Dear Solvay Families,

As we enter our 6th week of the COVID-19 school closure I wanted to provide you an update on a few items.

**Marking Period 3 Grades**

The COVID-19 transition to distance learning occurred a little over half way through the third marking period. We understand that the transition to distance learning was rapid and comes with many challenges. During this uncharted time we have asked teachers to focus on assessing students’ learning, considering the constraints the COVID-19 closure presents.

Based on teachers’ assessment of learning prior to and during the closure grades will be given to students and course averages will be reported on report cards. We acknowledge the difference between in person learning opportunities and distance learning and this difference is being taken into consideration when assigning grades. Please be assured that balancing fairness while providing feedback to students in this turbulent environment is incredibly important to us.

Marking Period 3 grades will be available via SchoolTool on April 24, 2020. If you need any assistance in accessing SchoolTool please reach out to me for support.

**Marking Period 4**

Marking Period 4 began as previously scheduled on Monday, April 20th. While we understand the COVID-19 closure has thrust all of us, including our students and teachers into new territory, the continuity of education and associated assessment of learning must progress within the constraints the situation presents.

Teachers are expected to offer learning opportunities for students during the closure. The distance learning opportunities offered by teachers are expected to be aligned to the appropriate grade level standards and curriculum. Your child should be receiving regular learning opportunities in all core subject areas and special area subjects. The intent of the learning opportunities is to facilitate students’ learning of new material in all areas while understanding that the pace of distance learning is not the same as face-to-face learning.

It is expected that students will engage in the distance learning opportunities provided by their teachers to the best of their ability. Teachers are expected to extend professional judgment and grace to students in acknowledgement of the difficult and unsettling situation that currently exists. In return we ask that students and/or parents/guardians reach out to teachers, building administrators, or guidance counselors if further support or clarification of expectations is needed. The district is committed to supporting all students during this time of distance learning.
Throughout the remainder of the closure teachers will continue to assign work, develop lessons, and assess students. SchoolTool will be regularly updated by teachers to support the documentation of students’ progress and assessment of learning. We will continue with the same grading system for the remainder of the school year, making minor adjustments as necessary to be responsive to the situation.

Regents Exams

As previously announced, all June 2020 Regents exams have been canceled. NYSED has made it clear that any student who was on track to graduate in June 2020 should be given every opportunity to graduate. Thus, the graduation requirements that students ordinarily must meet to earn diplomas, credentials, and endorsements have been adjusted so that students will not be adversely impacted by the absence of Regents exams. Provisions exist to provide exemptions for students taking a Regents course to receive the associated high school credit providing they achieve an overall passing grade for the course.

Our administrative team, guidance counselors and teachers are working diligently to review what the changes mean for each student and to ensure that students, who were on pace to graduate prior to the COVID-19 closure, continue to graduation this year. Guidance counselors will be contacting students and guardians to work through specific situations to maximize students’ ability to successfully continue to make progress towards graduation. It is important to note that in order for students to graduate or receive high school credit for a course he/she must still obtain an overall passing grade for the course. Despite the uncertain times and the transition to distance learning students must still engage in learning and work to demonstrate the achievement of course requirements.

Again, please feel free to reach out to teachers, counselors, Mr. Graves, or myself if you have any questions. Take care and be safe.

Sincerely,

Diane Hagemann

Diane (Dee Dee) Hagemann