Dear Port Jervis Learning Community,

I am hopeful that all in our learning community are doing well and remaining healthy.

Remote Learning
As we come to the end of the second week of our remote learning plan, by all indications, student participation has steadily improved. We understand that this is a large transition and that there are going to be hurdles and obstacles. At no point should any of our students feel overwhelmed. Our teachers are doing an amazing job of being creative with the assignments, with the delivery of instruction, with assisting our students and their families overcome any of the challenges they may encounter. Every member of the administrative team, the faculty and staff, we all have the same goal - continuing the educational process as much as possible. Please let me know at any point when any of you encounter anything that is hindering the learning process and our team will address the hurdle or obstacle you are facing. For the time being, this is the new normal, and each of you have our full commitment.

Report Cards
Specific to report cards, our district is taking the position that the marking periods will remain as in line with the original schedule as possible. That being said, the third marking period officially ended on April 3, and the teachers and students had approximately 2 weeks to fill in any missing assignments and process the grades. At this point the grades have been submitted and report cards for our students will be mailed home early next week. The grades are available in ParentPortal on SchoolTool if you do not want to wait for the mail.

Grades
I have received a few emails regarding grades, particularly for the secondary schools. As I shared in the last phone message, we are moving forward with our traditional grading structure. We are aware that the modality of instruction and learning has changed. We are aware that the assessing of students will look differently, but I stand by the decision that our students should have the opportunity to excel, to earn grades based on their effort, performance, and hardwork, in the best manner possible given the circumstances. To repeat the overall message, our teachers will use flexibility and compassionate grading, and I am certain our students will continue to rise to the occasion. To further reiterate, there is no substitution for the live, in person interactions between a teacher and student - this is all being taken into consideration. I have the highest respect and faith in our entire faculty and the end results will speak for themself and student recognition will remain intact.

Class of 2020 Signs
I want to applaud the incredible number of individuals involved in delivering Class of 2020 signs to each of our senior’s homes yesterday. While there are no words to describe the wide range of emotions that our seniors are feeling, we are hopeful that this gesture showed that your teachers and everyone in the schools, the Board of Education, PTA, etc., we are all thinking about you and we are continuing to look at all possible ways to ensure you have as much of your high school experiences as possible. If we need to, and based on the latest statement by Governor Cuomo earlier extending the stay at home date to May 15, it appears we will need to, we will be creative in how we can provide each of you with the recognition and experiences you each have earned...
and most certainly deserve. This is not how any of you envisioned the spring of your senior year, and it was not our vision, either. We will figure this out in the same manner and we will get through all of this, together.

In closing, I want to make sure our learning community is aware that there is a Board Meeting this evening. The meeting will be conducted through Google Meet. If one is interested in watching the live stream, there is a link on our website to YouTube streaming site. As always, a recording of the board meeting will be on BoardDocs, also found on our website under the Board of Education tab.

I wish each of you the best and please know that you can contact me, your child’s teacher, or building principal with any issue you are encountering. Be well and thank you for the continued support and patience.

Sincerely,

Mike Rydell