-6thgrade3>

Seventh Grade on Wednesday, August 19th

7th Grade Sign Up: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30E084AACAC2DA6F49-7thgrade2>

Eighth Grade on Thursday, August 20th

8th Grade Sign Up: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30E084AACAC2DA6F49-8thgrade2>

You will receive additional communication from us with information on how to review your child's tentative schedule and how students will receive their GoogleClassroom codes so they are ready to start on August 24, 2020.

Thank you,

Lincoln Administration