

FROM THE DESK OF Phyllis Alpaugh



SUPERINTENDENT'S NEWSLETTER

Rockaway Borough Schools
October 2020

WORK ON ALL REFERENDUM PROJECTS MOVE AHEAD

[CLICK HERE TO GET AN UPDATE OF FUTURE
PROJECTS](#)

[CLICK HERE TO SEE A PHOTO GALLERY OF COMPLETED
PROJECTS](#)

RAMS CORNER

Read about how our Elementary Art
Students are Becoming Peace
Ambassadors



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

[Upcoming Parent Nights Scheduled for
both Lincoln and Thomas Jefferson](#)

Happy October!



Dear Parents and Families,

Well, we made it!

With six weeks into the fall semester, I am proud to say that we have successfully reopened both Lincoln and Thomas Jefferson for in-person instruction for all cohorts. Due to the amazing efforts of our custodial staff, our buildings are spotless, clean and safe. Our teachers, aides and professional staff have done a phenomenal job as have our students in working cooperatively together to meet the needs of those in-person and those learning from home. We also are very appreciative of you, our parents and families, who have patiently supported all our efforts in learning and delivering instruction during this current COVID world.

As we move ahead this month, we are hoping with proper safety precautions in place to offer more extra-curricular activities to our middle school students that will round out their academics. With the announcement of the Governor's latest Executive Order # 187 this past week, we will be discussing



For more information regarding these or other topics, feel free to contact me at pa@rockboro.org

the possibility of hosting a winter sports season which may involve intramural or inter-scholastic competition. We also have just approved a number of other popular activities such as the Yearbook, the Newspaper, the Art Club, the Cube Club and Student Government Organization that can be conducted virtually as well as continue to explore other activities and options that can be safely delivered. Designated advisors as well as coaches will share more information as meeting and practice details are finalized.

For those in need of academic support, we are also putting together a **Homework Help** program to assist students in both schools with daily and long term assignments. All sessions will be conducted virtually after the end of the official school day and take place Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday afternoons. Teachers will shortly be reaching out to potential students and their families with a targeted start date of November 10th.

Again many thanks for helping us to begin the year in such a positive manner and as always, please stay safe and healthy.

Phyllis Alpaugh
Superintendent of Schools

Governor's Executive Order Changes School Schedule for Election Day



ROCKAWAY BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

Dear Parents and Rockaway Borough families

At our recent Board of Education meeting, we discussed and confirmed plans regarding Election Day, Tuesday November 3rd.

As per the Governor's Executive Order #177, all New Jersey school buildings whether they are official polling places or not, must be closed for in-person instruction. Remote learning however, may continue. Since this is already a short week due to the NJEA Teachers' Convention, the following schedule changes have been made to optimize student in-person instruction for all Cohorts.

- Monday 11/2 will be an in-person instruction day for all students in Cohorts A & C. Students will follow a regular cycle day schedule.
- Tuesday 11/3 (Election Day) will be a totally virtual instruction day for all Cohorts as dictated by the Governor. All staff except maintenance will work/teach virtually from home.
- Wednesday 11/4 will be an in-person instruction day for Cohorts B & C as per our regular hybrid schedule.
- On Thursday 11/5 and Friday 11/6, school will be closed as per our 2020-21 School Calendar for the NJEA Teachers' Convention.

If parents/families for any reason are unable to accommodate the Monday schedule change, Cohort A students may simply attend classes virtually online on November 2nd.

As always, thank you in advance for your cooperation regarding this schedule change and please stay safe and well.

Sincerely yours,

Phyllis Alpaugh
Superintendent

Request for Change in Learning Platforms

Just a reminder as per our district Reopening Plan, parents may decide to send their students back to school for in-person instruction who are currently remote or have them switch to remote from in-person as directed by the Governor. These transitions must take place at the end of each Marking Period. If families wish to change the learning environment of their children, they must provide a request in writing or via email to their respective building Principal with 10 day notice prior to the start of a new marking period. The start of the second marking period is November 11th so building principals are currently accepting requests from parents and will do so up until the first of November.

This issue's FEATURED ARTICLE... What are Educational Platforms and How do they support instruction in a COVID-19 World?

The onset of the Corona Virus early last spring has certainly changed the way we all approach learning as well as forced schools across the country to shift from traditional classroom methods to remote and virtual models aimed at slowing the pandemic and keeping students and staff safe. As a result, educators have turned to the use of educational platforms and tools that will provide the necessary support needed to enhance interactive learning for all students, no matter what the model.



So by definition, what are educational or learning platforms? Many experts categorize them as an integrated set of online services that provide teachers, students, parents and others with information, tools, and resources to both support and enhance the delivery and management of educational material. They are generally used and have become very popular in the delivery and enhancement of blended learning especially where there is a combination of-person and online learning. Comprehensive in nature, educational and learning platforms often employ a simple and intuitive user interface for all parties.

What are some of the practical benefits of effective educational/learning platforms? While there are many different types of platforms currently available, here are few generalized benefits as they pertain to teachers, students, and parents.

Practical Benefits to Teachers that enable them to:

- Create and share teaching materials which can be accessed online, printed out or used with an interactive whiteboard or Smartboard
- Share their resources online so individuals can access them both in school and at home
- Access a wide variety of learning materials that can be customized for the exact needs of students
- Assess, monitor and track individual and group progress
- Access lesson plans from colleagues when coverage is needed
- Receive submissions of work from students in one easily managed area
- Manage timetables, email and discussions from a personal desktop

Practical Benefits to Students that enable them to:

- Access learning materials created by teachers and others from outside locations such as the library or home
- Save work and notes online for use in assignments and homework outside of normal school hours
- Create online portfolios and performance videos
- Work at their own pace with a wider choice of learning styles in a more personalized way
- Submit homework and assignments for grading and assessment
- Communicate by email and participate in live discussions and forums with teachers and other students

Practical Benefits to Parents and Guardians that enable them to:

- Play a greater part in their child(ren)'s learning especially when there is access from home
- Support children in any learning that takes place outside of school
- Access their child's personal progress to keep track of their work and assignments
- View reports, attendance data and scores in assessment activities
- Communicate effectively with teachers and school administrators

- Engage with wider school issues through online communication tools
- Become active partners with the school

If you attended our Virtual Back to School Night, or simply sat in to any of your child's virtual classes, you are quite aware that teachers in both Lincoln and Thomas Jefferson are utilizing a wide variety of educational platforms this year to enhance our instruction. To simplify our remote learning and support our hybrid teaching model, we have chosen three specific platforms district wide to offer consistency in delivery, a single sign-on platform, and a viable means of communication for both students and parents. They include **Google Classroom**, **Clever** and **ClassTag**. To learn a little more about these platforms as well as how best to use them to support your child this coming school year, please check out our the "Educational Platforms" section of our Parent Resource Page on our Distance Learning site by clicking the below link.

[Educational Platforms](#)



ROCKAWAY BOROUGH SCHOOLS www.rockboro.org

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