Nyack School District
Remote Learning Guide for Parents
2020

Contributors:
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Ms. Gloria Menoutis, School Business Executive
Ms. Audrey Cabell, Director of English as a New Language and Bilingual Education
Ms. Lorraine Longing, Director of Guidance
Mr. Leo Macias, Director of Special Education and Pupil Personnel Services
Mr. Joe Sigillo, Director of PE, Health, Wellness and Athletics
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Mr. Joe Mercora, Principal Upper Nyack Elementary
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Mr. David Johnson, Principal Nyack Middle School
Ms. Nicole Saieva, Principal Nyack High School
Ms. Lucia Pichardo, Assistant Principal, Nyack High School
OVERVIEW
This document contains important information for our parents, guardians and school community to use as we strive to do our best to engage our students in meaningful learning experiences during the COVID-19 school closure. Our staff and administration have been working hard to adjust our teaching practices from traditional methods to a very new and untried virtual platform. We deeply appreciate the high level of professionalism displayed by our staff to deliver quality instruction in a difficult environment. Our District’s investments in technology, professional development and technology-infused instruction has placed us in an advantageous position to carry out this new model of schooling. We ask for your patience as we confront this incredibly challenging task. There will undoubtedly be missteps and unintended outcomes, however, we are confident with all of us working together, our students will continue to achieve academically.

Please be advised that we continue to receive updates and new information from State and Federal officials related to public education issues. We are operating in a dynamic environment and anticipate revisions to this document. We will continue to update our school community as new information becomes available to us.

SCHEDULE
Keeping a regular learning schedule during this period of school closure is very important to students’ health and wellness and the continuity of learning. Maintaining a regular learning schedule will also help when schools reopen. Therefore, students should follow the schedule to which they are accustomed or the new daily schedule developed and listed on their teacher’s class page.

- Your child’s school time will be a combination of lessons (direct instruction) offered by the teacher, through video or real-time video conferencing and independent activities to reinforce the learning and/or indirect instructions.
- Any videos or conferencing that may occur are not to be copied, tampered with or disseminated in any way (e.g. posting a video a teacher made on social media).
- The District’s Media Opt-Out protocol is being followed throughout this school closure. If you placed your child on the Media-Opt Out List for the 2019/20 school year and thereby have not given parental permission for your child(ren) to be included in photo sharing, your child(ren) will still be able to participate in real-time video class room activities or conferencing. In this
situation, teachers will activate the necessary tools to keep your child(ren)’s image from being seen in the virtual classroom (e.g. Zoom).

- In order not to overwhelm students with transitions, we have recommended that no more than 2 activities/assignments be given per day within a given subject area or course at the elementary level. At the middle school and high school level, we have recommended that assignments are due multiple days after being assigned. Daily lessons and independent activities will be available each morning by 8:30 am on the teacher’s google class page and via Schoology.
- Special area teachers will be coming online in the coordination of at least one special (art, music, for grades 2-5, P.E.) each day in their lesson plans. We encourage families to also build in frequent wellness breaks.
- Teachers will monitor student progress to ensure participation and check-in with students if they are struggling or non-participatory.

DELIVERY OF ASSIGNMENTS AND INSTRUCTION

K-12 Teachers - In addition to a review of past lessons, teachers will be introducing new concepts beginning April 1st, 2020. Teacher’s instruction will focus on the District’s content area curriculum, which is already in place. Teachers will regularly share assignments and instruction with students and/or student families where appropriate. Learning activities may include, videos, tutorials, web-sites, and assignments, which will be available and posted for students via E-Chalk, Google classroom, and/or Schoology. Special education services and related services will continue to be provided to students to the greatest extent possible.

Consultant Teacher Direct - Consultant teachers will modify the general education teachers’ plans and activities in accordance with each student’s IEP. This will occur only for the areas of need, as outlined in their IEP, for consultant teacher direct. The teachers will offer suggestions for how to complete the activities for the content area of need and what appropriate accommodations and modifications should be utilized per the students IEP.

