

News

April 2020

...for parents during the school dismissal due to COVID-19

Instruction during the extended dismissal of schools

Dear Parents and Guardians:

For the last few weeks, our educational system has undergone a tremendous transformation, from the structure and routines of our schools to the virtual classrooms now being created by our teachers. We have been using words like ‘unprecedented’ for everything happening in our world today, and it is true: what we are doing to instruct our children has never been done before. These are trying times, but we are up for the challenge, because we all care about our students and want the best for them.



These virtual classrooms are being established on two platforms that some of our students may have already used: Google Classroom or Microsoft Teams. Different grade levels are using different platforms intentionally. Some students and teachers were already interacting on one of the platforms or to make it consistent for students across certain grade levels to interface on the same platform.

In this newsletter, you will find initial information to familiarize yourself with the platforms your child will be using to interact with teachers. Our goal in this initial transition to virtual instruction and learning is for all to familiarize themselves with the process and programs/materials we will be using.

This newsletter also includes information on our approach to grading and grade reporting, our first wave of laptop distribution, and reminders from Student Services and the district’s Acceptable Use Policy and Code of Conduct.

We all recognize that there are so many questions left to answer. We will continue to send regular updates to address the variety of topics that need to be tackled. Right now we must focus on supporting each other through this transition to online learning, addressing issues related to learning and connectivity. We are working on increasing the distance of each school building’s wireless network, installing more mobile hotspots on several of our buses, and partnering with local towns and non-profit agencies to expand the availability of wi-fi. Next week we will update families on this important topic.

I would like to thank parents and guardians for working so hard during this very difficult time to assist your children with their learning, while at the same time keeping your families cared for and your households functioning. Thank you to all our district parents, grandparents, families, and community members for your patience, support, and encouragement to our students. This has been outstanding and much appreciated.

Stay Home • Stay Safe • Be Well

Sincerely,

Dr. Thomas J. Douglas
Superintendent of Schools

Additional Resources and Information

Please click on the images below or <https://www.horseheadsdistrict.com/> for additional resources for parents and up-to-date information on our schools response to our extended student dismissal.



Classroom Connections: Online Platforms

Below are the online platforms we will be using at each grade level. As it has always been, it is very important that parents communicate with teachers on any issues involving their student. Please contact the teacher via email, or leave a message at the school's phone number, and the teacher will get back to you in a timely manner. If you haven't already, you will be hearing from your child's teacher(s) with information on when they will be available during the week for office hours. During this time, students can connect with teachers live through features available on the platform they're using.

PreK-Grade 4



All students in PK-4 grade will use the **Microsoft Teams** classroom for their online learning experience. For students of PK-2 Grade, a notification will be sent with your child's username and password. Third and fourth grade students can access their teacher's Team classroom by using their normal computer login name and password they use to get on a computer in class. The Microsoft Teams platform will allow your student to receive new learning through shared lessons from his/her teacher. Students will also find Music, Art, and Physical Education lessons in their Team classroom.

Grades 5-6

Students in Grades 5 and 6 will use either **Google Classroom** or **Microsoft Teams**. Students should have already received an email from their teacher to invite the student to the class platform. If they did not receive an email your student or you should reach out to their child's teacher on Monday, April 13. These platforms will allow your student to receive new learning through shared lessons from his/her teacher. Students will also find Music, Art, and PE lessons in their classroom.



Grades 7-8

Students in Grades 7 and 8 will use either **Google Classroom** or **Microsoft Teams**. These platforms will allow your student to receive new learning through shared lessons from his/her teacher. Students will have a different classroom *for each class in his/her schedule*. Students should have already received an email from their teacher to invite the student to the class platform. If they did not receive an email your student or you should reach out to their child's teacher on Monday, April 13.



Grades 9-12

All students in grades 9-12 will use the **Microsoft Teams** classroom for their online learning experience. These platforms will allow your student to receive new learning through shared lessons from his/her teacher. Students will have a different classroom *for each class in his/her schedule*. Students should have already received an email from their teacher to invite the student to the class platform. If they did not receive an email your student or you should reach out to their child's teacher on Monday, April 13.

Google Classroom Resources

Parents, to learn more about this platform, [click here](#).
Students, to learn more about this platform, [click here](#).

Microsoft Teams Resources

Parents, to learn more about this platform, [click here](#).
Students, to learn more about this platform, [click here](#).

For a tutorial on Microsoft Teams created by our own HSCD students, [click here](#).
A video on Microsoft Teams created by our own HSCD instructional techs, [click here](#).

Acceptable Use and Code of Conduct

For all platforms your child is using, our district's [Acceptable Use Policy](#) and [Code of Conduct](#), especially Academic Integrity, remain in place. Please click on the hyperlinks above for friendly reminders of these integral pieces of our education system, regardless of where the learning occurs.

