

# HAZEL M. KELLINGTON SCHOOL

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Dear Parents

March 27, 2020

As we head into Spring Break, this is certainly not what any of us expected to be experiencing, even just a couple of weeks ago! We first want to say thank you to you and your family for continuing to work with the school through this very difficult time for everyone. We appreciate the effort that you are putting in, and realize that this is not an ideal situation for any of us. School staff continue to work in providing valuable learning opportunities for your child, and are trying to connect with each family on an ongoing basis throughout this crisis (if you have not yet been contacted by your child's teacher, please contact the school office and provide updated contact information so we can be in regular contact moving forward). As teachers send out information, we would ask that you give a quick reply so they know you have received the message. Of course, if you have any questions, asking your child's teacher is the best first step, but the office phone is also continuing to be monitored during regular school hours. We understand that home learning will look different from classroom to classroom, just as it will look different from home to home. After our first week of at-home learning, we are continuing to look for the best way to deliver educational programming from a distance, especially if the current at-home learning period happens to be extended. As we continue to work through the various challenges that will be faced, it is extremely important that we get your feedback so adjustments can be considered in order to make the learning time as valuable as possible. As was mentioned in our March 18<sup>th</sup> letter, our goal is not to overwhelm families, but rather to provide learning experiences that will reinforce and solidify previously learned concepts. If at-home learning does get extended, we are going to be looking at the best methods for moving children's education forward, rather than continuing to reinforce previously learned material. If that happens, we will again be in touch letting you know what our plan is. In the meantime, we continue to hope to hear from families about the types of programming that are felt to be most effective.

An area that is often talked about as a strategy for at-home learning is the use of technology. There are many excellent educational programs and websites that have temporarily given free access to schools, teachers, and/or families through the current COVID-19 pandemic. Many teachers have signed kids up for various programs, and our school division is also compiling resources in an online "Learning Hub" that parents, students and teachers can utilize (<https://sites.google.com/bpsdedu.com/bpsd-sharing-hub/home?authuser=0>). Although technology can be used in many educational ways, we still need to monitor kids' screen time and be sure that parents

are determining screen time limits. Another issue surrounding the use of technology is the question of accessibility – both in terms of having a device available to utilize, as well as having access to the internet. This is something we are very aware of, and are trying to find ways to minimize. If internet accessibility happens to be an issue for your family, please be sure to inform your child's teacher, letting them know the types of issues you are dealing with. This information will help them as they continue to plan the best way forward for your child's learning.

From time to time the school helps families out by providing an occasional lunch, or some snacks. If your family is finding it hard to make ends meet during this crisis, please contact us at the school, as there is the possibility that we may be able to help provide some assistance.

With so much change in such a short time, stress is something that is going to be felt by everyone, to various levels. We hope that your family is not feeling overwhelmed by school work that is coming home – either by the amount of work, or the types of materials that are being sent. That is in no way our intent. If keeping up with school, on top of everything else that is going on, seems to be too much, please communicate that with your child's teacher, and reduce the school workload to a manageable level. In these unprecedented times, all any of us can do is try our best. You are the one that knows your child best, which means that you are the one that knows what your child most needs at this time. The school is here to support you and your child, and we will do our best to continue to do that now, and into the future. Contact us if there is anything that you think we might be able to help with. We won't always have an answer right away, but we will certainly do our best to try and help find an answer.

In closing, we hope that you and your family are healthy, and continue to remain that way. With next week being our regularly scheduled Spring Break, we want to be sure that you take a break from school for the week. It will be a time for families to try to enjoy the time with each other, despite all that is going on around us, without having to worry about school work. At the same time, we are also encouraging our teachers to take the week off, so they have a chance to rest and recharge after the challenging past couple of weeks. This means that teachers are not likely to be communicating with families until at-home learning resumes on April 6. When school does resume, we will all get back to work and be prepared to face whatever might lie ahead of us at that time. Please try to remain at home as much as possible, practice good hand washing, avoid touching your face, and if you have to be around others, continue to practice social distancing. If we all do our part, we can help to flatten the curve.

Please do your best to enjoy your Spring Break! We look forward to welcoming students back to their learning after the holiday!

Sincerely

The Entire HMK Team