Special Class (Self-Contained) - Special Class teachers will continue to provide modified content in the area of need for their students in their special class via distance learning. Each Special Education teacher will offer content in each area of special class per the student’s IEP to support the learning of skills for students in their special class.

Related Service Providers - Currently each provider has resources for parents to utilize while home. Moving forward, mandated services will be provided to the extent possible utilizing a platform such as Zoom.

Speech and Language Services - Speech therapists will provide distance learning activities to engage students in a variety of ways to develop their skills as related to their IEP goals and needs determined in the present levels of performance.
Occupational Therapy Services - Occupational therapists will provide distance learning activities to engage students in a variety of ways to develop their skills as related to their IEP goals and needs determined in the present levels of performance.

Physical Therapy Services - Physical therapists will provide distance learning activities to engage students in a variety of ways to develop their skills as related to their IEP goals and needs determined in the present levels of performance.

Hearing Services - Teachers of the Hearing Impaired will provide distance learning activities to engage students in a variety of ways to develop their skills as related to their IEP goals and needs determined in the present levels of performance. Consultation with the General Education/Special Education teachers will also occur as needed to support access to the curriculum.

Counseling/Psychological - Counselors will provide distance learning activities to engage and promote skills in the areas of social, emotional and behavioral development as related to their IEP goals and services needs determined in the present levels of performance. Indirect consultation and activities may be provided to parents in order to support distance learning.

Section 504 - Teachers will continue to follow Section 504 accommodations and modifications for students that would remain applicable during distance learning.

CSE/504 Meetings - The CSE Annual Review process will continue. Meetings will be held via Zoom. Teachers must make every effort to maintain the proposed schedule. If there is an issue, the teacher shall contact the CSE chair or case manager. Please be advised that CSE meetings that require testing such as initials, program reviews, and re-evaluations will be postponed until the providers have the ability to test the child.

ENGLISH AS A NEW LANGUAGE (ENL) AND BILINGUAL EDUCATION
The ENL/Bilingual Department will utilize various digital/virtual platforms and computer aided instructional tools to continue to provide the high quality exemplary education we have always offered our students. All members of the department will collaboratively plan with general education teachers and specialists to ensure that English Language Learners receive mandated CR Part 154 minutes of instruction in an optimal virtual learning environment.

Lessons will be scaffolded to support the needs of the students and bilingual materials will be provided as needed. Co-taught ENL and general education classes will still be co-taught virtually.

Communication is important and critical. Ms. Audrey Cabbell, Director of ENL and Bilingual Education is available to answer any questions. She can be reached at acabbell@nyackschools.org or 845-353-7032. Se habla español.
PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND HEALTH

Physical Education and Health teachers will post lessons in their Google Classroom sites to help students and families maintain a healthy lifestyle through this closure. The lessons contain several benefits including physical activity, which is critical to maintaining a healthy lifestyle during long term school closure. We encourage parents/guardians to join their children and participate in the lessons. Now more than ever, staying physically active is vital. Benefits of exercise included in the lessons are:

- Assistance in improved academic performance
- Improved self esteem
- Reduces the risk for depression and the effects of stress
- Improves overall quality of life

GUIDANCE SUPPORT/SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING ACTIVITIES

The health and well-being of our students remains a top priority. Guidance Counselors, Social Workers and School Psychologists remain available to students and families during this time. Children of all ages might feel an increase in stress and anxiety during times of uncertainty. The guidance department will be posting mindfulness activities, and SEL videos that can be used at home. Please visit the Guidance Department webpages for resources and SEL support during school closure due to COVID-19.

