

Answering Methacton High School Questions for the End of the 2019-2020 School Year

In recognition of the many changes that have taken place during the closure of schools, please see the following reference guide to help navigate these uncertain times:

- **Academic Information**

- **Asynchronous Learning/Synchronous Learning:** There are generally two forms of instructional delivery that can be conducted through virtual learning, asynchronous and synchronous. Asynchronous instruction provides the use of resources and assignments disseminated by the teacher that the student can complete according to their respective schedules. As an example, our teachers are using the asynchronous delivery model by assigning reading and reflecting activities using content-based resources, viewing content-specific videos, assigning creation of authentic work products related to academic subject areas, and administering limited assessments such as quizzes. Our teachers are approaching instruction on a chapter or unit basis, which allows work completion to be spread out over a week or more with staggered due dates so that all work is not due at the same time. The use of synchronous instructional delivery requires students and teachers to participate at the same time. For example, a teacher would schedule students for a specific time and the teacher would communicate while students watch and respond. While our teachers are predominantly using the asynchronous delivery method, we provided guidelines to our teachers so they could begin to engage in synchronous interactions with their students, if needed. A teacher looking to leverage the synchronous delivery model will require a consent to participate form to be completed for each subject area prior to your child participating. Please be advised that participation in synchronous instruction is not mandatory for any student should his/her teacher elect to engage in this manner. One of the most essential components of providing an education during this unprecedented time is the importance of ensuring equity in all tasks. While all measures are exhausted in the brick and mortar environment, it is difficult to apply this same standard to a virtual instruction environment. In light of this, most instruction for the remainder of the year will be in an asynchronous manner. Additionally, we do not expect, in most cases, for student work in the home to exceed a maximum of three hours per day, a determination that was made to provide equity for all students.
- **Marking Periods and Final Examinations:** The third marking period concluded with the six days of virtual instruction preceding spring break. Report cards are available for parents to view on the PowerSchool parent portal. Fourth marking period began with virtual instruction on April 14. The school year will officially conclude on June 12. Final examinations will not be administered for this school year. Final grades for yearlong courses will be calculated as follows: each of the four marking periods counts as 22.5% of the final course average with the midterm exam counting as 10% of the final course grade. Final grades for second semester courses will be calculated as follows: Third marking period and fourth marking period will each count as 50% of the final course grade.

- **Advanced Placement (AP):** As per guidance from College Board, all AP exams will be administered virtually for 2020. Please visit the College Board Advanced Placement website for resources, specific information about modifications to the tested content, and specific testing dates and times:
<https://apcoronavirusupdates.collegeboard.org/students>
- **SAT Administration:** College Board has cancelled all SAT administration through July. Please visit the College Board website for updates on testing in August and throughout Fall 2020: <https://pages.collegeboard.org/sat-covid-19-updates>
- **Student Expectations:**
 - All students must complete **daily attendance**. The school district continues to have responsibility for ensuring student engagement, even in a virtual learning environment. Daily attendance documents were created and disseminated to all students. The student needs to click one box per day on the attendance document to indicate their participation. In the event that a student does not complete the attendance form for a period of two or more days, parents will receive a contact via email and potentially a phone call from attendance staff.
 - It is anticipated that students will engage in approximately three hours of schoolwork per day. Teachers will provide instruction and assignment that take into consideration this anticipated time frame. This expectation is inclusive of most academic courses. The exception to the three hours per day standard involves some Advanced Placement courses. The curriculum and timing of instructional delivery for AP courses is determined by College Board. Summative AP exams administered by College Board begin on May 11, thereby accelerating the time in which AP teachers must complete the delivery of content that may appear on the test. In light of this, some AP courses will include additional content dissemination and student work between now and the scheduled May AP exam for that course.
- **Teacher Office Hours:** Teachers established 1.5 hours of office hours per day with major subjects spread out so the hours do not completely overlap. These dedicated office hours times were created so students would be aware of a time when they could receive either immediate or timely feedback to questions or concerns, as well as assistance with understanding the content and associated assignments during the day. Teachers continue to prepare daily for instruction, grade assignments, and answer student and parent communications throughout the regular school day.
- **Resolving Issues:** As we progress forward together, please encourage your child to contact his or her teacher via email or through Google classroom communication if your child has any questions or concerns about content and assignments, or any difficulty understanding the virtual learning platform. If issues persist or are unresolved, parents are encouraged to contact the respective teacher by email. If the issue continues to be unresolved or is more complex in nature, parents should contact the student's school counselor and/or grade level

administrator. Teachers, school counselors, and administrators will work to be understanding and flexible in addressing issues and concerns. Please see the following email contact information for school counselors and administrators:

- **School Counselors (assigned by alpha of student last name):**

- Last Name A-CL: Mr. William Peck wpeck@methacton.org

- Last Name Co-G: Mrs. Roxane Henning rhenning@methacton.org

- Last Name H-Ll: Mr. John Midgley jmidgeley@methacton.org

- Last Name Lo-Pa: Mr. Dave Ruminski druminski@methacton.org

- Last Name Pe-Sr: Mr. Robert Howard rhoward@methacton.org

- Last Name St-Z: Mrs. Cindy Hartson chartson@methacton.org

- **School Administrators**

- Principal: Dr. Jason Sorgini jsorgini@methacton.org

- 9th Grade House Principal: Mr. John Smink jsmink@methacton.org

- 10th Grade House Principal: Dr. Paul Spiewak pswiewak@methacton.org

- 11th Grade House Principal: Mr. Dan Bontempo dbontempo@methacton.org

- 12th Grade House Principal: Dr. Karey Kochenour kkochenour@methacton.org

- Supervisor of Secondary Special Education:

