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# Highland School

*“Committed to Excellence”*

Dear parents/guardians of Highland Students:

March 13, 2020

Over the course of the last several weeks, teachers at the Highland School have been diligently preparing for the potential of lengthy school closures due to COVID -19. Such an event is unprecedented in contemporary education, but fortunately, the Highland School has the capability and resources to effectively adapt to this situation. Highland School has established ‘virtual classrooms’, which will not only ensure relevant instruction for our students during the school closing, but also complies with state guidelines so these ‘virtual days’ will count towards the mandatory 180 days students need to be in school. **However we do need your help to ensure students are attending ‘virtual school’ and completing necessary work.**

**Please read this IMPORTANT letter closely so we are all on the same page.**

**Here is how it will work** – Students will utilize Google Classroom to access everything they need for school. (This is not new for our students.)

- **Starting Monday March 16th:** students will enter their Google Classroom called ‘**homeroom**’ at **8:25am**. Once students are in the homeroom Google Classroom, students will log in for attendance purposes and read any message and/or information that is conveniently posted in the homeroom; i.e. schedules.
- **Then**, according to the half day schedule (see below), students will go period by period to ensure that all subjects, even specials like PE and health are given enough virtual seat time throughout the week.
- **Each subject** has its own Google Classroom with its own assignments and due dates.
- **Students will complete and hand in any and all assigned work for each subject.** Students do not have to necessarily finish by the end of the period, but should submit all work by the end of the day or as directed by the teacher (i.e. week assignment).

Virtual Classroom Schedule		
Period	Start Time	End Time
<b>Homeroom</b>	<b>8:25am</b>	<b>8:30am</b>
1	8:30am	9:00am
2	9:00am	9:30am
3	9:30am	10:00am
4	10:00am	10:30am
5	10:30am	11:00am
6	11:00am	11:30am
7	11:30am	12:00pm
8	12:00pm	12:30pm

*Student schedules grade 3-5 will be posted in the homeroom daily. 6<sup>th</sup> grade may access Power School for their individual schedules.*

*Please note: 6<sup>th</sup> grade electives will not be running on the virtual classroom.*

## Important Expectations:

- **Attendance:** **Students must attend virtual school every day (sign into homeroom by 8:30am).** Absences will be logged and counted as unexcused absences unless a doctor’s note is provided, just like in real school. (e-mail the doctors note to [mcallesano@mpsny.org](mailto:mcallesano@mpsny.org) ) **ABSENCE CALLS WILL BE MADE.**
- **Assignments:** Teachers worked hard to prepare for this time: Assignments have been created to ensure standards are still being met despite not being in the classroom. This is not just busy work.

- **Communication:** Teachers will be available during their designated period as most assignments will allow for teacher communication real time via chatting or even video conferencing depending on the need. Teachers may be contacted after school hours via email.
- **Assessment:** Student work will be collected and assessed, just like real school, and become part of their marking period grade.
- **Technology:** All Chromebooks for grades 3-6 have been sent home with the students to ensure equal learning opportunities. If your child was absent and needs his/her Chromebook please contact the Highland School main office so arrangements can be made.
  - To access **WIFI** with the Chromebook: look for the time in the bottom right hand corner of the screen. Select 'Not Connected' and then select your home network from the available networks. You may need your personal password to do so.
  - Should you have **Chromebook issues** and not have another usable device, please contact the Highland School tech office via e-mail to make arrangements for repair: Mrs. Treta- [ctreta@mpsny.org](mailto:ctreta@mpsny.org) or Mr. Spadaccini- [zspadaccini@mpsny.org](mailto:zspadaccini@mpsny.org)
  - **IMPORTANT:**
    - Chromebooks should be taken care of and returned in good working order.
    - Chromebooks are monitored & students will be held accountable for poor choices.

#### Parent Reminders:

- Parents are highly encouraged to log onto their child's Google account and track what is happening in the virtual classrooms. Ask your child for their logins. Students can show you how it works. They use the Google platform routinely.
- **In the morning - please get your children up and into the Google Classroom by 8:30am**. Routine is critical.
- Students should establish a nice comfortable spot at a table or desk where they can work. This should be part of their routine.
- Transitions are important – students should try to keep with the flow of the school day so the teacher is available to help like they would be in a real classroom. Perhaps set up a timer via a cell phone or clock to remind them to switch periods.
- If students are not available for a certain class they can make up the work at a later time that day. We understand that students may not be available at certain times because of life factors.
- For students who receive free and reduced lunch, your child's lunch may be picked up at the Horseshoe in back of the High School from 11:30am-12:30pm.
- **Limit stress for everyone**--- virtual learning is new for everyone and there will be hiccups. Please take all of this in stride and know we are working hard to give students the best experience possible. Please contact the teacher with questions or concerns.

As stated, this is unprecedented and we ask that you be patient as we work out inevitable kinks. The teachers have worked extremely hard to make the 'virtual classroom' a reality and though we would rather be with the students in the traditional classroom as we believe nothing replaces traditional seat time, we are making every attempt to make this a great learning experience. Thank-you for your anticipated cooperation. Please be safe.

Should you have any questions please feel free to contact me-

Sincerely,



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