

IMPORTANT - School Closure Information

March 16, 2020

Dear Dobbs Ferry School District Families,

Today, the Westchester County Executive, George Latimer declared a state of emergency due to the spread of the COVID-19 coronavirus. Included in his executive orders was a closure of all schools for 14 days. The intention of this closure is to help mitigate the spread of the virus in our schools. The Dobbs Ferry schools will have an extended closure through March 31, 2020. At present, this information is subject to changes based upon ongoing updates. Therefore, families should prepare for the potential of even longer school closures.

We continue to ask for your flexibility and patience. Information regarding any potential changes to this year's District calendar will be shared in the near future as our current priority is to focus on providing on-going learning and supporting the well-being of our school community.

In the Dobbs Ferry schools we remain dedicated to serving the educational needs of our students. In doing so, we have developed the plans outlined below to support student learning while they are at home. Please be reminded that during the school closures, all athletic and extracurricular activities are canceled.

Learning from Home

Beginning Wednesday, we will be shifting to a virtual environment to support student learning. On the district website www.dfsd.org two resource documents can be found (K-5 and 6-12). These documents include links to valuable resources that will support student learning during this current extended closing.

For Springhurst families without functioning technology related devices at home, we have a limited number of Chromebooks to loan and are available for pickup on a first come, first serve basis. Chromebooks can be picked up on Wednesday, March 18th between 8:30 a.m. and 11 a.m. at the MS/HS Commons entrance.

What to expect:

6-12

Teachers will:

- Post messages/assignments and update Google Classroom as appropriate, but no less frequently than every other day
- Use Google Classroom to share appropriate resources
- Check email daily and respond to students/parents within 24-48 hours
- Review student work submitted via Google Classroom and provide appropriate feedback in a timely manner
- Establish and communicate a two hour window each day during which teachers will actively monitor email and be available to answer and respond to student and parent questions and concerns.
- Teachers of special education will collaborate with general education colleagues and reach out to students to provide additional support as necessary
- Guidance counselors, school psychologists, social workers, and other support staff will check in with individual students as appropriate
- Participate in CSE/504 meetings via phone
- Related Service Providers will provide services to the greatest extent possible via phone and other technology solutions

K-5

Teachers will:

- K-5 resources to support ongoing learning will be posted to the Springhurst website and updated as necessary
- Teachers will regularly communicate with families but no less frequently than every other day via email or Google Classroom to encourage and support use of posted resources and encourage daily reading
- As appropriate teachers will share with families via email, assignments to be completed
- Check email daily and respond to students/parents within 24-48 hours
- Review student work submitted via email (and/or Google Classroom if applicable) and provide appropriate feedback in a timely manner
- Establish and communicate a two hour window each day during which teachers will actively monitor email and be available to answer and respond to student and parent questions and concerns.
- Teachers of special education will collaborate with general education colleagues and reach out to students to provide additional support as necessary
- Guidance counselors, school psychologists, social workers, and other support staff will check in with individual students as appropriate
- Participate in CSE/504 meetings via phone

- **Related Service Providers will provide services to the greatest extent possible via phone and other tech solutions**

Parents should recognize that teachers and staff may be dealing with challenges such as ill family members. Our teachers and staff are committed to making their best efforts in this regard.

What students and families should do?

One of the challenges that may exist for students is how to best organize their time while working remotely from home. As noted above, our teachers will have daily "office hours," will post assignments and guidance regularly, and will provide individualized feedback to students. The sample schedule below provides you with a template for how to help your children schedule their days at home. Please note that this schedule is a resource and can be adjusted and/or modified to meet the individual needs of each student. This does not mean that your child's teacher is necessarily available at these times. This is simply an organizing tool for students.

6-12

8:30-9:15: English

9:25-10:10: Social Studies

10:20-11:05: Arts/Electives

11:15-12:00: Science

12:00-12:45: Lunch

12:45-1:30: Math

1:40-2:25: World Language

2:35-3:20: Health/PE/Wellness

K-5

Grade level teams will be providing families with suggested daily schedules but families can adjust as necessary. It is only a suggestion for those who need it.

School Nutrition Program

Starting on Wednesday, March 18th and continuing throughout the duration of this long-term closure, grab-and-go breakfast and lunch options will be available at the Dobbs Ferry High School entrance Monday through Friday between the hours of 8:30 a.m to 11:00 a.m. These meals are being provided for all students at no cost.

Technology and Off-Site Learning

We recognize that off-site learning is not a replacement for face-to-face instruction, but it does provide an opportunity for students to continue to be engaged in their learning during this time of crisis. If you have any questions related to your child's home-based learning, please email your child's teacher and/or principal.

Technology questions can be directed to the District's technology help desk that can be reached via helpdesk@dfsd.org or (914)693-1500 extension 3063.

We also recognize that students and families may need emotional support during this very difficult time. If you are experiencing anxiety or stress and you feel you need support, please call the Department of Community Mental Health at (914) 995-1900. In addition, the District's mental health professionals will be available to support you and your children. Counselors can be reached via email.

As always, we sincerely appreciate your continued support and understanding. Together we will get through this challenging time due to the strength of our partnership as a school community.

Sincerely,

Lisa Brady, Ed.D.

Superintendent