



Lafayette Township School District

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March 15, 2020

Dear Parents and Guardians,

As I write this update, I cannot help but reflect on how quickly the world has changed in these last few days. It is hard to believe the difference a week has made in our response as a nation, state, and district to the COVID-19 pandemic. Due to this crisis, our school district will be closed for the next ten days from Monday, March 16, 2020 to Friday, March 27, 2020. At this time our remote learning plans have been activated. Given our preparedness and remote learning plans, we will be able to count these remote learning days towards the mandated 180-day school requirement for the New Jersey Department of Education.

I recognize the challenges that we are all going to be facing over the next few weeks as we manage the needs of our children, families, work, and communities. There are no easy answers to these challenges, but I believe that we will be able to support one another and get through this situation. We will be reevaluating the current status of COVID-19 as it impacts education each week to determine our next course of action. I will update you as soon as I have any additional information so that you have as much time as possible to plan for the needs of your family.

Last week all students were provided with various packets of work, novels, other learning materials, and/or online resources to complete as they engage in remote learning. All of our students have access to a computer and the internet to further extend learning opportunities. Given the range of ages that our school district educates from 3 years old to 14 years old, there is not a single plan in place for all students. Individual teachers have sent home learning resources with direction sheets, login information, and additional resources for the students that they instruct. Each teacher will be communicating further as necessary to students and parents as we move into this week.

There are many questions regarding remote instruction from parents, students, and teachers alike. This is the first-time remote learning has occurred in NJ schools, and a comprehensive plan was brainstormed and implemented in 7 days. Thank you to our amazing teachers and staff for their hard work in preparing for what is now our reality as remote learning has become our mode of instruction. Thank you for your patience as we work together to make this a successful experience for our students.

Sincerely,
Jennifer Cenatiempo

Remote Learning Frequently Asked Questions

1. My child and I feel overwhelmed by a lot right now. From school being closed to hearing about COVID-19 on the TV and internet constantly, it is weighing on us. How can I support my child during this difficult time?
 - a. The first and most important thing that any of us can do is be a safe and supportive person for our children to open up to about their feelings. It is okay to talk to them or ask them directly how they are feeling about school being closed etc. For many students, the disruption to their normal schedule is going to make learning more challenging. If your child is struggling to complete an assignment, please communicate with the teacher, and the work will be modified as necessary.
 - b. Most of the assignments were designed to be completed within a week of time, but each child is unique and different. If the assigned workload is overwhelming your child or your family, communicate with your child's teacher and reduce the amount of work to a healthy level.
 - c. The social and emotional well-being of our community is important. Our school psychologist, Mrs. McIntyre at bmcintyre@ltes.org and our school social worker Mrs. Roccisano at kroccisano@ltes.org are available to support your child or family remotely as necessary. Please email them should you have the need.
 - d. I am always available via email at jcenatiempo@ltes.org. Please reach out with any questions or concerns.

2. My child came home with many different resources last week, but I am unsure about what I should actually have them work on. What are my next steps?
 - a. All students were sent home with various paper-based resources. Some of the students also have digital or online resources. The paper-based resources included a cover sheet that provides a daily or weekly explanation of the assignments and directions for completion. Each classroom and grade level will function a bit differently given the content and grade level of the students enrolled in that program.
 - b. For many of the middle school classes, the teachers will be communicating with the students via email. Their work will be integrating a great deal of online work with some paper-based work. The teachers will be posting assignments and communicating regarding their expectations. If your child is unsure of what they need to complete, please email their teacher directly.

3. Who should I contact with any questions?
 - a. When a question arises, the first step is to email the teacher to clarify the expectations. The teacher will be able to immediately address content or assignment-based questions.
 - b. All teachers and staff will be actively communicating with the students and parents via email throughout the period of closure.
 - c. Please feel free to reach out to me at any time at jcenatiempo@ltes.org

4. My child was absent last week. Where do I pick up their work?
 - a. Your child's work will be on a table in the school vestibule area with their name on it. The vestibule area will be unlocked tomorrow so that parents may pick up missed work from 7 am – 3 pm.

5. My child generally receives nutrition benefits from the school including free or reduced lunch. Will my child still be able to receive that daily meal from the school?
 - a. Yes, students who have been identified receiving free or reduced lunch will continue to receive lunch daily.
 - b. Parents can pick up the lunch daily from 11 am – 1 pm in the school vestibule.
 - c. If you are unable to come to the school on a daily basis, please communicate with the lunch server directly. It is possible for several days of lunch to be packed for you at a time.

6. My family is experiencing food instability due to COVID-19. (There is not enough money to purchase food for my family.) Are there resources available to support my family?
 - a. Yes, please communicate to Mrs. Faris at pfaris@ltes.org or myself at Jcenatiempo@ltes.org and we will connect you to resources in our community who have food and supports available for our families during this challenging time.

7. Will the main office be open?
 - a. The main office will not generally be staffed. If you need support from the main office, please contact Mrs. Cocchiarella at rcocchiarella@ltes.org

8. Will additional trips and events be cancelled?
 - a. I will continue to update everyone regarding event cancellations. It is difficult to forecast where we will be beyond a day or two at this point as the information is constantly changing. We will give as much advanced notice as possible regarding events.