

**From:** Alan Addley <dps@darienps.org>

**Subject:** Message from the Superintendent of Schools

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September 11, 2020

Dear Families,

First, and most importantly, today we observe the 19th anniversary of the September 11 terror attacks. In doing so, we remember everyone who lost their lives on that tragic day and the countless families impacted. We also give thanks for the sacrifices of the first responders and honor them by recognizing the first responders who today continue to serve our communities.

I hope this message finds you well as your family transitions into the new school year. The staff and students have done an extraordinary job getting ready and adapting to the new practices and protocols. While the start of this school year is different, the energy and excitement of the new school year is visible across all schools. We have ten school days remaining in the hybrid model. Assuming the trend in health and safety metrics remains consistent over the next few weeks and we do not encounter unanticipated circumstances, we look forward to a full in-person reopen on September 29th.

The time spent in the hybrid model for a few weeks continues to be necessary and a helpful transition into making our final preparations for a full return to school. It is helping staff and students reacclimate to the new school setting while simultaneously allowing us to refine our new health and safety practices, and technology systems. For example, lessons learned from hybrid models are resulting in the exploration of expanded physical spacing options for students during lunch in the in-person model.

Since teachers are providing instruction to students at home and in class simultaneously, we ask for your understanding that they will have limited ability to troubleshoot technology in real time. For issues with passwords or hardware (cameras, keyboards) please contact your school's Media Center Specialist. For all other issues, contact the helpdesk: <http://support.darienps.net> and a member of our technology team will respond as quickly as possible. This link can be accessed on the front page of the District website. Here are other [contacts](#) that you might find helpful when you have questions about health & safety, special education, facilities, transportation, food services and special education. Additionally, the [Chain of Communication](#) link on the District website can also be used for submitting questions and suggestions.

Again, thank you to our K-2 parents for accommodating the change in the remote learning schedule this week as we delayed the live components of instruction for our youngest learners. K-2 students had additional opportunities this week to practice accessing their learning in preparation for Monday.

If you have not had a chance to visit the [reopening page](#) of the District website, you may find much of the information there helpful. The FAQ page continues to be updated and past communications are archived in one place for your reference.

Meals will be provided for free and reduced lunch eligible students on remote learning days. Meals should be ordered by emailing Meghan Bendish at [mbendish@darienps.org](mailto:mbendish@darienps.org) and include the name of student(s) receiving meals. Please also note any allergies in the email. Meals should be picked up between 10am and 11am at the bus circle of Middlesex Middle School. A member of our Food Service Staff will be there to place your meal in the trunk of your vehicle.

Elementary principals will be sharing additional communication to parents today on a variety of topics. As we prepare for another week of instruction, we appreciate your patience and understanding as we work to support our staff and students in the remote and live settings.

Sincerely,

Alan Addley, Ed.D.