



Education Today  
Knowledge Forever

# HERRICKS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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## Office of the Assistant Supt. for Curriculum & Instruction

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April 1, 2020

Dear Herricks Families,

As you are aware, Governor Cuomo has extended the school closures through April 15, and there is a possibility that the State will further extend school closures beyond April 15. We have appreciated your patience as we navigated together into this new mode of teaching and learning. We moved from a mix of review and stop-gap activities on March 16 to e-learning on March 19. For some of our teachers and families, the learning curve was steep and therefore we allowed some flexibility in the delivery of instruction. In addition to doing our best to provide quality instruction and learning opportunities this past week, our staff was equally committed to making contact with all students, assessing needs, and identifying gaps in access.

As we begin our second full week of e-learning, we have carefully considered our transition to Phase 2 effective Monday, April 6. Because learning at home cannot look like a typical school day, in Phase 2, we seek to

1. further clarify expectations for students and parents;
2. leverage our existing technologies while being mindful of
  - a. screen time,
  - b. the developmental appropriateness of extensive remote learning for each student and,
  - c. mixed approaches to delivering instruction;
3. remain sensitive to students' social and emotional well-being, and;
4. continue to move forward in curriculum with ongoing direct instruction and the introduction of new material.

### **Expectations**

All teachers will continue to interact with students, and introduce new material on a daily basis, assign work and give purposeful feedback to students. They will also grade work where appropriate and communicate with parents, as needed. We continue to ask that teachers use their professional judgment and their knowledge of their students to drive their decisions. All teachers will continue to find their own way to interact with students, and this work will look different from teacher to teacher. We are working to get the balance right, but you will see direct instruction, both synchronous (real-time) and asynchronous (self-paced).

## Hours of Instruction

Remote learning cannot replicate daily face-to-face interactions with teachers. It is not healthy for students to engage excessively with a screen or device for six hours, even for the sake of instruction. **Including** direct instruction, assignments and activities, we expect our students in grades

- K-2 to receive approximately 1 hour of work per day;
- 3-5 to receive approximately 1-1/2 hours of work per day; and
- 6-12 to receive approximately 2 hours of work per day with a total of approximately 2 hours of work per subject per week.

Teachers will also give more latitude for due dates for assignments.

## A Day of Remote Learning

Be mindful that direct instruction may be a small portion, likely no more than 10-20 minutes, of each teacher's lesson planning. A student may be tasked, for example, to participate in a 20-minute flipped classroom. A flipped classroom experience may combine short videos with self-paced work and check in by the teacher. After the flipped classroom, the student may be assigned classwork or homework online on their own related to the concept taught.

Teachers may elect to post all their lessons at once for the week or post lessons daily or on several days. **All lessons will be posted by 8:00 a.m.** You can expect that your child's teacher will post or email further details and instructions.

We have additional, **but not required**, enrichment activities and resources on our district website at the [Learning at Home/E-learning](#) link.

## Direct Instruction

Direct instruction means that teachers will instruct and deliver new curriculum and concepts. We recognize some families and teachers have privacy concerns about live video. Direct instruction does not necessarily mean face-to-face instruction. Some examples of direct instruction may include:

- Synchronous (real-time) instruction
  - live video conferencing through Google Meet
  - live audio conferencing through Google Meet
  - presenting content with real-time feedback
  - assign an Edpuzzle video and check progress in real time while students learn at their own pace
  - discussion-based assessment through live conversation
  - streaming a discussion in Google Classroom
  - collaborating on a shared Google document, form or slide with students
- Asynchronous (self-paced) instruction
  - recorded video conference through Google Meet
  - pre-recorded lessons and/or videos on outside websites such as Youtube or Khan Academy, among others

- broadcasting a video with voiceover on tools such a Screencastify, Youtube, Discovery Ed, Edpuzzle, or other Google extension
- flip classroom approaches through self-paced learning with interactive video lessons using tools such as Edpuzzle
- streaming a discussion in Google Classroom
- collaborating on a shared Google document, form or slide with students

Right now, the G Suite Google tools, including Google Meet, are the only sanctioned video conferencing applications for our district. Google Meet accomplishes the same goal as Zoom. Zoom is not an approved video conferencing platform for instruction for our district.

**Elementary Schools:** Your child’s teacher will be sharing a Google doc or Google Classroom link, inviting students to Google Meet conferences, or communicating via email with parents and/or students.

- Teachers will maintain contact with their students.
- Teachers, including special area teachers, will create lessons and assignments to engage students and maintain the learning process while at home. Students should be able to complete assignments independently.
- Direct instruction may take place in one block of approximately 10-20 minutes.
- K-2 are expected to receive approximately 1 hour of work per day
- 3-5 are expected to receive approximately 1-1/2 hours of work per day
- In addition to the work provided by the teacher, students should be reading for pleasure every day (for a time appropriate for their age as determined by the teacher)

**Secondary Schools (MS/HS):** Your student’s teachers will be posting assignments on their Google Classroom accounts or platform that he/she has been using throughout the school year, inviting students to Google Meet conferences, or communicating via email with parents and/or students. Included here is the [Secondary Schedule](#).

- Students are expected to engage daily and complete each assignment as directed by the teacher.
- Students are expected to be online for approximately 2 hours per day with direct instruction taking place in blocks of 15-30 minutes.
- Teachers may expect students to upload completed work to the appropriate platform.
- Teachers will host an extra help session during the week.

**Special Education:** As the closure of schools is extended, we move towards more direct instruction and the continuity of the supports and services your child needs as per his/her IEP. During this time we will be providing your child with his/her mandated IEP programs, services and supports consistent with the need to protect the health and safety of students with disabilities, as well as those individuals providing special education and related services.

If your child accesses services through video teaching and/or telepractice, the District shall consider such access as your consent to receive services through that modality. Any parent who does not agree to receiving services through that modality should contact Lois Jankeloff, Director of PPS at [ljankeloff@herricks.org](mailto:ljankeloff@herricks.org). If you do not consent to the use of video teaching

and/or telepractice, your child will be provided instruction in an alternative format, such as through written instructional materials or telephone consults.

Your child's teachers/providers will be in touch with you regarding the provision of these supports and services. Please reach out to them and/or your child's IEP contact teacher or special education administrator to let us know if your child is in need of support to access the instruction and learning being provided.

**English as a New Language:** English as a New Language teachers and any teacher of ELLs will continue to provide students with an appropriate education based on their level of proficiency to the best extent possible. Be sure to contact your ENL provider with any questions or concerns.

### **Communication with Teachers**

Students and parents should feel free to reach out to teachers via email with any questions. Middle school and high school teachers are also available during their extra help hours to answer questions students may have about assignments. Teachers will provide their available time to their students.

Our plan will continue to evolve as we receive more guidance from the State, and as we become more familiar with the various instructional platforms. We will continue to provide ongoing training opportunities for teachers throughout our closure, with April 8 dedicated to professional development on technology for our staff.

We will remain compassionate and flexible. This latest change to our e-learning plan should clarify many of your questions. I am heartened by the good in humanity that this pandemic has brought about. As Starman (1984) reminds us, humanity is at its very best when things are at their worst. May we be kind and patient with each other. We are in this together.

Please contact me if you have any questions that cannot be answered at the building level.

Sincerely,

K. Elizabeth Guercin  
Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction