



Saint Paul
PUBLIC SCHOOLS



COMO PARK

SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

May 4, 2020 Newsletter

From the Principal

Greetings Como Families,

“The only source of knowledge is experience”—Albert Einstein

As a school community, neighborhood, district, city, state, country and world, we are living through unprecedented times. This experience is like none other and we are learning together. As the Como team continues to plan, collaborate and learn together; new techniques, new strategies, and new platforms are being implemented in order to engage learners in this unique learning reality.

In many of my previous communications, I encouraged you to continue to give us feedback as to how things are going as you, your child, and your family navigates this new learning platform. Managing Schoology, reading, listening to, and responding to the sheer amount of communication coming from the school can be overwhelming. When we receive information from our students and families, we are working toward solutions. We are all teachers and all learners.

Our Como team is learning a ton about use of technology and it will transform teaching for years to come. We are also learning from your feedback on needed adjustments to make instruction more accessible now. The important message here is that we need you, need your feedback both positive and constructive in order to continue to support learning now and into the future.

We see families as our partners in their child’s education and that is more important now, than ever before. Communication is key in a strong partnership. Please reach out to your child’s teachers with any questions, reach out to the support team for any emotional, social or mental health support and please don’t forget you can email me with any questions, celebrations or feedback. My email is stacy.theien-collins@spps.org

In partnership,

Stacy Theien-Collins



2020 Graduation

Saint Paul Public Schools high school graduation ceremonies will be held virtually for the Class of 2020.

After engaging with school communities about graduation, SPPS acknowledges and recognizes the desire and clear preference for in-person events to honor 2020 graduates. Unfortunately, these in-person options are not recommended due to risk. It would be difficult, if not impossible, to maintain the statewide orders for social distancing and also host large events with many people. Additionally, SPPS considered postponing commencement ceremonies to August. This option is not recommended due to the unpredictability of COVID-19 responses from State, City and local venues.

SPPS will host virtual graduations for the Class of 2020. Additional details about what information we will need to gather from students for our virtual graduation ceremonies will be shared as soon as possible. The virtual graduation ceremonies will allow us to honor our Como Park Senior High School traditions with speakers and other elements of the program. **Como's graduation will be on June 1 at 5:30 PM. For our students graduating summer of 2020**, SPPS will use the same format for summer graduation in August 2020.

Detailed information about the distribution of diploma covers, caps, gowns and other adornments will be shared with families soon. We certainly share in the disappointment our seniors and their families are experiencing. We understand this isn't an ideal way to celebrate our graduates, but we ask for your patience and understanding as we celebrate our seniors in the best way possible.

There is no way to replicate the traditions of a high school graduation ceremony, but we are doing everything we can to make this a special time for everyone involved. We want our seniors to know that we, as a community, support them. We see what they're going through, and even though their senior year looks different than anyone expected, they are still seniors, and **this is still a time to celebrate their accomplishments.**

Aspirations in Computing Awards 2020

The National Center for Women and Information Technology (NCWIT) offers an annual awards program, recognizing young women, genderqueer, and non-binary high school students for their technology interests, skills, and accomplishments. Since 2013, Minnesota has been a state affiliate, allowing high school students in Minnesota the opportunity to be selected as national and/or state award recipients. This year, nearly 4,700 students from across the nation applied for the award.

State Honorable Mention	Chiamaka	Chijioke
Certificate of Distinction	Hamdi	Aden
Certificate of Distinction	Nimo	Mohamud



Rising Star	Way	Htoo
Rising Star	Ridwan	Abdi

Chiamaka Chijioko

Senior at Como Park Senior High School, St. Paul Chiamaka is a State Honorable Mention recipient. She first fell in love with technology in her 7th-grade Computer Programming class. In the summer of 2019, she interned at Optum Technology, where her passion for technology grew further after coding for and testing a self-driving car. Chiamaka founded the first Futurist Academy group in her school, a club whose mission is to create interest about technology in youth. She hopes with this club she can help others find the same passion for technology. When she's not planning activities for her club, Chiamaka tackles a load of AP and college classes, volunteers for the technical crew in her church, plans events for Student Council, and practices music for her choir or band groups. She plans to double major in Psychology and Computer Science and minor in Linguistics on a Pre-medicine track. She then plans to attend Med school and become a Psychiatrist. Chiamaka is an enthusiastic learner who enjoys spending her free time reading and writing poetry.

S-Term

There have been no decisions made regarding summer term classes for credit recovery. We will update our families as decisions are made.

The Counselors' Corner

1. Sophomores and Juniors: ACT is offering FREE digital learning:

Free Kaplan Live Online ACT Test Preps, ACT Academy (students can enter their ACT scores and it will customize lessons for you in area that you need to improve), student and parent resources, and more! Please visit: <https://www.act.org/content/act/en/covid19.html>

2. Want to retake the ACT? Register for the next ACT test! Please visit www.act.org for upcoming test dates, test costs and fees, register for the ACT, etc. If you qualify for free or reduced lunch, you may qualify for a fee waiver. Please contact your counselor.

3. **FAFSA Friday-Seniors, have you completed your FAFSA application?** If so, you have a chance to **win a \$25 gift card** of your choice by simply submitting your Student Aid Report (SAR) to Ms. Leedra. Once you've done so, you'll be put in a drawing and a winner will be announced every Friday at 1pm. If you haven't completed your FAFSA, no worries because you can still win by completing your FAFSA today! Send your SAR to Ms. Leedra at lyang.ach@stpaul.k12.mn.us. See attached flyer.



4. Como Scholarship is Open! Applications due May 15

The Como Scholarship is live! If you are a Como senior seeking a degree in a STEM field, this is the scholarship for you! Three Como seniors will have the chance to win this renewable \$3,500 scholarship. All you need to do is fill out the google form below and include your written personal statement and your Student Aid Report from FAFSA! The deadline for the Como Scholarship is be May 15th, 2020 at 12pm CST. For more information check your email, Schoology, and/or email Ms. Leedra at lyang.ach@stpaul.k12.mn.us. Click on link to apply:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfms3OL3bx-LRymvh2mcDx66tkmeX4P8XxDhSswJy4YZM-1Qg/viewform?usp=sf_link

5. It's important to stay healthy mentally-It is still very important that you take care of your mental health. Stressing over school work, maybe about college decisions, personal issues, or our currently situation with COVID-19....it is a lot to process! Stress can affect our bodies in ways people don't realize, such as manifesting itself into physical programs within out body. Below are links to help relieves some of that stress:

Mindfulness Meditation: https://youtu.be/6p_yaNFSYao

Relaxing Sounds #1: <https://youtu.be/qYnA9wWFHLI>

Relaxing Sounds #2: <https://youtu.be/Y6QTdvbu0uI>

Volunteer Opportunity

Did you know that required school documents can be translated upon request or interpreters made available?

For more information please call Alexis Gray-Lawson at 651-744-4493 or email alexis.gray@spps.org

Meal Access Plan

Please go to the following website for meal delivery and pick up information:<https://www.spps.org/Page/38722>

iPad Damage and Replacement

If your iPad is damaged or needs to be replaced please report the issue by emailing or calling Saint Paul Public Schools Technology Services:

- **Email:** familysupport@spps.org
- **Call:** 651-603-4348 from 7 a.m. – 8 p.m.. Please leave a detailed voicemail and your call will be returned as soon as possible.
- [iPad Troubleshooting](#)



If you are having problems with your iPad, you may also contact your student's teacher or school: School Directory. After a report is made, a member of the SPPS technology support team will contact you about replacement options to continue distance learning in Saint Paul.

Volunteer Opportunities

Do you know that we have Parent/Community opportunities at COMO? If you would like to volunteer your time with our students or want more information please contact our Parent Liaison Alexis Gray-Lawson at Alexis.gray@spps.org. Go Cougars!!

