

Pandemic Prompt – A Day in the Life with COVID #1

In March of 2020, the high school I worked at prepared for Spring Break. It was the Friday before break, and everyone involved was excited. However, many students and staff were talking about “Coronavirus” and how bad it was getting in other parts of the world. I remember another teacher telling me that he bets “we don’t come back after break”, but I didn’t really understand and was starting to think that this sort of thing would not happen.

During our Spring Break, students, staff, and parents were notified that break would be extended for one more week. At this point, I was a little nervous. People I spoke to were both optimistic and skeptical that we would return after the two weeks.

Near the end of the second week, we were informed that school would be online for the rest of the school year (eight weeks) out of precaution. Our administration created an online schedule in which we would have thirty minutes of “office hours” per class period every day where we would be available via Zoom to any students who had questions or needed help. We would also be required to post work online through Canvas. However, due to state law, teachers could not lower the grade of any student. Due to this, I did not see most of my students for the rest of the school year.

For the rest of the school year, most of my students did not log into Canvas, complete work, or attend Zoom meetings. I usually would have about five or six students per class show up on Zoom. Half of the students would genuinely have questions about school work, but the other half just wanted to talk and catch up. It is still crazy to think about how the school year ended that way.

On March 31st, I sent this e-mail to my students:

“Good morning,

First off: I hope you all are doing okay. I miss all of you (I am being serious). Even though we will not be meeting in person for the rest of the school year, I will still be here for you and will be providing you work and any help that you might need.

Starting on April 6th, I will be posting work via Canvas. Please make sure that you go to the HOME PAGE of my Canvas class, and then on the very top of the page click on the link for your class period. This will bring you to a module that you will have a week to complete. For next week, this will all be review work, so please do not stress. :)

Once we start new information, I will continue to provide you notes to help you learn. If you need help understanding anything, I will be more than happy to help you.

If you need to speak to me for any reason, I will have "office hours" available for 5th hour on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 8:30-9:00. Please e-mail me if you would like to make an appointment with me, and the appointment will be through Zoom (please make sure you sign up using your school e-mail).

Once again, I hope you all are okay and I am looking forward to hearing from you!”