



School Community Newsletter — January 15, 2021

1066 Front Street, Manchester, New Hampshire 03102

Phone 603.316.1170

www.sparkacademynh.org



Dear Parents & Friends,

We have the NH PETAC group to thank for a grant award of \$25,000 which has made it possible for us to purchase a laser cutter and two 3-D printers to assist in the growth of our technology program. PETAC works to support the development of pre-engineering and technology programs in middle schools, secondary schools, and career / technical education centers in New Hampshire. Although we already have access to so much equipment through the generosity of Manchester Community College, these purchases expand our capabilities and enhances our ability to include technology-based projects throughout our curriculum.

We have also benefited from a generous grant made available by the NH Department of Education for schools as they make the best of a tough situation with remote/hybrid learning. As you might imagine, the need for resources to provide both the software and hardware for our Spark's classes is considerable to begin with. The need for these resources has increased tremendously to allow our students hands-on experiences while learning at home.

We very much want to thank both the PETAC Organization and the NH DOE for all they have done to enrich our program as we navigate through historic times! Without the help of these organizations, Spark's remote and hybrid models would certainly look different.

Our meetings with our second year students continue as they and their parents discuss with us their student's interest in MCC classes for their third Spark year. This information is assisting us as we explore the possibilities for them in the MCC curriculum. Every student graduating from Spark will do so with the full Advanced Manufacturing Program that is the backbone of our school. However, our students will have room available in their schedules to add other MCC classes when and where MCC department heads and the MCC coordinator for early college find it is appropriate to do so. Our goal is to open up as many possibilities for our students and add a solid MCC experience to their high school transcripts.

I have met today with Dr. Brian Bicknell, President of MCC, to discuss with him when and how Spark will return to campus. We have some additional information to gather and will meet once again next week to chart a date for Spark's return to campus in hybrid mode. I appreciate your patience as we work together to implement our return in a prudent manner. I share the concerns that many of you have expressed regarding remote learning. It has been a necessary journey; however, much is missed without at least some in-person time. I will be including our faculty's perspective this Tuesday regarding the time and manner of our return to hybrid learning. In the meantime, I would very much appreciate hearing from all of you through email as to your thoughts on when we should return and how we should do so. Please email me at denismailloux@sparkacademynh.org. Please know that your thoughts very much matter to us.

Please be sure to contact me directly at denismailloux@sparkacademynh.org if your immediate family has experienced Covid infection. To date, I am unaware of any Spark families that have had to deal directly with Covid infection, but my current data may need an update. This information is important regarding our reporting to the NH Dept. of Healthy and Human services and for my discussions with Dr. Bicknell regarding the possibilities for in-person learning on the MCC campus.

Our last virtual open house seemed to be effective thanks to the support of our board, admissions committee, families, and faculty. Thanks to all of you who were able to place Spark signs in your front yards and businesses. Please contact Sue McGowan at susan.mcgowan@sparkacademynh.org should you be able to help us out with a sign of your own to advertise the upcoming open house.

Applications are coming in, and we are scheduling Zoom enrollment meetings with incoming families. Please continue to help us contact prospective Spark families by letting them know of our upcoming virtual open house on Tuesday, February 2nd, at 6:30. Registration for the open house can be found on our website calendar.

Once again, thank you for your patience as we all work together on behalf of our kids!



Denis Mailloux
Director