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igniting your purpose!

August 23, 2019

Dear Parents & Guardians,

I want to begin by thanking everyone who was able to join us last night for our first Spark Academy Family event. I also wish to thank everyone at Manchester Community College for being so welcoming to our school. Dr. Susan Huard, President of the College, has established a culture at MCC from which Spark will benefit tremendously. Thank you, Dr. Susan!

We will be posting photos from last night on the Spark Facebook page.

As we look forward to welcoming our students for their first day on Wednesday, September 4th, it is worthwhile to go over a few items once again. We will be following regular school hours on the 4th, 8:00 am to 3:00 pm. The Manchester School District has informed us that bus transportation for the first week of school will be free. Booklets to purchase subsequent school bus rides will be available here at Spark during the first week of school. If you are a Manchester family, you should be receiving a postcard from the Manchester School District with information as to your neighborhood's morning pick up and afternoon drop off location. Remember that all bus students will transfer from their neighborhood bus to the Spark bus at Cardinal LaCroix Academy on Belmont Street in the morning and then do the reverse in the afternoon, so they need to make note of their bus numbers!

The Spark entrance is located at the rear of the college. Parents driving their students to Spark should make their first (sharp) right as they approach the main building, travel between the Welding & Automotive buildings, turn left to travel around the back of the building, then turn right to arrive at the upper parking lot designated for Spark. The bus lane around the perimeter of the parking should be marked by then. Parents may park in the spaces located in the middle area of the parking lot. We will have staff at the entrance and in the parking lot to help direct you during our first week of school. We will also have staff outside the Spark entrance to greet our inaugural class. The first few days of school are always an "interesting" experience as everyone begins to establish a new routine. In very little time, however, it will all seem natural. Parents should try to get their students here by 7:40 and should plan on picking students up by approximately 3:15.

#### Opening Day:

The day will begin at 8:00 with everyone gathered in room 300. Throughout the morning, everyone will be together as one group to get to know each other a bit more with "ice-breakers" before going over some important procedures such as:

- collection of required school forms - especially medical & emergency contacts
- the locations of restrooms,

- locks for the lockers which we will issue to the students,
- locker neatness,
- Spark emergency procedures in concert with MCC emergency procedures,
- and a review/discussion of the Parent/Student Handbook.

Selecting cohorts will be the next item on our agenda. I have received a couple of requests for students to be paired up with those whom they already know. I can certainly understand the comfort level that comes with having a familiar face in one's cohort. However, I'm debating as to whether an important aspect of the Spark experience will be missed if the cohorts are selected around that concern. There is something to be said about learning to work closely with people who are new to us. Also, I am considering whether we change cohorts at the semester change as a way of furthering the social skills and collaborative nature of the Spark experience. I would truly value your thoughts on this and invite you to email me at [denismailloux@sparkacademynh.org](mailto:denismailloux@sparkacademynh.org) to share your perspective.

After cohorts are designated, each group will have the opportunity to name their cohort after an innovator/inventor/discoverer who has changed the course of human history. A list will be provided to the students, but suggestions will definitely be entertained.

We will have lunch together outdoors if weather permits. After lunch, we will have an abbreviated class schedule. Dismissal will be at our regular time, 3:00 pm.

We have purchased notebooks and four-color pens for our students. We will have these items for sale at cost: \$1.29 per notebook and \$3.00 per pen — rounded to an even \$8.00. The notebooks are in four different colors so that students may designate a color to each class so as to avoid bringing the wrong notebook to class. It is not a problem if you have already purchased notebooks and pens, regardless of notebook colors. However, if you wish to have your student purchase those items with us, \$8.00 is all he or she needs to bring.

Thursday, September 5th, and Friday, the 6th, will be regular school days.

We will be sending you a plethora of school forms next week. Brace yourselves. :)

This is a good deal to remember as this is your daughter's or son's first day of high school. It is also the first day for Spark Academy. Please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns you have. We want your student's transition to Spark to be a great one!

Sincerely,

Denis Mailloux  
Director