

Dear SMS Family...

We have officially finished the April-May segment of the academic session 2020-21, and we are ready to break off for summer vacations, a break that provides students and teachers time to relax, introspect and reinvent themselves.

This year, as we know, has been different for all. The world has been gripped by a pandemic – COVID-19 – and our nation went into a lockdown mode even before the start of this new academic session, creating unprecedented and desperate times for all – students, teachers and parents. All were suddenly exposed to a new paradigm – working and learning from home – a transition that has not been easy for both parents and students.

[It always seems impossible until it's done...Nelson Mandela]

But what is great is that we all rose to the new challenge with aplomb in our fight against COVID-19 and adapted ourselves to continue life's basic functions, which explains why humans are the most evolved species. The school timely switched over to online-teaching to which both students and parents adapted well despite all odds, resulting in a successful April-May academic segment. What we need to be proud of is that we all adapted to this changeover proactively, ahead of nearly all others, justifying our school-ranking of being among the Top-100 schools in the country for years now.

[Excellence is never an accident, but a result of high intention, sincere effort, intelligent direction, skillful execution and the vision to see the obstacles as opportunities...Aristotle]

All this, however, would not have been possible without the unflinching support of our teachers and parents. While our teachers rose to the challenge of changing over from conventional classroom teaching to virtual classrooms, developing online-content and conducting classes from their homes, the parents too pitched in to ensure that their wards responded positively to this change and attended the new online-school with enthusiasm and sincerity. In fact, regular inputs from parents – by way of positive comments, and suggestions/ideas for improvements – have been a big help to constantly improve the virtual teaching-learning process. For all the efforts put in to make the new model a success, I sincerely thank all the stakeholders – teachers, students and parents.

I would like to now share some important points with you all:

- a) The syllabus scheduled for regular and physical classroom teaching in April-May-2020 was successfully completed in the new virtual avatar too.
- b) Attendance during the online classes was nearly 100%.
- c) Holiday homework has been assigned.
- d) PTMs for junior classes were conducted earlier this week, of course virtually, and the positive inputs by parents were highly encouraging for our teachers.
- e) Like every year, the school has planned some activities/workshops for students during the summer-break, of course, these would now be online. You shall be informed of the same very soon.

Please feel free to share any positive comments or words of encouragement with your ward's teachers if you feel things have been going well. Our teachers are putting in many more hours than a traditional working day to make learning happen for the students. Don't be shy about giving them a 'pat on the back' if you feel they deserve it.

I would like to add that DEAR PARENTS...YOU are doing all you can for your ward in these difficult times. It is difficult for even the most organized professionals to fulfil their work duties from home, juggle finances, monitor the new 'home-school student', provide childcare and do all you can to keep your family safe during this pandemic. I would like to encourage you to use this time with your children to explore new areas of their interests and partake in family activities that you may not have had the luxury of time to do before. A silver lining can always be found if we look hard enough.

And DEAR STUDENTS...Continue working hard and always aim for the MOON; even if you miss, you will land among the STARS.

In closing, I can speak for all of our teachers when I say that we really miss seeing the children every day and I hope that everything returns to normal as soon as possible. We are doing everything possible to ensure our children continue to learn at home and your efforts as parents are truly amazing during this time. Our children are lucky to have such supportive caregivers.

With good wishes to stay safe... and be happy.

Principal