- Dr. Jamie Gravinese jgravinese@methacton.org

- **Access to the Building:** At present, shelter in place and distancing guidelines do not allow for students and parents to access the Methacton school buildings. The abrupt conclusion of in-person schooling on March 11 created a situation where many student items were left in the school building while other items such as library books, textbooks, etc. are in students' possession in their homes. Please know that the school district is formulating a plan for resolving this issue. Some students also have medications in the nurses' office. School Nurses Mrs. Cheryl Peiffer and Mrs. Kathy Thompson will be contacting parents to schedule a time for medication to be picked-up at the school. Additionally, Dr. Paul Spiewak is organizing opportunities for student athletes, organized by spring athletic team, to pick up any athletic equipment that was left in team rooms and locker rooms. Dr. Spiewak and the spring team coaches will communicate directly with the student athletes.
- **Events and Refunds:** The abrupt conclusion of in-person schooling led to the cancellations of many scheduled events. The process is underway to provide refunds for any event that has already been announced as cancelled e.g. field trips, Senior Banquet, Film Festival, etc. Based on the social distancing guidelines already announced by the Montgomery County Commissioners on the rescheduled Prom on May 29 will also need to be cancelled. Information regarding refunds will be forthcoming.
- **Yearbooks:** Jostens, the company that publishes the MHS yearbook, has generously agreed to direct mail the 2019-2020 yearbook to the homes of all students who purchased a book. This will take place around Memorial Day weekend. Also, the teachers and student staff of the yearbook will be working on a special spring supplement that will be mailed over the summer.

- **Class Specific Information:**
 - **Underclassmen (11th, 10th, 9th Grades):**
 - **Course Selection 2020-2021 (Juniors, Sophomores, and Freshmen):** The period of course selection for all underclassmen for the 2020-2021 school year took in February and March during individual meetings between students and school counselors. Please be advised that those course selections can be viewed by parents through the PowerSchool parent portal. Parents are asked to please view these selections and, if there are any questions or concerns, contact your child's school counselor no later than May 6.
 - **Summer Acceleration and Remediation:** Methacton School District will be offering our summer school acceleration and remediation courses. These courses will be offered at an individual self - pace within the months of June and July. Our course offerings are listed on the Methacton High School website with the cost associated with each class. A final will be required at the completion of the course at the end of July. Timelines, course offerings, tuition costs, and other important information can be found on the high school website. <https://methacton.revtrak.net/methacton-high-school/rw-mhs-summer-school/>
 - **Waiver Policy:** Any underclassmen who requests to schedule a course for which he or she does not meet the prerequisite requirements has until the completion of the third marking period to achieve the required prerequisite grade based on the Waiver Policy. Please visit the Program Planning Guide tab of the MHS webpage for additional details. **All requests for waivers must be submitted to Department Coordinators by May 6, 2020.** <https://www.methacton.org/site/Default.aspx?PageID=1136>
 - **Class of 2020**
 - **Decision Day Video:** We are planning to put together a presentation that includes pictures and/or short videos (10 seconds) of all the Seniors describing their plans after graduation. We want to know if you are attending a college or university, enlisting in the military, or joining the work force. Please send us a picture in your college, military, or work gear, or a short 10-second or less video describing your choice so we can make a video capturing all of your important decisions. If you don't have related apparel, please make a sign with your information or just record the information on your video. Some colleges have extended their respective decision periods. If you aren't sure exactly where you are going or what you are doing, tell us where or what you are deciding amongst. Please complete the [Senior Decision Form](#) and include your name, pictures and/or videos. This video will be released later in May so please get your submission in as soon as possible.
 - **Yard Signs:** In recognition of the desire of the entire Methacton Community to celebrate the accomplishments of the Class of 2020, yard

signs are being purchased for each member of the class. These yard signs will be individually delivered to the homes of the graduating Seniors sometime in June prior to the anticipated graduation day. We are grateful for the generous support of the Board of School Directors and the leadership of the MHS Post Prom for supporting this community-wide celebration. Any purchases of yard signs already made through the Post Prom fundraiser will be refunded in the coming weeks. **Please be advised: If a parent determines that he or she does not give permission for the commemorative yard sign to be placed on her or his property, please email Mr. John Smink at jsmink@methacton.org by May 15 and your child will not receive a sign.**

- **Senior Superlatives:** Senior Superlatives voted on by members of the Class of 2020 would have been announced during the cancelled Senior Banquet. Plans are underway to release that information to students.
- **Class of 2020 T-Shirt:** Senior Class T-Shirts were also to have been distributed at the Senior Banquet. These shirts will be distributed during the first week in June together with items related to participation in the graduation ceremony.
- **Awards Ceremony:** The awards ceremony originally scheduled for May 20 will take place virtually. All students who are being recognized with an award will receive information about viewing the virtual ceremony in advance of the May 20 date.
- **Graduation Ceremony:** Plans have been developed to hold a “drive-in movie” style graduation ceremony on Thursday, June 11, 2020 at 4:00 PM on the campus of Arcola/Skyview. Specific plans will be shared directly with Seniors and Senior parents and posted on the MHS webpage.
- **July/August Photo Opportunity:** As long as social distancing provisions allow, dates will be established in July and August when Seniors and their families can come to the school campus and take photographs in designated areas of the building as well as in other areas of the campus such as the stadium and field. Specific dates and times will be announced in June once summer guidelines have become more clear.
- **Senior Class On-Campus-Picnic August:** As long as social distancing and large group gathering provisions allow, a luncheon/picnic will be planned for the members of the graduating Class of 2020 on Wednesday, August 5, 2020 on the campus of Methacton High School from 11:00 AM to 2:00 PM. Lunch will be served in the MHS cafeteria beginning at 11:30. This will be an opportunity to share and sign yearbooks, meet with members of the class, pose for pictures, and gather for a last time as a class.