

Supt's 3/24/20 Message and COVID-19 Update

Now more than ever, this is a time when the Board and I are “listening to learn.” It has been very helpful to hear from you directly through our two email accounts: webmaster@islandparkschools.org and techspecialist@islandparkschools.org as well as via emails to principals and the teachers with whom you are communicating your questions/concerns about digital learning assignments using “Subject: Virtual Hand Raise.” We will also be initiating the email, PublicBeHeard@islandparkschools.org, so that your questions can go directly to the Board as we transition to our first virtual Board Meeting on Monday, March 30, 2020 at 7 pm via the District website and BoardDocs. (More to come on this later in the week.) Please use this email address to send your questions (and/or your child’s/children’s questions) to us. Please try to your questions to us by Noon that day. We look forward to solving issues, providing answers, and learning how we can improve our school services during this period.

We will all begin listening to your children this week as our Social Emotional Learning (SEL) support team members (Andrea Porzelt, guidance counselor; Allison Janowsky, LOMS social worker, Felicta Carranza, FXH social worker; Collen Kunz, LOMS psychologist; and Krysten Nielsen, FXH psychologist) reach out to them in one-on-one telephone calls. Our SEL team members are sincerely interested in listening to them to find out how distance learning is going and how the social distancing from friends is working out while being largely holed up at home.

The School Mental Health Resource and Training Center offers free webinars and resources to support families and caregivers during this challenging time. There is a new webinar scheduled for Thursday, March 26, 2020 from 12:30 to 1 pm; the topic is “Coping with a Crisis.” To register for it, go to <https://www.mentalhealthednys.org/parents/>.

Please see “Get Well Wishes to Our IPS Employee,” a section of the District website to which cards and messages from students and community members are being posted for our employee with COVID-19. We hope these “good vibrations” will be an uplifting source of strength. For personal safety reasons, however, we advise that students do not sign their first and last names; at most, a first name will suffice.

Today we heard from the Department of Health and they confirmed the employee’s case of COVID-19. There is no additional information to report from their case investigation as they said all individuals in direct contact with the individual were notified and should complete their self-isolation period through Friday, March 27, 2020. In addition, the Department of Health approved our resumption of meal distribution for our students who qualify for free or reduced price breakfast and lunch beginning Monday, March 30, 2020.

Belfor Property Restoration was on site today at Lincoln Orens Middle School doing what they do best—biohazard decontamination cleaning. Just to be on the safe side, we have decided to have them perform the same cleaning at Francis X Hegarty Elementary School and the Conference Center. These buildings will be cleaned tomorrow.

We look forward to “listening and learning.”
My best wishes continue for everyone to be and remain well.