



# GILBERT PATERSON MIDDLE SCHOOL

CONQUER THYSELF, THEN CONQUER THE WORLD

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March 25, 2020

Dear Parents / Guardians / Students,

We hope you are well on your way to logging into Microsoft Teams using our instructions that were sent out yesterday. They are available on the website as well.

<https://gp.lethsd.ab.ca/home/news/post/teams-distance-education-login-procedure>

Our goal is to make the process as streamlined and efficient as possible and to not add stress to families and staff. We know we will try some things and they won't work as planned. We will keep making adjustments in the delivery and content of student learning as we move forward. We will also be contacting students and families this week that do not register for Teams to see what assistance they need in their programming.

Starting next week on Monday March 30th, we will deliver full core class content to students through the Teams platform. Students will receive their Math, Science, Social and Language Arts instruction and assignment on Monday mornings at 9AM. At this time, teachers may also set up a time for group conversations or instruction during the week. Teachers will contact students through teams, email and possibly phone depending on where they are working from during the week as well. Core class work times as set out by Alberta Education are as follows:

- Grade 6 – 5 hours per week (that is government requirement for elementary grade 6, our middle school hours will be a hybrid of the 5-10 hour guideline)
- Grade 7/8 – 10 hours per week

These guidelines will be monitored as we go – teachers will need to see it in action and make adjustments. Students can access and complete work in a way that works for your family schedule of shared devices, childcare and the overhaul upheaval of our daily routines. We suggest parents and students look at what works best for their own situation and plan out a schedule for the week to help students with routine. With the variety of situations facing each family, we do not feel it is our place to make your schedule. Students can also contact teachers and ask questions during the week through Teams and teachers will also set up dedicated times for this type of dialogue and feedback with their classes. Work will be submitted to the teacher by Thursday of the week for feedback and comments. We are excited about this type of formative assessment dialogue between teacher and learner.

Students will also be provided with weekly activities or extensions that they can engage in if they choose in areas such as physical activity, arts, music, cooking, technology, mindfulness, and connectivity with others to help foster positive growth and coping skills during this time. Our Paterson Wellness Team has also attached information on how they will connect with students and offer support.

The government has mandated that all students will pass to the next grade in Alberta schools. We have completed term 2 and their current core and option grades will stand at this point. We continue to look at the most effective way to assess for learning that considers the platform, student needs and our current situation. Until we know what it looks like for students and teachers, we have not decided as middle schools what this new “term 3” final assessment piece will look like. Watch for more information after Easter.

Teachers will be receiving student feedback regularly, but we also welcome parent feedback. Please give the process a couple weeks unless there are glaring issues. We welcome feedback through calls and emails. Please note regular spring items like 2020 fall registration, option choices, yearbooks, and other year end procedures will be tackled in priority order once efficient learning has been established. We will push out that information through the website, synervoice and Teams

Lastly, I ask that you go over this information with your child again. They will also receive it again through their teacher on Teams. We want to ensure our Teams platform is safe, appropriate and learning focused. All team activity is monitored by the teacher and administration and adherence to these expectations will be taken seriously. Please do not hesitate to report any concerns to your child's grade level administrator.

**Please take time to review the important user information below for all students and parents prior to signing into Teams.**

The Microsoft Teams platform is to be used for educational purposes only. The expectation of all students is to maintain a safe, appropriate and effective learning environment. It is not a chat room to message friends unless engaging in a classroom discussion directed by the teacher or asking for help or clarification of an assignment. All Teams postings and activity are monitored by the teacher and administration and inappropriate language, content or behavior of any kind will not be tolerated and will result in actions that may include removal from the Teams platform. Thank you for helping us create a positive learning environment.

Thank you again for your support during this transition.

Sincerely,  
Darryl Christiansen - Principal