



CLINTON TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT

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"Where Children Come First"

April 9, 2020

Dear Families & Staff,

As we approach our Spring Break, we would like to review a few items regarding instruction and bring everyone up to date on the platforms and approaches we are using. The following platforms have been used, and will likely continue as any bugs get worked out of these systems from the back end. See the information below, which includes some safe usage reminders.

- Google Meet - Part of the G Suite, this program allows for virtual meetings. This is a platform that the district has vetted for FERPA and COPPA compliance, meaning that it would not collect personal information from our students. This is a vital part of approving the use of any programs. The caution in using this is that students need to exit the meeting before the host does, because if not, students may remain connected and may engage in unmonitored discussions. Our staff has been made aware of these concerns, and as always, we strongly urge parent monitoring at home.
- Zoom - **Currently on HOLD** - much has been in the media regarding Zoom, a virtual meeting platform that had mainly been used by corporations. The issues surrounding Zoom appear to stem from the user end, meaning that as a host, you need to select specific settings to control the meeting and attendees. Zoom has been adding restrictions to their platform, which resulted in preventing students under the age of 17 from accessing without providing birthdays, names, etc. We have currently suspended use of Zoom for this reason. Zoom is aware of this situation and we are monitoring their discussion boards as they work to rectify this issue. We will alert everyone when we deem it secure to use with our students. Some of our students and families had already been using the platform, and as long as it does not begin to ask you for identifiable information, you are secure in using it. Several measures have been added, such as entering the meeting from a "waiting room" and so on.
- Recorded lessons and instruction or read alouds. Many of our younger students are going to see their instruction delivered through their teacher's website or Google Classroom in pre-recorded videos. This is an age appropriate approach, and also allows them to watch a video additional times. Less interaction is expected in these short tutorial-like videos. The format of a mini lesson, followed by applied practice, is typical for students in our younger grades.
- Projects are another approach being used. This allows teachers to provide a multi-faceted assignment and provides a time frame for completion of independent work. Some of these may also be in the Unified Arts area. Problem Based units are another form of a long term independent learning. PBL's are available for all grades.

- STEAM Activities, Story Time (Read Alouds will be posted soon), and other optional or enrichment activities have been provided and several may be accessed on our Health Preparedness Website [here](#). These provide students and families with experiments to do at home, as well as allowing our younger students to listen to a story read by one of our staff members. Please be sure to check these out over the break, if you are looking for some activities.

Please be aware of the following and monitor your children's use of the Internet and their devices.

1. Student emails are turned on to allow them to email their teachers directly. The concern with this is that they have the capability to email each other and this would need to be monitored at home. Google Hangouts is also open and should not be used for student to student contact. Students are not permitted to use their school emails for personal communication, unless specifically asked to do so by their teachers.
2. During Spring Break, no additional student work will be posted. We will not be closing login access during the break, to allow students to work on incomplete assignments, or access the additional resources listed on our website. Please note that during that week, it will be important to monitor usage, as the district staff will be offline.

A reminder regarding PowerSchool; we will be closing the public portal over the break to allow for the upload of data and to address any system updates. It will reopen on Monday April 20th. As you will recall from our last letter, grades are being entered as students complete work, (a zero = an incomplete assignment) and therefore, we are running a more flexible model. We have not received guidance from the NJDOE regarding this aspect of remote learning, and will let everyone know any updates as they occur. We appreciate your patience with this change.

Finally, we are monitoring the current Executive Orders and their impact on schools across the state. We will provide updates to all as we learn and verify their status. We continue to hope that you are all doing well and remain safe and healthy. We know this is impactful, not only for our community and families, but those across the country and around the world. Our hearts go out to those who are feeling these impacts and our thoughts are with all of you at this time.

Be well,

Dr. Michele Cone

Michele Cone, EdD