

## **Assistant Superintendent's Update April 8, 2020**

Dear Island Park Families,

I hope this email finds you and your family well! I would like to provide you with a few important updates as they relate to teaching and learning during the school closure. Last week, the District posted a "Distance Learning Parent Survey" on the District's website and Facebook to gain a better understanding of parents' level of satisfaction regarding distance learning during the school closure. Below, is a summary of the survey results:

Survey Question	Level of Satisfaction (n=101)
I am satisfied with my child's distance learning workload.	67% of parents reported satisfaction regarding the distance learning workload.
The virtual "hand raise" email message is helping me and my child communicate with the teacher during the school closure.	76% of parents reported that the virtual hand raise message was assisting them and their child to communicate with the teacher.
My child and I can access the daily assignments.	88% of parents reported that they can access the daily assignments.
After completing daily assignments, my child has sufficient time for play and other daily activities.	71% of parents reported that their child has sufficient time for play and other activities once they complete their daily assignments.

Throughout the school closure, the District is utilizing a new online learning platform called i-Ready for English language arts and mathematics instruction. i-Ready is an online program that helps the Island Park UFSD 1) determine your child's strengths and areas for growth, 2) personalize their learning, and 3) monitor their progress throughout the school year.

### **1. Determining Strengths and Areas for Growth**

In February 2020, all kindergarten through eighth grade students completed a diagnostic assessment, in English language arts and mathematics. The purpose of the diagnostic assessment was not to provide each student with a score; rather, it was designed to determine how to best support learning by determining each child's strengths and areas for growth. The i-Ready diagnostic assessment provided the District with valuable data that has enabled us to meet each student's needs and to determine next steps with prescribed distance learning instruction as well as future classroom learning.

### **2. Personalized Learning**

Based upon the diagnostic results and teacher input, i-Ready instruction provides students with lessons based on their individual strengths and areas for growth. Through the i-Ready Instruction platform, students engage in two types of lessons; "My Path", i-Ready assigned personalized online lessons based on a child's most recent diagnostic results, and "Teacher Assigned," lessons of a teacher's choice comprised of on-grade level

instruction. These lessons are interactive and provide strategic supports to keep your child engaged as they learn. The lessons are presented in three parts: tutorial, guided practice, and a graded activity. Each student will receive relevant instruction with supportive feedback as he/she progresses through each lesson. The program truly differentiates for the learning needs of each student by efficiently targeting gaps to help students who are behind with grade-level content while also providing challenges and enrichment for students who are on grade-level.

### 3. **Progress Monitoring**

The i-Ready instruction is designed to be used jointly with i-Ready Diagnostic to allow for progress monitoring throughout the year and to determine whether students are on track for appropriate growth. By utilizing the growth monitoring dashboard, teachers and administrators can actively monitor students' growth, in real-time, by analyzing individual student and whole class results and creating plans for future instruction.

In addition to the parent survey, we held virtual meetings with teachers and administrators to determine distance learning effectiveness. We recognize that throughout this school closure, the i-Ready online learning platform will continue to provide teachers and students with vital teaching and learning tools and resources. However, based upon feedback from students, parents, teachers, and administrators we are implementing the following changes to i-Ready assignments; beginning on Monday, April 13<sup>th</sup>, teachers will require students to complete "Teacher Assigned" lessons two days per week, on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Students will continue their English language arts "My Path" lessons on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. However, this does not apply to mathematics lessons as both "Teacher Assigned" and "My Path" lessons will continue to be assigned Monday through Friday. Please note, that i-Ready is only one of the many learning tools/platforms utilized by our teachers to provide digital learning assignments to our students. Teachers across all grade-levels and content areas will continue to engage students in "new learning" using other tools, resources and platforms. Assignments are posted daily to the Teacher Webpages on the District's website. Please continue to monitor the Teacher Webpages for daily assignments.

We acknowledge that the past few weeks have been difficult ones for all members of the Island Park community, especially our students. Teaching and learning as we know it has been drastically transformed. As educators, we recognize that students' routines have been completely uprooted as we now provide our students with "distance learning" that limits their social interactions with teachers and peers. Although we can never replace these social interactions from a distance, our Digital Learning Plan is designed to provide for continuity of learning for all students. Please know that we value your input as we navigate these challenging times and use this new online learning platform for teaching and learning. Please continue to communicate the needs of your child with your child's teachers and principal and know that we look forward to your feedback as we adjust and strengthen our delivery of distance learning.  
Stay safe and healthy!  
Fondly,

Vincent Randazzo  
Assistant Superintendent  
Island Park UFSD