

FHPS Video Transcript, Forest Hills Forecast, June 26, 2020

Hello Forest Hills families and staff members. Thanks for tuning into the sixth edition of the Forest Hills Forecast. I'm here at Eastern Middle School, and today I want to speak with you about just a couple of things: one sticking with our game plan and the impact that we'll have for reopening school in the fall; talk a little bit of an update and thank you for our meal program; and finally, a candid conversation.

Now our game plan. Every great coach has a game plan. And as a community we've got our game plan, it's to continue to keep this virus at bay. As we come into July, as we have the tradition of family reunions and outdoor cookouts and barbecues, the temptation may be there to slip in our game plan, to think that we've got this thing beat, and we have to guard against that. We have to continue to be vigilant with all the things that we've been doing to keep this virus at bay and we can do it. So let's watch out for those things. Even though we may not see the virus, it's still out there. We need to keep that at bay. As a Michigan fan, too many times I sat in the stadium and watched the Wolverines winning at the end of the third quarter, only to be disappointed when they were at triple zeros at the end of the fourth quarter. You Michigan State fans know exactly what I mean. So we want to make sure we're sticking with our game plan, as an entire community, all throughout these weeks to come, and don't let the great weather or that barbecue tradition or family reunions allow us to let our guards down. We can do those things. But let's make sure we're adapting to our new normal.

Let's make sure we're continuing to wash our hands regularly. Avoid touching our nose, eyes, and face with our hands. Wear a mask or face covering when indoors and around large groups of people. And continue to social distance when we're around people that aren't part of our regular family. Cover your sneeze or cough with your elbow or a tissue. Clean and disinfect commonly-touched surfaces. Avoid close contact with people who are sick. And if you are sick, stay home. And if you have a fever, go get tested. Testing is widely available right now.

We want to make sure we keep this virus out, so our students can come back in to school on August 24th, and all throughout the fall, five days a week for full face-to-face learning. We can do that, but we may need to sacrifice a few things in order to keep that goal primary of all of our students in our schools for face-to-face learning. Some of the things that we're looking at that we may have to think about differently, things like field trips to areas where there's large groups

of people. So for example, a Greenfield Village or Capitol visit in Lansing, those are things that we may need to postpone and sacrifice going forward. Even thinking about visitors coming to our schools, we may need to think differently about people coming into our building, so we can keep that common group of teachers and students, that consistent group in our schools, and not bring other people in. We'll have more time to discuss more of these details, but my point is our primary goal is five days a week face-to-face learning in our schools, and if we need to sacrifice a few other things in order to protect that, we will do that. So, more information to come.

On to our meal assistance. I am so grateful for everyone who has taken part to help with food distribution. We're winding that up here this week. And as a Friday, we've delivered over 205,000 meals. I am so very thankful and grateful for our cooks, and our food service workers, and everyone involved with that. If you need additional food assistance throughout the summer, please look to our website and some links that are connected to the SchoolMessenger message that accompanies this Forest Hills Forecast message. Again, thanks to all of those involved: 205,000 meals. That's outstanding.

And finally a candid conversation. In fact, this is a conversation I've had with many many people and that's the point I want to make. The conversation has to do with how people are struggling with this new normal, struggling adapting to change and the change that's been created because of this pandemic. I want you to know that everyone I talked to has shared, sometimes in hushed tones, how they're struggling from time to time with this. And that's the point, we're all going through this together and you're not alone. If you've experienced some hardships, some emotional struggles, the uncertainty of job upheaval, the cancellation of traditions and things that we look forward to, all of this takes a toll. It takes a strain.

But what I know can make a difference, is to make these things discussable. Don't keep them all inside and think that you are the only one. We're all perhaps too good at masking the struggles that we go through. But I can assure you, I've had these struggles. Loved ones of mine have had these struggles, neighbors, and friends, and coworkers. So this is very typical right now. And what we need to continue to do is to reach out to talk with one another to share the things that are going through us and the feelings that were having, the struggles that we may be experiencing. We will get through this and we will get through this together. Our country, our nation, our community, has endured hardships before, and it's always made easier when we bond together and do this together. So feel free to reach out to talk to one another. We have

resources that are available through our school district, in our community, but there are resources right in our own neighborhoods, in households, and sometimes, it's just sharing what's on our mind and what's bothering us at this moment that can be very helpful, going forward ahead.

This next week coming up, July, the first week of July, we'll be celebrating Independence Day. I will wish you a great holiday, but we'll also be taking a week off from the Forest Hills Forecast. So we'll be back on July 10th. I look forward to seeing you then. Until then, stay safe. Stay healthy. Take care.