MCC’s Liberty Partnerships Program (LPP) has not been immune to the waves of change the COVID-19 pandemic has brought to our world this year. Being fully remote for all of our tutoring, college and career prep programming has pushed staff to reimagine how our activities will look, and how to engage students and families over Zoom.

In October and December, LPP hosted check-ins for our 4 target schools: Edison, East, World of Inquiry #58, and Northeast/Northwest. These meetings gave students the opportunity to socialize via Zoom, play some fun games, talk about their experiences so far in the school year with remote learning and let LPP staff know what additional support they could use. In February, LPP will be hosting its next round of check-ins. After hearing some student feedback, LPP is going to adjust the meetings to be scheduled by grade level, instead of by school. This will provide students the opportunity to meet more kids their age across the District.

At the end of October, LPP hosted our annual College Bound Kickoff event. Guest speakers joined us from Nazareth College, Monroe Community College, and the University of Rochester to discuss everything college with students and their parents. Presentations covered the admissions process, navigating financial aid and opportunity programs applications, as well as how to tackle first year struggles. One of our LPP volunteer tutors, a student from the University of Rochester, shared her journey from growing up in Cuba to ending up at the U of R completing applications for medical school! Families were able to ask follow up questions, and clarify confusing elements of the college application process.

LPP has also been hosting monthly Student Leadership Committee meetings. In these sessions, students are given the opportunity to provide feedback on LPP activities and other activities they would like to see LPP do in the future. LPP also uses these meetings to allow students to showcase their leadership knowledge and capabilities by guiding them through immersive, team-oriented activities.​

Like everyone, remote learning has presented many new challenges when it comes to teaching and academics, but often overlooked is the challenges it presents to special celebrations. Known to some as "the best event of the year", Liberty Partnerships Program's annual Winter Wonderland provides an outlet for students to connect and de-stress at the end of the first half of the school year. Faced with facilitating a warm and social environment while barred from any in-person interaction, the LPP team found a way to bring the party online. Students engaged in scavenger hunts, Pictionary, Hot Potato, and Jeopardy games over Zoom. They turned on their cameras and allowed themselves to be seen, some for the first time all year. Students and staff played, laughed, and chatted about their holiday plans and personal updates. Connections were created and for a moment we were all together again.

The Liberty Partnerships Program will be running in a remote setting for the foreseeable future, but that will not stop us from planning amazing activities for our incredible students and their families!

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