

**Community Conversation: Lessons Learned from the Pandemic**  
**Junior High Students**  
**March 3, 2021**

**What one word describes how things were different this year compared to other years?**  
(highlighted items were mentioned multiple times)

Hectic	<b>Stressful</b>	<b>Hard</b>
<b>Confusing</b>	Interesting	<b>Chaotic</b>
<b>Challenging</b>	Sporadic	Weird
Tense	Random	Distant
Terrible	Obstacle	
Precautionary	Boring	

**What made learning harder this year (and what could be done to make it better)?**

VLO: Zooms were optional so not many people attended. Miss the social interaction and I learn better when I can talk to others. If they were mandatory, I would be more disciplined.

Using Chromebooks the entire day is hard.

I wish we could use paper for assignments; it helps me be more focussed.

Online first semester and in person second semester: I had more work when VLO than when I am in person. It is less stressful in person.

Hard to balance online homework. Math is much easier using paper for assignments.

Felt pressure and stress of homework, not learning as much. Miss not having connections with teachers when remote.

I think teachers assign more homework online and spend less time teaching -- not covering material as much.

Last year teachers taught more.

In person we can ask questions and get answers right away -- hard to wait for 1-2 hours for a response.

Block scheduling

Is a challenge

Too much homework

Confusing and overwhelming

With only having a class a few times a week, it is harder to catch up when absent due to quarantining.

Hard to stay focussed for 90 minutes

Lots of knowledge being covered in 90 minutes / multiple lessons at once / hard to take in that much information at once. Then lots of homework.

Six hours a day on a screen is too much. We are teenagers and go home and need screen time on phones and video games too.

Too much screen time is stressful and hard on the eyes.

Like that due dates seem to be longer than in the past.

Like that we are now more aware of spreading germs.

Teachers are putting more assignments on Canvas -- that helps when you have to miss school.

Would be nice to have a layout on Canvas of what was covered in class and links to videos and resources.

Would like more time management information.

I seem better organized now with less binders and paper.

More teachers using Canvas helps me be organized. Teachers are letting you know what is coming up more this year.

More video lessons would be helpful -- esp for math.

Teachers seem to be more understanding this year about late work.

Teachers are asking more about how we are doing.

For lunch we sit with the class we just came from for safety reasons. We should keep doing this so people don't feel left out and have to sit by themselves.

Teachers are doing a good job.

Maybe not so much homework; it is hard to find time for our non-school lives.

Not a lot of teachers used the calendar on Canvas in the past. So much better now that they do.

Like teachers augmenting their lessons with online resources.

I am losing more sleep due to so much homework. Sometimes I am doing it just to get it done. Not getting anything out of it.

Too much homework; a lot of it seems to be busy work.

Getting fresh air and taking our masks off is nice -- helps me concentrate.

Lakota has done a great job keeping us safe with mask breaks, vaccinating the staff and lots of hand sanitizing stations.

Social interactions were missing, just do this directions vs conversation

90 minute blocks, lots of sitting and no break, hard to focus on all the content without practice of work

What/when/how to turn in assignments

Social distancing in group work...desks spread more than 6 feet, hard to feel group in interaction

Harder during quarantine, pressure to do all the work on time as assigned. You would look on Canvas and may or may not have directions.

Spent most of time learning by myself, less teaching happening

Staying home, being cut off from others

A lot of stress, just do work but no real teaching of subject

Not a lot of work given last Spring, now overloaded and due dates on top of each other to rush through

Less resources offered than in Spring

### **Matt's closing comments**

- Really liked the one-word descriptions with many common themes.
- See that we need to look at block days, the amount of homework (too much), and remote learning days.
- Several in my group also noted issues that arise when you are quarantined.