



University Liggett School

Dear Middle School Families,

I hope this letter finds you safe and well in these unprecedented and challenging times. As we move forward together, trying to find as much joy and normalcy as possible, I am grateful to work in a community full of such caring, compassionate, thoughtful individuals. Over “spring break,” we have been planning for our transition to remote learning. We’ve connected with and learned from colleagues in independent schools who have launched their own remote learning, participated in distance learning modules through the [Global Online Academy](#), and held virtual faculty and administrative meetings. As we continue preparing for our virtual return to school, which will begin next **Tuesday, March 31**, here are a few details to help students and families prepare:

Remote Learning

Zoom will be the primary tool for connecting teachers and students remotely. The Zoom app is free and students should download it on their device prior to Tuesday’s virtual return to school. You can [click here to download the app](#) and take a tour of Zoom. If you have difficulty, [please visit this resource page](#) to find answers to common questions. Also, Nick Provenzano (nprovenzano@uls.org) is available to help you with any technical questions. Students should “log in with Google” and use their uls.net accounts.

Each teacher will have a unique meeting ID for their classroom. These links will be posted on the middle school resource page on the student portal (formerly MyLiggett) for students to access. Teachers will also post their class meeting IDs on their classroom pages on the portal (formerly MyLiggett).

Before remote learning commences, students should set up their virtual learning space in their house — ensuring that they are comfortable, have adequate lighting, and good wifi connection. If you have difficulty with your device or internet access, please reach out to me.

Schedule

Students will follow their daily schedule each day. Using the teacher’s classroom ID, students will log in at the beginning of each class period for the day’s instruction. The virtual class period will be a mixture of synchronous and asynchronous instruction. As we launch remote learning, expect each class to begin with synchronous experiences of varying lengths. After these experiences, teachers will be available throughout the 75-minute class block to answer questions and provide assistance.

Our advisories will meet on Tuesday and Thursday, as they normally do, and we will attempt to have weekly morning meetings. Here is a sample schedule:

| | |
|-------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 8:30-9:45 | Class 1 window of instruction |
| 9:45-10:00 | Advisory/break/morning meeting |

| | |
|---------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 10:15-11:30 | Class 2 window of instruction |
| 11:30-12:40 | Lunch break |
| 12:40-1:55 | Class 3 window of instruction |
| 1:55-2:05 | Break |
| 2:05-3:20 PM | Class 4 window of instruction |

When we return on March 31st, we will run a slightly altered schedule (students know it as a Y day), so we can check in with each grade level in the morning prior to launching our virtual school day. We will send that schedule on Monday.

Materials pick up

Student materials from their lockers will be bagged, labeled and placed under the canopy by the pickup line at the front entrance to the school. Materials will be organized by advisory. **Middle school materials will be available for pickup this Friday.** To abide by social distancing regulations and be as safe as possible, please come at the designated pick up time, listed below, and plan on leaving as quickly as possible. Know that we have communicated with local authorities, and they have supported our plan.

| Pickup time - Friday 3/27 | Last name |
|----------------------------------|------------------|
| 9:00 - 10:00 | A,B,C |
| 10:00 - 11:00 | D,E,F |
| 11:00 -12:00 | G,H,I |
| 12:00- 1:00 | J,K,L |
| 1:00 - 2:00 | M,N,O |
| 2:00 - 3:00 | P,Q,R |
| 3:00 - 4:00 | S,T,U,V |
| 4:00 - 5:00 | W,X,Y,Z |

Trip cancellations and suspensions

All April class trips, including the Spanish A and Chinese A language trips, have been cancelled. The 6th grade trip to Pleasant Lake has been suspended. We are working with the facility to explore options to take this trip at a later date.

As the situation progresses, I will update the status of May trips and events in the weekly middle school newsletter.

Connecting

Our next MS parents association meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 7 at 8:45 a.m. We'll use this time to hold a virtual meeting via Zoom, so we can connect, share experiences with remote learning, and gather feedback. I will send a meeting link to all parents on Monday the 6th.

Again, thank you for your grace and support as we navigate these trying times together. Certainly, remote learning will be a learning experience for all. With the right mix of patience, empathy, compassion, and communication, we can emerge from this difficult situation as an even stronger, more resilient community.

Warmly,

Rob