



GRANT SCHOOL ~ SANTA MONICA

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CHRISTIAN FUHRER - PRINCIPAL

April 3, 2020

Dear Grant Families,

I am hoping this letter continues to find you all well and that you and your families are remaining healthy during this unprecedented time of crisis. We continue think about you daily and hope that you and your children are able to stay positive, active, and connected to your teachers.

Although it certainly seems longer, we have just completed three weeks of distance learning. While we know this process has not been perfect for everyone we will continue to ensure all students have the ability to participate in the learning process. Thank you for your patience and understanding during this time. Please read the information below to learn about Grant's updated Distance Learning Plan which will begin after Spring Break:

- On March 17th teachers provided optional independent learning packets for 3 weeks of learning for the anticipated 3 weeks of school closure, and have been reaching out via technology platforms like Zoom for some social-emotional learning. As it has now been confirmed that all SMMUSD schools will be closed for the remainder of the year (see Dr. Drati's 3/26 letter), beginning April 20th fully-digital learning will occur for the last 7 weeks of the school year. In order to maintain the "Safer at Home" order and keep everyone safe, printed hardcopy instruction will not be provided; all instruction will be digital.
- This week, Grant distributed more than 130 Chromebooks to students whose families requested access to technology devices for distance learning. We are continuing to provide Chromebooks to our students on an as-needed basis. Please contact your teacher or Principal Fuhrer if your student needs use of a device for distance learning or complete this form: <https://bit.ly/SMM0420>. We understand that families who have devices may be strained to share between students and parents working from home, and we will also accommodate devices under this circumstance. We are working on obtaining hotspots for families unable to secure internet service and we have listed offers of free internet services on our community resource website. Free internet is available to SMMUSD students via the organization Wander at Wander.net with code SCHOOL2020 or call (323) 457-2949.
- Teachers will have "office hours" each day to answer any questions from students and parents. Your teacher will let you know when her office hours are each day. Teachers and staff will continue to be available via email and will respond within 24-48 hours on business days. You can also leave a voicemail, which will be sent as an email voice message to staff.



SANTA MONICA-MALIBU UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Numbers and extensions are available on the [school website](#). We will return your call with 2 business days. Please be aware that as we are working remotely, phone calls from staff may appear as “blocked” numbers or Google Voice numbers.

- By Sunday evening of each week teachers will provide parents with a week-at-a-glance schedule that identifies all instruction and assignments. It is important to note that distance learning is not a minute-for-minute replacement of the school day. Rather, it is an altered and abbreviated schedule that reflects the realities of school closures, social-distancing, the “Safer at Home” order, and other emergency orders intended for everyone’s safety and well-being.
- In addition to email, teachers will utilize a communication platform to share information such as Google Classroom, Zoom, Class Dojo, Padlet, or See Saw. If you need assistance with the platform, please reach out to your child’s teacher. We will be careful to consolidate information as to not overwhelm parents with communication during this challenging time. We ask that you please stay connected to your child's "classroom". It will be an ever-shifting landscape as we continue to develop our educational program.
- Instruction and assignments will be included for each subject area (reading, writing, math, social/emotional learning, PE, science, social studies, art, and music). Grant’s partner organizations PS Arts, SMMUSD VAPA, and PE Coaches will be collaborating with teachers to share lessons. The amount of time for each subject area will be approximately 20 - 30 minutes per day depending on the subject area or task. For the well-being of our students, our goal is that the amount of screen time (time a child is in front of a screen for any live, recorded, or independent learning) per day will be no more than 2-2.5 hours. In regards to teaching any new content, teachers will select the grade level content that will be the most comprehensible digitally, and will be the most beneficial preparation for the next grade level. Teachers will also focus on building core foundational grade level knowledge and skills in content areas. Special Education IEP services, 504 Accommodations, and Intervention will continue to be provided. Please keep in mind that schedules for Grant’s specialized programs (Preschool, Transitional Kindergarten, Specialized Academic Instruction, and Social Skills) may incorporate different components and elements into their instructional program.
- The teacher may provide instruction in a variety of ways such as: teacher recorded videos (asynchronous learning), live sessions via platforms like Zoom (synchronous learning), opportunities for guided practice and collaboration, and/or independent work such as assignments and projects. This allows teachers the flexibility to determine what works best for their students to ensure instruction is meaningful and accessible. Teachers will provide at least 3 live interactive learning experiences a week. This live learning will occur during regular school hours 8:30 AM - 3:00 PM, may be individual, small group, or large group, and may focus on various subject areas including social-emotional learning.
- Grant’s primary goal is the emotional health and overall well-being of our students, and we will keep this in mind as we collaboratively develop and provide lessons. Our intent is that the instruction we provide will give a sense of routine, continuity of learning, and positive social interactions.

- We understand that this is a very difficult time for families and that many factors may impact a student's ability to access instruction at specific times. Therefore, we are working hard to be flexible by offering some assignments and learning that can be done at your convenience. For additional resources for families, please visit the SMMUSD Educational Resources page at <https://www.smmusd.org/Page/5437>.

FINAL DETAILS:

- Spring Break: April 4-19, 2020: We hope that all families, teachers, staff and administrators can take the coming two weeks to relax and refresh as much as possible, while adhering to the "Safer at Home" order. Please understand that our team will not be responding to emails or inquiries during the break, and will return ready to educate students and support families as we continue to navigate this challenging time.
- The updated distance learning instructional program will begin Wednesday, April 22nd.
- To support our teachers in the development of lessons that incorporate the various online platforms, we have provided two student work days, Monday, April 20th and Tuesday, April 21st, where students will work independently (asynchronous learning) while our teachers plan collaboratively.
- Teachers will be holding a live "morning meeting" with their classes on Monday, April 20th and Tuesday, April 21st before their collaboration time. The exact times will be communicated by each grade-level.
- These two days **will not** be pupil-free days. Students will still be expected to engage in learning activities provided by their teachers.

I would like to highlight the remarkable efforts of our staff! This has been incredibly complex work and they have risen to the challenge as we knew they would! They will need your continued support during the remaining weeks of school.

I would like to also remind our families that all SMMUSD facilities are closed for the duration including after normal school hours and weekends. Please do not visit the school campus.

We understand that this is a time of hardship for families both financially and emotionally. The SMMUSD Student Services team has organized many helpful resources to assist our community members. These resources are posted in [last week's Gecko Gazette](#). If you know of a family in need of community support please contact Bilingual Community Liaison Florencia Rams or me. She can be contacted by frams@smmsusd.org and I can be reached at the email below.

Finally, I wish to make a plea to all of our parents and guardians. **Please be easy on yourselves.** Most of you have been thrown into the role of "teacher" without any training. We know this is difficult, we understand, and are sympathetic. We are here to assist you with this challenge. Please reach out to us. I am available to answer any questions you may have or just to hear about your struggles and successes. Remember to visit the school district's [website](#),

Grant's [website](#), and all of our social media accounts ([Facebook](#), Instagram: grantgeckos_smmusd, and Twitter: @GrantGeckosSMM) for regular updates and information. The Gecko Gazette will be my primary method of communication.

We are all in this together.

GO GECKOS!

In Friendship and Health,

Christian Fuhrer
Principal
Grant School
SMMUSD

Ph: 310-450-7651 (please leave a message and I will return it as soon as possible)
Email: cfuhrer@smmusd.org

Best regards,



Christian Fuhrer
Principal
Grant School
Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District