Laptop Distribution



The distribution of student loaner laptops (and power cords) will occur Monday and Tuesday, April 13 and 14. More information will be sent directly to those families that requested laptops. Included will be when and where you can pick up a laptop, and what to do if the time of pick up does not work for your family.

For security reasons, we are deploying laptops only to those that requested them and have received an email from the district. We have gone through a process to ensure hardware is being given to our students. Those on site on Monday and Tuesday will not be able to add any other students to their lists. We will look to do a second request process the following week.

For families that requested multiple laptops, please understand that at this point in time we can deploy one laptop for every two students. We do not have the resources to provide a device for every student, and our goal has to be to outfit as many households as possible in this first wave. During the second request process, families with multiple students can request again for a child. Depending upon the number of requests, we will determine if we can alter the plan for one laptop for two students in the same household.

Student Services

During the school dismissal, we remain responsible for the free appropriate public education (FAPE) of students eligible for special education services with an individualized education program (IEP). Each special education student and classroom has unique instructional needs and materials to consider when planning self-contained class lessons.

All students with IEPs will have access to educational opportunities with the support of a special education teacher and/or related service provider, as appropriate. CSE and 504 plan meetings will continue as scheduled with a phone conference format.

If you have any questions concerning a 504 plan, reach out to your building principal. For questions about IEPs, please contact your child's case manager or CSE Chairperson.

PK-4 CPSE/CSE Chairperson	Cassandra Lamphier	clamphier@horseheadsdistrict.com
5-12 CSE Chairperson	Ryan Collins	rcollins@horseheadsdistrict.com
Students in BOCES Placements	Theresa Woodworth	twoodworth@horseheadsdistrict.com
Director of Student Services	Kelly Squires	ksquires@horseheadsdistrict.com

Questions about the information in this newsletter? See the last page for contact information. If you are unsure of whom to contact, email us at hcsdinfo@horseheadsdistrict.com or call 739-5601, x4295.

Grades and Grade Reporting

The truth is that we need students, families, and staff to become comfortable with this new way of delivering instruction and learning. We know that asking this in the midst a pandemic brings additional stress and anxiety. To ease into this reality with brand new content being introduced, teachers will provide feedback on assignments. Grades will not be assigned for the first few weeks. The only exception to this applies to our students in ACE and AP courses who have been working on new content throughout this time given the demands put on those courses from higher education and The College Board.

For the next two weeks, from April 13 through April 24, our teachers, support staff, and administrators will monitor student progress and address barriers to learning in this new system. During the third week, and if the dismissal is extended by the governor, we will devise a grade reporting system that takes into account our learning from the previous two weeks, any new guidance provided by the state, procedures adopted by higher education, and most importantly is in the best interests of our students. At that time, we will follow up with the community on our course of action concerning grading and grade reporting.

Throughout this process, as is the case when schools are in regular session, there is an expectation of students at all levels that they participate in their own learning by completing and turning in work assigned by their teachers. This is especially true for students taking credit-bearing courses at the secondary level.

Parent Portal

During this time, it is increasingly important to find multiple ways for our teachers and parents to remain connected. Horseheads Central School District Parent Portal allows parents to view grades and, when back in session, attendance through our SchoolTool website. Please note that we are looking at ways to measure students' attendance and participation during the extended dismissal. To access the portal, go to <https://schooltool.horseheadsdistrict.com/sthhweb>. You can also find the SchoolTool Mobile app in the Apple app store and Google Play store.

Questions about the Parent Portal? Email hcsdportalinfo@horseheadsdistrict.com or call your child's school.

Child Care

We are working in partnership with the Chemung County Child Care Council to assist families of health care workers and first responders during this time. The Council has updated information for parents about available childcare during school closings related to COVID-19. For information, please call 607-734-3941 or see www.chemchildcare.com.

2020-21 Budget Development

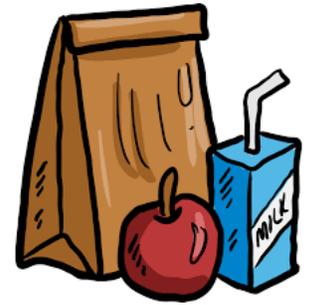
Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the state has postponed state-wide school budget votes until at least June 1. The district continues to work on developing the budget. The April 22 Board of Education meeting will go on as scheduled, but will be held via videoconferencing. A live stream will be on the district website at www.horseheadsdistrict.com. Choose Board of Education from the main menu.

You may view preliminary budget information on the district website at <https://horseheadsdistrict.com/Budget2020-21.cfm?school=District>, but please note that information does not yet include current updates on state aid or information received since the dismissal of schools. Information will be updated once we receive information from the state. Questions? Email hcsdinfo@horseheadsdistrict.com or call (607) 739-5601, x4295.