- To view the Elementary school page click here: [Elementary Guidance page]
- To view the Middle School page click here: [Middle School Guidance page]
- To view the High School page click here: [High School Guidance page]

Please do not hesitate to reach out to your child’s guidance counselor for resources or if your child needs additional support. It is important to seek support during this disruption to our normal daily routines. Check in with us often using the following:

- Jon Hogg, UN and VCE Elementary: jhogg@nyackschools.org
- Marina Gomez, Liberty and UN Elementary: mgomez@nyackschools.org
- Edgar Lambert, 6th grade Middle School: elambert@nyackschools.org
- Liz Battista, 7th grade Middle School: lbattista@nyackschools.org
- Francesca Falvo, 8th grade Middle School: ffalvo@nyackschools.org
- Maggie Gershonovitz, High School: mgershonovitz@nyackschools.org
- Tara Heinemann, High School: theinemann@nyackschools.org
- Sean Cavanagh, High School: scavanagh@nyackschools.org
- Alejandro Pena, Bilingual High School: apena@nyackschools.org
- Diana Wright, High School: dwright@nyackschools.org
- Dornzella Milligan, Student Support Services Prevention Coordinator: dmilligan@nyackschools.org
- Lorraine Longing: Director of Guidance K - 12: llonging@nyackschools.org
TECHNOLOGY ACCESS
Technology platforms will be used by students that are age-appropriate and designed to connect students and teachers at each grade level to allow for learning objectives to be communicated to students with each lesson. Technology Platforms will allow content and skills to be introduced in a variety of ways, allowing for differentiation, feedback and self-reflection. Recording tools will allow teachers to provide lessons, support and tutorials as needed. Video conferencing tools will allow students to interact with their teacher and other students via video, audio, chat or discussion boards. Teachers will also be able to monitor student progress and ensure participation.

TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT - If parents/students have trouble connecting, logging-in or accessing a required program, please call the Technology Help Desk at 845-353-7075

We understand that not all students have the same level of access to technology at home. If you do not have internet connectivity (WiFi), or a device, please contact your child’s principal who will inform the Technology Department of your concern.

SUPPORTED TECHNOLOGY PLATFORMS - The list below, while not comprehensive, contains district approved and commonly used technology tools.

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<tr>
<th>Elementary Schools (K-5)</th>
<th>Middle School 6-8</th>
<th>High School (9-12)</th>
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<tr>
<td>● Seesaw*</td>
<td>● Google Classroom*</td>
<td>● Schoology*</td>
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<td>● Google Classroom*</td>
<td>● Google Apps for Education</td>
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<td>● Google Apps for Education</td>
<td>● Brain Pop</td>
<td>● Schoology*</td>
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<td>● Typing Club</td>
<td>● Ed Puzzle</td>
<td>● Google Classroom*</td>
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<td>● Screencastify</td>
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*Learning Management System used for the coordination of learning activities.
(Supported Technology Platforms, continued) - The safety, security and privacy of our students and their data is a top priority. Many web-based platforms are not compliant with educational privacy requirements. Teachers have been instructed that any platform which collects student information must be approved by the district to ensure adherence to student data privacy requirements.

ELEMENTARY GRADING
Due to the uncertainty of when schools will reopen, the district will institute a pass/fail grade for courses for the third trimester of the 2019-2020 school year. The pass/fail determination will be based upon multiple data collection points including:

1. The student’s second trimester grades
2. The teacher’s evaluation of student participation and progress during the remote-learning time

Elementary students' grades are based on ongoing formative and summative assessments. Each of the above data collection categories will be graded using the existing standards-based system:

- **Level 1**: Far below standards
- **Level 2**: Approaching the standards (Level 2 is the widest range. A student who is a low 2 would not be passing; a student who is a high 2 would be passing)
- **Level 3**: Meeting the standards
- **Level 4**: Exceeding the standards

Please note that Level 1 and low Level 2 would be a “fail” grade; High Level 2 and Levels 3 and 4 would be a “pass” grade. These grades will be modified if necessary. Our goal is to overcome the challenges of the current remote learning situation so that no student is negatively impacted.

