

SCHODACK CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

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MICHAEL TUTTLE
President
Board of Education

April 7, 2020

Dear CES Families,

Let us begin by saying how much we miss our students. School is not the same without all of us together and we truly miss everyday life at Castleton Elementary School. We hope that everyone is healthy and working hard to do their part during this time. We recognize the difficulties and challenges that families are facing and want you to know that we are here to support you and your family. At the end of the day, we are all in this together.

Yesterday, Governor Cuomo extended our school closure through April 29. As our time away from traditional school increases, home instruction becomes more and more important. Although home instruction can't replace the experience our students receive at CES, it's necessary to continue the learning process as best we can. As a district, we are doing everything we can to make that experience as accessible as possible. We have supplied families in need with computer devices and internet access. Food services have been made available to all students, and teachers have worked hard to reinvent the way we connect with and educate our students. All of which happened in a relatively short period of time.

As home instruction continues throughout the month of April, and concerns are raised over an even longer closure, it is our responsibility to prepare our students for next year, despite the challenges of this year. Teachers are beginning to develop and assign lessons that introduce new material. We want all families to know that we recognize the challenges that you are facing at home and are putting in place guidelines to help accommodate your needs. The partnership between CES and our families has always been a strong one, and we are looking to ask more of you now than we ever have, but no more than you can handle.

Attached to this letter is additional information to help you understand expectations and provide more information on home instruction, report cards, assessment and student/family support.

We have many aspects of school that will need to be considered as our closure continues. As we make adjustments, we will continue to communicate with you. Please check your email as well as our website periodically for updates. This is new to all of us and we will continue to be as accommodating and understanding as possible. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out to your child's teacher or your administrators. This adventure in learning will not be perfect, but together, we will make it great for our kids!

Sincerely,

James L. Derby

James L. Derby
Principal

Keri Rosher

Keri Rosher
Assistant Principal

CES Parent Guide to Home Instruction

Expectations

We understand that supporting and navigating online home instruction has many challenges. We recognize that you may be working yourself, have multiple kids at different grade levels, your internet and available devices may be at a premium, and you yourself may not be a teacher. We want you to know that we are here to help!

Below you will find a chart of reasonable expectations by grade level that our teachers are using as a framework when designing and assigning lessons and activities for each day:

Daily Home Instruction Expectations by Grade Level				
Grade	K	1-2	3-4	5-6
Time spent by students <u>on each lesson/activity</u>	15-20 minutes	20-25 minutes	25-30 minutes	30-40 minutes
# of core subject areas per day (Core = ELA, Math, SS or SCI)	3 core subject area lessons/activities	3 core subject area lessons/activities	3 core subject area lessons/activities	3 core subject area lessons/activities
Special Areas (P.E., music, art, library)	1 special area lesson/activity	1 special area lesson/activity	1 special area lesson/activity	1 special area lesson/activity
Total Time Daily	60-80 minutes	80-100 minutes	100-120 minutes	120-140 minutes

Please know that we do not expect or recommend that children engage in a traditional school day's worth of work each day or that they complete all assignments in one sitting. Instructional lessons and activities are accessible at all times, which gives your child and family flexibility to complete them when it is most convenient and appropriate. If you are finding that the assigned work is taking your child much longer than the expected time, please reach out to your child's teacher(s).

Class Meetings

We value the positive relationships and social interactions that we have in our classrooms and school. Therefore, teachers will be offering at least 1 class meeting each week using Google Meet. These Meets are intended to be an opportunity for the teacher(s) and students to virtually connect in real time. The class meetings are not required, however we strongly suggest students join in these meetings to talk, share and engage with their peers and teachers. Teachers will share specific information and links to the Meets with families each week.

Computer/Internet Use

As we venture into this age of online learning, please know that our students will still be held to the same standards for internet safety and rules that we would expect while in school. Please have conversations with your children about proper use of social media and online meetings and monitor their activity as appropriate.

Feedback and Assessments

As teachers move forward with new instruction, it is critical that students still receive feedback and support as they work toward meeting learning standards. Traditional assessments and grading will not be used at this time, however, teachers will keep track of student understanding and participation in various ways, which we will utilize to inform report cards.

Report Cards

Elementary students will not receive report cards for Quarter 3, which ends on April 9. Instead, teachers will combine the work completed in Quarter 3 as part of the Quarter 4 grades and comments on the last report card. We will be using the following standards-based rating system in grades K-12 for report cards:

Exceeds (4) - Student demonstrated learning of curriculum that exceeded the standards of what was taught and assigned.

Meets (3) - Student demonstrated learning of curriculum that met the standards of what was taught and assigned.

Partial (2) - Student demonstrated learning of the curriculum that shows partial understanding of the standards that were taught and assigned.

Not Yet Learned or Incomplete (1) - Student has not completed assignment or work completed does not yet demonstrate learning of the curriculum.

Student and Family Support

Teachers will be available via “office hours” to help students and answer questions in “real time”. Teachers will provide a schedule of when they will be checking and responding to email, setting up chats in google classroom, or connecting with students and families to help support the learning at home.

Support service providers (reading, math, counselors, OT, PT, speech) have posted instructional resources on our CES Home Instruction page. They have been and will continue to be available to students and families that they service. If you need additional support, please contact them directly using the email link on their CES Home Instruction page.