

## BOE Brief- March 2020

Dear Canton families and staff,

I hope you are safe, healthy and well at home with your families as we all go through this time of uncertainty with the Covid-19 pandemic. This is certainly a first for all of us in our lifetimes and it is never fun to live with uncertainty. I have been taking a lot of walks and listening to podcasts. As I have written in the past, Brené Brown is one of my favorite authors, and she has a new podcast that just launched. As I listened to her first podcast, she touched on so many things that are so applicable to us right now that I want to share with you as we enter into distance learning for our schools. In her first episode, Brene Brown discusses the “TFT” or terrible first time and how to deal with first experiences. In order to not totally lose it or get bogged down in frustration, she recommends naming it as a “TFT” in order to normalize it, put perspective around it and then to reality check expectations. Since distance learning and being home with our families during this COVID-19 social distancing is what I would call a rather big “TFT”, I thought I would summarize my thoughts on how we name/normalize it, put perspective around it and then reality check our expectations.

- 1. Name it/Normalize it-** Distance learning for all of us is big “TFT” for all of us. The first time you do anything, it is clunky, wobbly, awkward, difficult, cringey and generally speaking it leaves us feeling vulnerable. The first day of distance learning will be this for everyone involved on Wednesday- teachers, staff, students and parents. Our teachers are experts with years of experience, and this will be a challenge for them. As parents, we won’t be experts at how to solve math problems the “Bridges Math” way. As we begin things this week, remember this will be hard because we’ve never done this before. We will be tired. We will get frustrated. However, know that this too shall pass—this clunky and awkward time won’t last forever, and this leads us to perspective.
- 2. Perspective-** We will figure out what works and doesn’t work for distance learning for our students and families. We will look back weeks or months from now and perhaps laugh at the things that didn’t work or think “wow- look at how we evolved as a learning family”. The main thing to remember is this feeling of TFT isn’t permanent.
- 3. Reality Check Expectations-** What we have to remember here is that this will be hard for a while. Teachers won’t be perfect, communication might be slow or inconsistent, student time management might drive us crazy, but the main thing we can do for each other as a school community is to approach this new adventure with patience, grace and forgiveness. Know that each teacher, principal and administrator really does want the best possible learning to occur for your students. It won’t be perfect, but we will learn together.

A few thoughts for parents- go easy on yourselves - we aren’t perfect, but we can carry this TFT together and support one another.... the messy parts and all- we’ve got this.

Finally, as we launch distance learning, I want to thank the incredible staff of the Canton Public Schools. They have been working tirelessly to do the best they can in these uncertain circumstances and help our community through this process. I wish you all a safe and healthy week and if you have any questions, please reach out to me via email at [jausere@cantonschools.org](mailto:jausere@cantonschools.org) or to Superintendent Kevin Case at [kcase@cantonschools.org](mailto:kcase@cantonschools.org).

Best,

Julie Auseré- Chair Canton Board of Education