SECONDARY GRADING (Nyack Middle School and Nyack High School)

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<th>Middle School (HS courses at the MS will follow HS grading)</th>
<th>High School</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3rd Quarter Grades</td>
<td>Based on students' work up to March 13th. (Numerical grade)</td>
<td>Students’ work will be graded until the end of the marking period. Students will receive a numeric grade.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grades</td>
<td>Numerical grades based on completion (non HS credit courses only)</td>
<td>Numerical grades based on mastery</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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### Some Types of Assessments

| Rubric driven, problem-based, timed assessments (Rubrics will include time on task and benchmarks) |
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### Special Education and ENL

| Teachers will work to offer modifications with the assistance of special education counterparts and with support of ENL teachers. Assignments and activities will be differentiated and reflective of the students’ individual learning needs. |
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### STANDARDIZED ASSESSMENTS

- The administration of elementary-level and intermediate-level State assessments have been suspended for the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year. The suspension applies to the following New York State testing programs:
  - New York State Grades 3-8 English Language Arts Test;
  - New York State Grades 3-8 Mathematics Test;
  - New York State Grade 4 Elementary-Level Science Test;
  - New York State Grade 8 Intermediate-Level Science Test;
  - New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT) in Grades K-12; and
  - New York State Alternate Assessment (NYSAA) for students with severe cognitive disabilities in Grades 3-8 and high school.
- AP Exams
  - The College Board will be posting updates regarding assessments here: [AP Updates for Schools Impacted by Coronavirus](#)
- Regents Exams
  - New York State has thus far not indicated any changes to regents exams for the 2019-2020 school year. As additional information becomes available, we shall share it with the community.
- SAT
  - The College Board will be posting updates regarding assessments here: [SAT Coronavirus Updates](#)
• Seal of Biliteracy
  - Information regarding the Seal of Biliteracy will be posted here: Seal of Biliteracy Updates
• ACT
  - ACT.org is posting updates here: ACT Coronavirus FAQ

ATTENDANCE/PARTICIPATION:
All school districts are still waiting for guidance from the NY State Education Department about student attendance during this remote learning time. In the interim, we are requesting that parents notify the school of their child’s absence, in the same manner as when school is in normal session, if he/she is unable to participate in the lessons/assignments on any given day:
  - NHS: mvalverde@nyackschools.org
  - NMS: EMcGee@nyackschools.org
  - Liberty Elementary School: gsantana@nyackschools.org
  - Valley Cottage Elementary School: vbreshin@nyackschools.org
  - Upper Nyack Elementary School: ldellolio@nyackschools.org
• If we do not hear from a parent, we will consider the student in attendance that day.
• We will only mark students absent if the parent notifies us that he/she will not participate on any given day.
• We will notify parents of any changes to the practice if we receive different information from the New York State Education Department.

SUGGESTIONS FOR PARENTS
• Develop an at-home work schedule that provides consistency and supports your child’s learning needs. Frequent breaks are a good idea.
• If possible, set aside a quiet area in your home that your children can use as their work space. This may be a desk area in a common room or another office area.
• Find time each day to be active, preferably outside, if possible. Take a daily walk. If you are not able to go out, try some indoor activities, such as yoga.
• Find time to relax and provide self-care for each member of your family. These are stressful times, so take care of yourself and each other.

SUGGESTIONS FOR STUDENTS
• Take risks and challenges.
• Keep track of questions you may have if your classroom teacher is not immediately available.
• Find a comfortable workstation in your house. You may need to be creative, but finding the right work space in your home is key. Do what works best for you and your family.
• Stay positive and take brain breaks. After working for a while, take a break or go for a short walk.
• Stay hydrated and drink water whenever possible.

CONTACT INFORMATION - WHO TO CONTACT
• Please contact your child’s teacher if you have questions about a lesson or assignment or to discuss your child’s progress. Teachers will continue to use email to stay connected with their students and families.

Please contact your child’s Principal if you have questions, in general:
✓ Liberty Elementary School- erechenberger@nyackschools.org
✓ Upper Nyack Elementary School- imercora@nyackschools.org
✓ Valley Cottage Elementary School- laddison@nyackschools.org
✓ Nyack Middle School- djohnson@nyackschools.org
✓ Nyack High School- nsaieva@nyackschools.org

• For Technology questions, please contact Ms. Darleen Nicolosi, Director of Technology at dnicolosi@nyackschools.org.
• For Special Education questions, please contact Mr. Leo Macias, Director of Special Education and Pupil Personnel Services at lmacias@nyackschools.org.
• For ENL/Bilingual questions, please contact Ms. Audrey Cabbell, Director of ENL and Bilingual Services, at acabbell@nyackschools.org.
• For curriculum-related, schedule, or more general questions please contact Dr. Winsome Gregory, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction at wgregory@nyackschools.org.

