



December 14, 2020

MBS Family:

Mountain Brook Schools will make first semester exams optional for all students at Mountain Brook Junior High and Mountain Brook High School. Here is what you need to know.

- Students who choose to take an exam will still follow the existing exam schedule.
- Students who wish to take an exam but cannot attend school should communicate with their teacher to develop a plan.
- Students who choose NOT to take an exam should notify their teacher as soon as possible and understand their final grade will be the average of the first and second nine weeks' grades.
- Students enrolled in ACCESS courses should follow their exam schedule as designated by their instructor.

This weekend we experienced a significant increase in our district's positive coronavirus case count and close contact situations, even when following the new public health quarantine guidelines. We jumped from 36 positive cases among students, faculty, and staff on Friday to 50 positive cases this morning. We also have over 135 individuals currently in quarantine.

While we know that students and teachers have invested a great deal of time preparing for exams, we believe it is in the best interest of all to make this adjustment. The number of people away from the classroom this week would create the need for extensive exam rescheduling in January and present numerous obstacles for students and teachers.

Given the circumstances, we want to provide every family with the opportunity to make the best decision for their student. We understand that all of our students are managing unique situations and may benefit from taking an exam. As always, our teachers are committed to working individually with each student. Ultimately, we want to allow you the option to choose what is most beneficial for your student.

Please know that we did not intend to pivot so close to exams. Even with rising numbers in recent weeks, we felt confident in our ability to accommodate students and remain confident about offering exams. We also still believe that school is one of the safest places our students can be; however, it became evident this morning the prudent decision is to make exams optional.

Thank you for your continued patience and flexibility.

Sincerely,

Dicky Barlow, Ed. D
Superintendent
Mountain Brook Schools