

Checking in memo for 24 March 2020

Good afternoon Cougar families,

How are you holding up? I hope you are well and acclimating to this new and hopefully, temporary normal.

As we continue to navigate through all of this uncertainty, I am pleased to have learned that our families have created dedicated learning spaces for their students. Also, that you have set realistic expectations and a learning time frame that fits your schedule. We expect this to change as the demands for your job changes.

On our end, we will continue to co-teach with you, supporting you to the best of our ability. We too, will have realistic expectations of our students, and will be considerate of parent's work schedules. Due to the ever-changing circumstances we are currently experiencing, all of our teachers have communicated to you and your students that we will have no hard deadlines on assignments. This too, will continue. We ask that you continue to encourage your student to turn in what they can, when they can during this time. Our objective is that our teachers continue to teach, and our students continue to learn to the best of all of our abilities.

We realize many of you are working from home and juggling a lot. We also realize that some of you are not blessed to have the option to work from home and are currently experiencing a loss of income. If this is your situation, and you are concerned about upcoming FACTS payments, please contact me, and let's ease this concern immediately. I will be addressing this case by case together with the school's bookkeeper, Mrs. Chavez. What I can assure our school community, is that all of our students will finish the school year as Cougars, whether that be online, remote learning, in a traditional classroom or a combination of all of it. NO ONE will be withdrawn due to financial hardship. We will continue to be committed to your child's Catholic education and working together with you to achieve this.

We have heard from so many of you through videos, emails and pictures of your children learning in their new environments. Please keep these coming! We share them as a staff, and it is incredibly uplifting for us to see the students.

For those of our families that may have a student on Student Success Plans (SSP) for a diagnosed learning difference, I will be touching base with you to ensure you have been able to continue the accommodation plan to best assist your student.

In an effort to continue some sort of normalcy, we will be continuing Positive Principal referrals. They are as follows:

Andie Woodcock for the virtue of mercy, charity and hope ~ Dillion Tran for mercy and hope. Kindness is a hot commodity right now. Your kindness has made an impact. Thank you.

Through these incredibly challenging times, I am so proud to announce, St. Mary's Catholic School has been chosen by the Albuquerque Journal as, TOP WORK PLACES 2020 as a small business. Top Workplace winners are determined by employees and captures their feedback on what matters most about work culture. Workplace Survey measures 15 culture drivers organized into four themes or, "imperatives." Top Workplaces measures using a seven-point Likert scale, from "Strongly Disagree" to

“Neutral” and “Strongly Agree.” We learned of this award yesterday and celebrated by virtual hugs and a big applause at our Zoom staff meeting. We refer to them as Zoooomba meetings!

I have attached a video from one of our teachers that is incredibly funny and just shows the great lengths our teachers go to reach their students. Enjoy. <https://youtu.be/ZQLvfqoEgXw>

One thing I know with certainty, is when there is crisis, there are also opportunities. Let us continue to seize these opportunities for our students' learning advantage. We are all looking for structure in this unstructured world. The best way I know to find this structure is to seek His guidance. Philippians 4:6 reminds us, to "have no anxiety at all, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, make your requests known to God". May we all have patience as we wait patiently for His timing.

May peace and calm be yours,

R. Maestas-Sanchez, St. Mary's Albuquerque, Principal