• Technology Help Line for district-issued devices: 845-353-7075

ATHLETICS
The Section One Executive Committee has postponed all practices, combined practices, scrimmages, and contests until further notice. The committee will meet on April 15 to reassess the status of spring sports. Our athletic facilities are closed to all, as they are an extension of the school. We ask you to respect this condition. Our coaches have been communicating with their student-athletes via SportsYou, HUDL or Google Classroom sharing valuable resources to keep them engaged, motivated, emotionally and mentally well during this difficult time. A Google Classroom has been dedicated to continual training for all, please use code raet5lt. For questions regarding athletics please contact Joe Sigillo, Director of Physical Education, Health, Wellness & Athletics jsigillo@nyackschools.org.
SCHOOL FACILITIES

- All District facilities are closed for non-essential employees, students and parents.
- Health officials have asked that we communicate to our communities the importance of practicing social distancing. Please be advised that during this health crisis the playgrounds and ball fields located on school property will not be opened to groups. We ask for your assistance with keeping everyone safe and healthy.
- We recognize that students may have belongings in school that are needed during the school closing period. Students that need to pick up medicine, equipment, or other items of importance may make arrangements by emailing their school principals.

SCHOOL MEALS PROGRAM - We are offering “grab and go” meals for our school age children in need while schools are closed due to COVID-19. Each student is eligible to receive one breakfast and one lunch. Meals will be available for pick up at the following two (2) locations in our school community:

- **Nyack Center:** Located at 58 Depew Avenue, Nyack. Pick up times are between 9:30 AM -1:00 PM, Monday-Friday.
- **Waldron Terrace:** Meals will be distributed from a mobile unit in the apartment complex parking lot between 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM, Monday-Friday.

Please contact Gloria Menoutis at gmenoutis@nyackschools.org or your school’s Family Resource Center representative if you have concerns about the ability to pick up meals using the following listing of Family Resource Coordinators:

- Silvia Falcomer at LIBERTY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - 353-7247
- Wanda Octavioano at NYACK MIDDLE SCHOOL - 353-7214
- Rachel Berlin at UPPER NYACK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - 353-7268
- Jessica Misla at VALLEY COTTAGE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - 353-7291

DISTRICT COMMUNICATIONS AND UPDATES

We will keep our school community informed with all District-wide updates and announcements during COVID-19 school closure using Central Administration Office robo-communications and postings to our website.

- **Important messages from the District,** including letters and updates from the Superintendent’s Office, will continue to be sent to District families via Infinite Campus Messenger, the District’s emergency communications platform. Letters and updates are attached as pdf documents emailed to Parent Portal accounts.
• **Text messages and/or robo calls** are sent as-needed in English, Spanish and Haitian Creole.

• **Updates** are being posted to the District website at [www.nyackschools.org](http://www.nyackschools.org).

• **Check the Alert Box**, located at the top of the District’s website and each school’s home page, on a regular basis for ongoing communication updates.

• **Let’s Talk** remains open and available as a District tool to stay connected to our school community. Submit general questions and concerns you may have via Let’s Talk at [www.nyackschools.org](http://www.nyackschools.org).

• **Translation of all website Alert Box updates is available** by clicking on the language button located in the top left hand corner of our website’s home page. (see the Google Translate icon and “Select Language”)

**ASSISTANCE IN SPANISH OR HAITIAN CREOLE**

**Si le hace falta información traducida en español, llame a:**

- Yesenia Polanco - District Community Liaison  845-353-7042
- Silvia Falcomer - Liberty Family Resource Center  845-353-7247
- Wanda Octaviano - Middle School Family Resource Center 845-353-7214
- Jessica Misla - Valley Cottage Family Resource Center 845-353-7291

**Si ou bezwen enfòmasyon tradui an kreyòl, rele:**

- Doktè Elcie Douce - Director of World Language 845-353-7173
- Rachel Berlin - Upper Nyack Family Resource Center 845-353-7268