

Newsletter from the School Counselor



March 23, 2020

Hello Northgate Family,

I hope that you are all able to stay healthy and safe during this time of social distancing and that you're able to find some stable ground during this time where so much has been shaken up for our community. During this time out of school, I am still hoping to be engaged with the needs of our students, recognizing that this is a scary time in the world for students and parents alike. My hope is to provide weekly resources both to give some social-emotional support for families during this time as well as preparing for the transition back to the end of the school year, should we return at some point this Spring.

A lot has been drastically shifted in the last two weeks and in ways many of us would not have fathomed. As scared and anxious as we have been, it's important that we recognize the impact this also has on the students whose routines may be off, some students may be panicking over missed field trips, changes in standardized testing expectations all while still being children being impacted by cabin/spring fever with recent storms and flooding.

It's important to recognize that this is normal for children who experience extreme, abrupt changes, and when "the end" of these changes isn't a concrete day and time that we can mark on a calendar, it may create anxiety and uncertainty. It's also important to recognize the heightened expectations placed on us and our families to be homeschooling children while many are also still working full-time from home, needing childcare while being called into work or coping with recent unemployment.

While resources listed below are limited due to space, there are many online and digital resources that can also help with students come to an understanding of what's happening in the world right now. Although it is important that students still get some time for academic instruction through i-Ready, work sent home from teachers, online resources that have been recommended, or even read-alouds you find on YouTube; my personal feeling is that the most important thing we can do for our students is let them still be kids. Meaning: let them have the space and validation to be frustrated about not seeing friends and family, let them be silly and play when they're unable to focus on school work, let them talk your ear off about a picture they drew or a castle they built even if it goes a little past their bedtime because they and we deserve to be in a place where things aren't so overwhelming and scary all the time.

We'll get through this and summer will be here before we know it, as always. This year may just look a little different in how we get there. I am thinking of your families during this time and if there is any way I can help, please let me know.

Thank you,

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During this time, I will be accessible at my email address or Google number to receive emails, calls, and texts during typical school hours of 8:15am to 3:45pm

Social-Emotional Resources

- [This Brainpop Video](#) has a child-friendly conversation covering Coronavirus, how viruses spread, the prevention of germs, and media literacy during the midst of a pandemic. The video does briefly mention death at the 3-minute mark.
- [This article from PBS](#) is helpful for setting up a daily routine that allows for academic time, quiet time, and working in body movement. Consider looking at a tip or two that would work best for your family while adjusting to a new schedule.
- Consider a transition to quiet time with some deep breathing exercises that can be found on apps like Calm or Headspace. Additionally, guided exercises and visualizations can be found on YouTube, [here is a brief 4 minute video to assist a student practice stillness and deep breathing.](#)

Academic Resources

- [Columbus Metropolitan Library](#) has posted resources for families that provide free downloads of ebooks, movies, and audiobooks. Families still have access to this without a library card.
- Khan Academy Kids (ages 2-7) and Khan Academy (ages 7+) are math apps accessible on your phone that could be done supplementally to ST Math, Prodigy, Study Island, or ALEKS assignments that students typically access in their classrooms.
- [If your student is looking for something new to engage them, consider looking at the free courses for elementary students at code.org](#) – they have free lessons for students aged 4 and up that will give introductory skills to computer science. Additionally, this gives students early access to a new skillset that could help them as they look at potential careers in the future!

General Family Resources

- If you don't know by now, Columbus City Schools is providing free breakfasts and lunches for students across the district. [Here is a link to locations and times.](#) Food is to-go and you are able to pick up breakfast and lunch at the same time. If you are only able to go at lunch, you will get the next days breakfast as well.
- COTA has waived fares for the time so people have access to necessary transport. They ask that if you are able, to enter through the back doors of the bus to limit bus driver exposure to germs.
- The daily press conferences done by Governor DeWine at 2pm are livestreamed at [Ohiochannel.org](#) as well as local National Public Radio stations 89.7 and 90.5
- If your job has been impacted due to the coronavirus, you may be eligible to receive unemployment benefits. [More information can be found here.](#)