



Maritime Academy Charter School

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January 3, 2021

To All Teachers, Staff, and Students:

I want to start by wishing the entire Maritime Academy Charter School Family a Blessed and Safe New Year. We have come a long way since March of 2020. The plan that was implemented was to continue as much of our school educational, social, sports, activities and fun programs in place as could be accomplished with safety. Because of your help and teamwork, we were able to accomplish that goal as exemplified by an Extraordinary and Joyous High School Graduation Ceremony and an Extraordinary and Joyous Move Up Day Ceremony.

We begin 2021 with much of the same challenges that we had in March of 2020; however, we are so much more prepared to deal with COVID-19 health and safety issues and restrictions. With the help of Ms. Feria, Mr. Wilson, Mr. Saunders, Mr. Hewitt, Ms. Bonanni and our Teachers, Specialists, Counselors, and you, our Cadets, we have refined our Continuity of Education Plan. We have had 10 months of practice with our teachers using the various platforms for them to present Educational Material to you using your chromebooks. Our Assistant Principal Matt Wilson has refined and given us the very best Health & Safety plan in the Philadelphia School System.

On January 4, 2021, we will return to Virtual Learning for our Entire School. Do your best, participate and come to virtual school. On January 11th, we will begin hybrid in-person learning for 1st and 2nd grade, special education, and cadets needing extra help at the High School, Elementary and Middle School. Again, do your best, participate and come to school and if in virtual school, come to school virtually. Your Administration and Leadership teams will regularly assess Health & Safety issues and as soon as can be safely permitted, seek to open hybrid in-person learning as early as safely possible for some additional grades.

We hope to open as many sports activities as possible starting on January 4, 2021. I will immediately address this with Mr. Schultz. We will continue to encourage your participation in our music program with Mr. Killian and Mr. Ahern and our Art Program with Mr. Lint. I would like to have a special virtual presentation by our Sea Shanty Chorus and will seek out a program using as a model the late renowned Sea Shanty singer Burl Ives. I invite each of you to send me your ideas to keep the Maritime spirit alive and well despite the many challenges. You know me, if it makes sense and will be a credit to our school and cadet family, we will do our best to implement the recommendation.

On January 18th, we will virtually celebrate Dr. Martin Luther King Day. Let us remember his legacy of truth, service and humility. He expressed many words of wisdom and kindness: *"Never, never be afraid to do what's right, especially if the wellbeing of a person or animal is at stake. Society's punishments are small compared to the wounds we inflict on our soul when we look the other way."* When you see injustice, speak up and don't look the other way. The truth and kindness is always the best offense and ***the truth and kindness is always the best defense.***

This will be a day of Mourning and the Celebration of the many Lives of those who we lost as a result of the COVID Pandemic. These include a Mentor, a person who we respect for their kindness, family and friends, but I want us to think of those in our Country and throughout the world family. I will invite you to record a remembrance of a Mentor, Kind Person, Family member or Friend who we can remember by celebrating their lives and accomplishments. On the day of Remembrance and Celebration on January 18, 2021, we will view one another's expressions of loss and honor **those persons by remembering their kindness and love.** This will be a Solemn but Celebratory day. Let us know of a service project that we can accomplish safely, socially distancing, and without unreasonable risk.

I will close with the plan for our New School at the site of the former St. Vincent Orphanage. We have a Vision and Plan that has been presented to the Charter School Office and the Philadelphia School Board. We are looking to create a K-12 educational campus and learning center for our maritime families and cadets. The timing is more likely at or about August of 2023. That may seem far off, but in reality is very short considering the planning and the "to do" list before a shovel gets put in the ground. It is a matter of the highest priority to bring you a New School Campus and Center of Learning and Maritime Excellence.

Thank you for your support and many expressions of kindness to me; always remember to ***"Be Rich In Kindness"***.

Eugene Mattioni, Esquire
Chief Executive Officer