SPPS COVID-19 Information Translations

[PLAN DE RESPUESTA CORONAVIRUS \(COVID-19\)](#)

တၢ်တြီၤ **Coronavirus (COVID-19)** တၢ်ဆူးတၢ်ဆါ
အတၢ်ရဲၣ်တၢ်ကျဲၤ

<https://www.spps.org/Domain/16210>

[QORSHAHA SPPS EE LOOGA JAWAABAYO KORONOFAYRUSKA \(COVID-19\)](#)

[KEV NPAJ RAU TUS KAB MOB CORONAVIRUS \(COVID-19\)](#)



Stay Connected Como Park Announcements

GOOOOOOOOOOOOD MORNING COMO PARK! Our DAILY ANNOUNCEMENTS are going virtual. Mr. Eric Erickson will be producing our daily announcements using apple clips and will post them on youtube. They will also be posted in Schoology, on our website, twitter and facebook.

Social Media



Stay up to date on good news and upcoming events - Follow Como Park High School on Twitter [@ComoPark_HS](https://twitter.com/ComoPark_HS)



www.facebook.com/Como-Park-Senior-High-100564780025476/



COMO PARK SENIOR HIGH DISTANCE LEARNING SCHEDULE

As you know, Governor Walz closed Minnesota schools from March 16-27 for educators to plan for distance learning. Our Como team has been preparing to best meet the academic, social, and emotional learning needs of all our students. Teachers have been planning for distance learning, testing out technology that is new to them, and preparing to welcome each of you to this new platform. Distance learning started on April 6 and will continue through May 4th, the current stay at home order.

High school class periods will be split every other day. Alternating days will ensure students can manage their workload and teachers have time to plan and provide quality learning and feedback. Periods 1 - 4 will meet on Monday/Thursday and Periods 5- 8 will meet on Tuesday/Friday. Wednesdays will be used for supporting and working with students, teacher collaboration and meeting times, etc. *Here is a description of our distance learning plans.*

What will distance learning look like?

Distance learning will look different from class to class and day to day. Here are a few examples. A teacher may simply assign a task for students to complete, ask them to watch a video, participate in a virtual meeting, or engage in an online discussion.

- Most of the distance learning activities will not be time-specific, meaning they do not need to be completed at a specific time of the day. Our model is what is referred to as asynchronous, there is flexibility for when students log in and complete the assignment. Due dates will be communicated with the assignment.
- Teachers will be available during the scheduled class time for instruction, small group and individual support. Additionally, virtual meetings may be scheduled at a specific time. These will be communicated to students in advance. Being in the virtual meeting will help improve student/teacher connection, but attendance will not be required.
- Students will be given assignments for each course through schoology.
- Teachers will document attendance as students complete a daily check in through a new course called **Daily Connect M-F**), for Como, that will be your advisory group.
- Assignments will be submitted electronically.

How will students, teachers and families communicate?

- Teachers will post daily lessons by 8:30 a.m.
- Teachers will be available by email and voicemail throughout the typical school day 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. **Email** will be the best way to connect with your teacher. Teachers will be checking voicemails and returning phone calls as needed. As teachers may be working from home, their returned calls may come from an unknown number.

What does a student's schedule look like for distance learning?



- During distance learning, each course will assign work two times a week (Monday/Thursday or Tuesday/Friday).
 - Periods 1, 2, 3, and 4 on Monday and Thursday
 - Periods 5, 6, 7 and 8 on Tuesday and Friday
 - Teachers are also available 3:00-3:30 for student specific support and questions.
 - On Wednesdays, staff will be completing meetings, checking in with students and providing more specific student support.

As we've said, the time students complete assignments is flexible. That said, virtual meetings will typically occur according to the schedule below. Families can choose to follow this schedule as they are able, but it is not required.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8:30-9:45	Period 1	Period 5	8:30 - 11:00 Staff / Committee / Department Meetings	Period 1	Period 5
9:45 - 11:00	Period 2	Period 6	Students have independent work time	Period 2	Period 6
11:00-12:30	Lunch/Advisory	Lunch/Advisory	Lunch/Advisory	Lunch/Advisory	Lunch/Advisory
12:30 - 1:45	Period 3	Period 7	12-2:55 Office Hours: Teachers available to conference with students	Period 3	Period 7
1:45 - 3:00	Period 4	Period 8	Students have independent work time	Period 4	Period 8
3:00 - 3:30	Office Hours: Teachers available to conference with students				