Emergency Meals Information

The district is providing breakfast and lunch for students in need of assistance during the school dismissal due to COVID-19. This program is for any district family who needs assistance. Meals are available for those 18 years old or younger at no charge.

Meals are provided weekdays during the school dismissal at the following locations and times:



10:30-11:30am	Center Street School	812 Center St, Horseheads
10:30-10:50am	Collingwood Mobile Home Park	358 Chambers Rd, Horseheads
10:30-10:50am	Pine Valley Mobile Home Park	3600 Watkins Rd, Pine Valley
10:30-11:00am	Ridge Road School	112 Ridge Rd, Horseheads
11:00-11:30am	Millport Fire Department	2016 Crescent St, Millport
11:00-11:20am	Thunderbird Greens Mobile Home Park	391 Sing Sing Rd, Horseheads
11:15-11:35am	Erin Estates	1356 Breesport Rd, Breesport

Please note: We are continuing to evaluate the program, and we will make adjustments if necessary.

We provide one breakfast and lunch per student. The menu items follow the typical meal pattern with grain, protein, fruit and/or vegetable, and milk. For those familiar with the Summer Food Service Program, the meals are very similar. Examples include peanut butter and jelly sandwiches or yogurt and string cheese, assorted fruit, and other items. We also provide alternative food items for students who have food allergies or intolerances.

Meals are provided via drive up or walk up service for recipients to take home. There is not a dining area.

If a parent is truly unable to get to a site, we can deliver meals to homes. Please call (607) 739-5601, x4260 or x4295 if you absolutely cannot get to a site to order meals for the following day. Please note: For Monday delivery, please contact us on the Friday before. We will need parents to contact us each day they need delivery.

Questions? Call (607) 739-5601, x4260/x4295, or email hcsdinfo@horseheadsdistrict.com.

Chemung County Meal Program

In addition to the district meal program, Chemung County is providing boxes of non-perishable food items for families in need of assistance. Families can participate in both the district and the county programs.

To reserve a meal box, please call the county hotline at (607) 873-1813, x1. Boxes will be available Mondays and Thursdays at district meal sites and through delivery. Families must register for a box each time they need one.



Questions? Call the county hotline number at 873-1813, x1.

Contact Information

Schools

Horseheads High School	795-2500
Kris Earl, Interim Principal.....	kearl@horseheadsdistrict.com x1600
Dan Buseck, Assistant Principal.....	dbuseck@horseheadsdistrict.com x1602
Mike McCawley, Assistant Principal.....	mmccawley@horseheadsdistrict.com x1603
Horseheads Middle School	739-6357
Ron Holloway, Principal.....	rholloway@horseheadsdistrict.com x3640
Tom Hoeffner, Assistant Principal.....	thoeffner@horseheadsdistrict.com x3642
Horseheads Intermediate School	739-6366
Michael Bostwick, Principal.....	mbostwick@horseheadsdistrict.com x3620
Robin Doubrava, Assistant Principal.....	rdoubrav@horseheadsdistrict.com x3628
Big Flats Elementary School	739-6373
Elizabeth Scaptura, Principal.....	escaptura@horseheadsdistrict.com x5600
Center Street Elementary School	795-2580
Patricia Sotero, Principal.....	psotero@horseheadsdistrict.com x2600
Gardner Road Elementary School	739-6347
Patrick Patterson, Principal.....	ppatterson@horseheadsdistrict.com x6600
Ridge Road Elementary School	739-6351
Anne-Marie Bailey, Principal.....	ambailey@horseheadsdistrict.com x7600

District Offices

Student Services.....	739-5601, x4305/x4308
<i>(Special Education, Speech/Physical/Occupational Therapy, Nurses)</i>	
Technology.....	739-5601, x4245
Food Services (meal delivery).....	739-5601, x4260/x4295
Athletics.....	739-5601, x4254
Superintendent's Office/Board of Education.....	739-5601, x4201
Business Office.....	739-5601, x4260/x4248
Human Resources.....	739-5601, x4211/x4212
Community Information.....	739-5601, x4295

The Horseheads Central School District offers educational programs without regard to race, color, national origin, creed, religion, marital status, military status, sex, sexual orientation, age, gender identity, predisposing genetic characteristic, or disability, and provides equal access to applicable groups under the Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act. Inquiries regarding this policy may be made to Caitlin DeFilippo, Title IX/DASA Coordinator, and Co-Civil Rights Compliance Officer; Anthony Gill, Co-Civil Rights Compliance Officer; or Kelly Squires, Section 504 Coordinator, Horseheads Central School District, One Raider Lane, Horseheads, NY 14845, (607) 739-5601. This policy of non-discrimination includes access by students to educational programs, counseling services, course offerings, and activities, as well as recruitment and appointment of employees and employment pay, benefits, advancement and/or termination.