



**SANTA FE INDIAN SCHOOL**  
Mid School Academics

1502 Cerrillos Road

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Phone: (505) 989-6393

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March 24, 2020

Dear Middle School Parents/Guardians and Students,

I want to first say how much we miss our students. The decision to close school left us all with a heavy heart, but the concern for our students' and their families health and well-being outweighed any uncertainty we had. The staff at SFIS are still very committed to ensuring continuous learning for our MS students and have been working diligently at finding the best way to support this goal.

Last week SFIS staff from various departments assisted in organizing and delivering Chromebooks/laptops to students so they could receive instruction from their teachers through Google Classroom. In the second week of closure we are understanding the challenges many of our students have with accessing technology. In order to provide an equitable learning environment for our SFIS students we have developed an SFIS Continued Learning Enrichment Plan which focuses on the following goals:

- keep our students engaged in the learning process,
- ensure students receive credits for promotion and graduation but are not penalized, and
- support the physical and mental health and wellbeing of students throughout our school closure and during this world health crisis.

Through this plan teachers from the content areas of reading, math, language arts, science and social studies will be producing lessons via Google Classroom for those who have Internet access and paper-based packets for those students without Internet access. As we do our best to provide assignments to keep our students actively engaged in the learning process, please monitor their stress level at home. If you notice your child becoming anxious with the amount of work or with the current world circumstances, please make adjustments to ease your child. In addition, please contact your child's teacher via email or call the school number and leave a message.

We know you have many questions and we want to reassure you that we are doing the best to serve our most important assets, your children. We will continue to reevaluate each action we take and ensure that it meets the best interest of our MS students. We will also continue to keep parents, students and communities informed of any changes or updates. Attached to this letter you will find Frequently Asked Questions.

If there is one thing I have learned from this experience it is that even a pandemic, that forces us into social isolation, cannot get in the way of us keeping our students' minds moving forward. Again, thank you for your patience during this time. Life will get back to normal and until then, we send many blessings your way.

Sincerely,  
Paula Chavez-Salazar  
Middle School Principal & Middle School Student Living Director



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**Frequently Asked Questions for SFIS School Closure**

***My child left their school books and other personal belongings at school, when can we come get their books and belongings?***

Campus is closed to all non-employees until further notice from the Superintendent, and this includes access to dorm rooms. Before the majority of the staff left, we collected as many school books as we could from students who were absent and sent those out to the different tribal communities or by mail. We have limited staff at the school and will not be able to collect any more materials at this time. We will be in contact when the campus opens and parents and students can access campus and return to school to collect belongings.

***Why are students not going to be graded on work completed during the school closure?***

Since some students left their school books and materials behind in their dorm rooms and other students live in communities where their entire tribe doesn't have access to the internet, we cannot reasonably expect all students to be able to access and complete assignments. Tribal libraries and other places where students might go to use wifi are closing and we cannot require students to work outside or in cars. We considered ordering hotspots through Verizon, however, we cannot guarantee that all students who need them would be able to use them in their homes and the devices wouldn't be available until April 25th.

***Why were students assigned Chromebooks if they are not receiving grades for the work they are completing?***

We believe that even without grades, it is important that students be able to continue their learning in whatever manner they can. Students were assigned Chromebooks to provide access to educational opportunities if they have access to the internet. We were counting on tribal libraries, but have come to learn that access is limited and libraries are closing or others have lost their internet connections.

***Do students still have to do the work that is assigned on Google Classroom or that is being mailed?***

We strongly encourage all students to continue engaging with the enrichment assignments and opportunities being offered online and through the paper packets that will be mailed out soon. We want students to keep their minds engaged in school work so that when we return, we are ready to pick up where we left off. We also want parents to support their students at home and understand that students may be struggling with the sudden change in their lives. We believe that even without grades, it is important that students be able to continue their learning in whatever manner they can. Teachers will be offering feedback to students on the work they complete so they will still be actively engaging in their learning.



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*If a student turns in late work that was due before the school closure, can the student still get credit for that assignment?*

**Assignments that were due on 3/12/20:** If students turned these assignments in, teachers must assign a grade and enter that grade in NASIS. If students were absent on 3/12/20 and didn't have the opportunity to turn in the work or had other extended absences that week which prevented them from turning in work, teachers will not enter any grades or grades of zero (leave blank or mark "Exempt").

**Assignments that were given and/or due the first week of closure 3/16 - 3/20:** If students turned these assignments in, teachers should provide some participation points/grades (this will essentially be extra credit) and do not enter grades of zero for students who did not turn in assignments (leave blank or mark "Exempt").

**Learning enrichment assignments/activities beginning 3/23 - 4/8:** Teachers will not give credit/points or grades but will provide feedback on Google Classroom, or for students receiving paper packets, on the phone or through "snail" mail.

Students are encouraged to work with their teachers if they would like to request to turn in assignments that were due prior to 3/12/20.

*How will the students know if they will be promoted to the next grade level?*

We are working hard to ensure that students who are on track to promote to the next grade level will not be penalized due to the school closure.

*Is there going to be a promotion ceremony?*

We understand the significance of this day and what it means to our students, families and school community. However, this will depend on the New Mexico State Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham's executive orders and the orders of our Pueblo Governors, Superintendent and Board of Trustees. Although we do not have a solid answer right now, we will reevaluate this question and pose some options once we gain a better direction from our tribal, state, and national leaders.

*Will school be closed for the rest of the semester?*

We miss our students very much and we know this is not easy. We certainly hope that we can return as planned on April 20th, but we also recognize that orders and guidance are changing day-to-day and much is left unknown.

*How do I get a hold of my child's teacher?*

You can email your child's teacher or call the MS Office at 505-989-6393 and leave a message.

*Who does my child contact for Technical Support?*

Technical Support will be provided for students, staff 10am to 5pm Monday – Friday.

- E-mail: For student support e-mail [helpdesk@sfis.k12.nm.us](mailto:helpdesk@sfis.k12.nm.us)
- Text: [helpdesk@sfis.k12.nm.us](mailto:helpdesk@sfis.k12.nm.us) for a call back. Include your name and phone number.
- Call: The IT Office (505) 989-6377

For help with SFIS Online Password Changes: Bridget Love: (505) 795-0611