



BERKSHIRE HILLS REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

GREAT BARRINGTON • STOCKBRIDGE • WEST STOCKBRIDGE

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April 2, 2020

REMOTE LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES NOTIFICATION AND GUIDANCE

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Thank you for your flexibility during these extremely challenging times. As you know, our school district has presently closed its physical school buildings due to the COVID-19 pandemic. During this period of school closure, the District will be providing students with remote learning opportunities, which may include analog materials, telephone calls, video conferencing, pre-recorded lessons, and other online services. Students are expected to participate in these services if possible, and will be provided with credit on a pass/fail basis. Please reach out to us as soon as possible if you anticipate or become aware of any issues with your child accessing the remote opportunities provided by the District.

What follows is specific legal language written by our attorney. It's a version of the golden rule -- treat others as you'd like to be treated.

In accordance with state and federal laws, including the Massachusetts Wiretapping Act and FERPA, parents and students must refrain from recording any and all remote lessons. Exceptions may be made on an individual basis due to special circumstances, and only with the consent of everyone involved in the lesson. In addition, while parents/guardians are permitted to observe online instruction in a non-disruptive manner, to the extent that remote learning opportunities provide access to confidential student information, all participants agree, by participating in this remote learning opportunity, to refrain from disseminating any confidential student information about other student participants with any and all third parties. By participating in the remote learning opportunities, consent to this request is hereby provided.

Similarly, we ask everyone in our school community to recognize that video conferences and other online services will be taking place in the homes of the educators and students who participate in the calls, and to be mindful of everyone's right to privacy. To that end, we remind our students to dress appropriately and choose an appropriate location in their home from which to participate in any and all remote learning opportunities, particularly those with a video component. Parents/guardians should take all precautions to safeguard personal or private information that they do not wish to be disclosed.

Students will be expected to behave in accordance with school rules of conduct while participating in remote instruction. Cyber-bullying, harassment, discrimination, and abuse of the remote learning process will not be tolerated and may result in suspension from interactive technology, as well as additional consequences when school resumes. The District also encourages its staff and students alike to limit disruptions to remote lessons to the extent feasible (while also recognizing that sometimes pets, small children, and technical difficulties cannot be prevented from disrupting a lesson that happens at home).

Special education teachers, ELL/SEI teachers, and individual service providers will be in contact with parents/guardians of students with specialized learning needs regarding necessary modifications to the remote instruction opportunities offered to other members of an individual student's class, as well as to discuss direct and group service provision.

The following online services are available to all students as part of the District's remote learning opportunities:

Google Classroom and Google Hangouts Meet.

Parents/guardians may choose to request that analog materials be provided as a substitute to online lessons to the extent feasible.

By accessing these services, the District recognizes that you and your child consent to access online instruction and agree to fully comply with the requirements of this letter.

We appreciate your time and attention to this notice. The path forward will be challenging and I have full confidence in our collective ability to rise to it. Please stay safe and well.

Sincerely,

Peter Dillon
Superintendent of BHRSD