



St. Mary's County Public Schools
Central Administration

Office of the Superintendent
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Dr. J. Scott Smith
Superintendent

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June 17, 2020

Dear SMCPs Families:

Thursday marks the end of the 2020 school year and I just wanted to say thank you for all your patience and support over these past three months. We have learned a great deal during this last quarter and so have our students. Our Continuity of Learning plan centered on students learning online through the modules in Edgenuity (secondary) and Imagine Learning (elementary), or by completing paper packets. It is a testament to each family that over 94% of secondary students have completed the assigned online units and over 91% of elementary students completed at least 10 units. Imagine Learning units will be open throughout the summer for students, and secondary students can enroll in optional [Edgenuity units](#) to assist in preparing for the 2020-2021 school year.

Our students have demonstrated extraordinary persistence and commitment to their learning through the platforms provided this spring. However, we know this experience was far from ideal. Quality instruction must be interactive and engaging - and this relies on face to face interaction. While we do not know exactly what the fall will look like, we are seeing positive trends and are hopeful that we will return to in-person learning in September. If we open traditionally, we will return to both direct and blended instruction in the classroom with the teacher supported by resources, materials, and interactions accessible outside the classroom. While we hope for the best, we must also plan for the worst. In the event that we are not allowed to reopen traditionally in the fall, we will be prepared to launch a virtual learning platform that will be much more interactive than what was quickly assembled for this last quarter of this school year.

The Board of Education approved the purchase of [Schoology](#), an online learning platform bridging the [home-school connection](#) that provides for both "live" (synchronous) instruction, as well as on-demand (asynchronous) instruction. Schoology will be our new comprehensive Learning Management System (LMS), allowing teachers to build content that can be accessed and delivered in the classroom, while also allowing students the ability to access it from home. For more information about Schoology, you can view [introductory videos](#) online, including specific ones for [parents](#), for [elementary students](#), or for [secondary students](#). It was our intention to spend a year rolling out this platform but we have compressed the timeline so we will be ready for September. There is much work to do and our time is limited.

Through the final weeks of June and throughout July, we will be working on a Safe Return to School Plan (SRSP) that is required of each county by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE). The plan will be developed with staff and stakeholders across the system and will include teachers, parents, and students. The plan must include several elements such as health and safety protocols, instructional planning, supports for students, transportation, scheduling, food service, as well as other

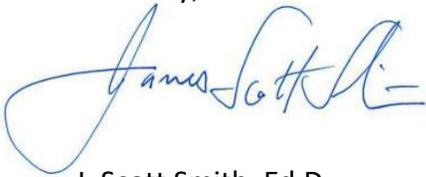
programmatic components such as athletics and performance groups. We will need your input as we move forward and ask that you complete [THIS SURVEY \(https://tinyurl.com/SMCPSrecovery2020\)](https://tinyurl.com/SMCPSrecovery2020). The information gathered will help the stakeholder group create a plan that meets the needs of SMCPS.

As we begin the work, SMCPS will be hosting a Virtual Town Hall meeting on Wednesday, June 24, 2020, at 4:00 p.m., which will be followed by our Board of Education meeting at 6:00 p.m. These events can be viewed online at www.smcps.org/streaming, or watched on cable Channel 96.

I hope that this summer keeps you and your family healthy and we all find some time to reset and prepare for whatever comes next.

Again, thank you for your continued support of SMCPS.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "James Scott Smith". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

J. Scott Smith, Ed.D.
Superintendent