



June 15, 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians,

The teachers, staff, administrators, students, and parents of the Diocese of Metuchen Schools have done an amazing job of responding to the current COVID 19 situation and once again demonstrated their resiliency and commitment. As we bring an end to the 2019-2020 school year, we celebrate the graduating class of 2020. While they have missed many important events, they are a part of a historical event that may help us be more humanitarian and noble in our future. Regardless of the past months events, these graduates are celebrated for their hard work and the perseverance they have demonstrated.

We are proud to have 492 graduates from the 4 Catholic high schools. These young people have earned over \$110.5 million in scholarships and 99% of students will be attending universities all over the world. As we say goodbye to the class of 2020, we wish you God's blessing and a future full of hope and prosperity.

For those who follow behind in elementary, middle, and high school, we thank you for your willingness to finish strongly! It has been a challenging ending to the school year, but I hope you have found ways to embrace the change to our typical routines. No matter what, we have all learned to adapt and be nimble in our response.

We often have little control over what happens to us in life and must be faithful to God's plan, but we have full control over how we choose to respond. Thank you, students, parents, and teachers for finding new ways to learn, teach, communicate, and grow.

As we prepare to close out another year and retool for the 2020-2021 school year, we know there are many questions and unknowns at this point and while we all share the same feeling of uncertainty, there are several things we know:

- Diocese of Metuchen School leaders will work diligently to prepare for the very best start to the 2020-2021 school year we can possibly offer our students and families. Your feedback is important, so your responses to the recent school surveys on remote learning are very valuable. Thank you to those of you who responded. As more details become available from the CDC, New Jersey Department of Public Health, and state leaders, we will take your feedback in tandem with suggested safeguards to provide for an optimal experience for students, teachers, and parents.
- Schools are working with local public school districts to utilize CARES Act money that was designated for our schools to enhance remote learning, purchase additional technology, provide professional development for teachers in blended learning, and purchase cleaning supplies.

- Schools will work all summer to prepare their buildings, utilizing recommended cleaning and disinfecting guidelines from the CDC and New Jersey Department of Health. We are also working to develop a plan for ongoing disinfecting strategies.
- Our schools will ensure all suggested safety guidelines are met for the protection of our staff, students, and families.
- Our schools will continue to communicate and keep parents and students informed as they progress over the next few weeks and months.

To aid us in answering many of the questions you have, we will be asking for parent input through focus groups. In addition, a school reopening taskforce, comprised of school leaders, teachers, and other experts is being formed to prepare for 2020-21.

In closing, I am so proud of the sincere commitment and compassion of our teachers and leaders. We recognize the challenge and have embraced this opportunity to personalize student learning and connect in different ways. We are exceptionally blessed with absolutely amazing students and we consider it a privilege to partner with families as we all work together through a unique time in our lives.

I leave you with a thought from St. Francis de Sales – “When you encounter difficulties and contradictions, do not try to break them, but bend them with gentleness and time.” Thank you for your attention, cooperation and flexibility during these rapid changes, as we continue to work to support you, our students and our faculties and staff. We look forward to seeing you face to face soon, but until then know that we are here working hard to ensure the very best for our students and community.

Sincerely,



Dr. Robert A. Lockwood  
Superintendent of Schools