

FROM THE DESK OF Phyllis Alpaugh



SUPERINTENDENT'S NEWSLETTER

Rockaway Borough Schools
September 2020

WRAP UP OF SUMMER REFERENDUM WORK

[CLICK HERE TO GET AN UPDATE OF THE LATEST REFERENDUM WORK](#)

RAMS CORNER

[Read about our District's Unsung Heroes](#)



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

[District's First Ever Virtual Back to School Night](#)



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

Welcome Back to School



Dear Parents and Families,

This September has certainly been like no other at least for me in returning to school in my close to forty years in education. While supply lists, schedules and names of homeroom teachers are important topics of conversations, the actual return to in-person instruction has been uniquely structured as a result of our current health pandemic and our need to support the safety of our entire school community, but provide instruction to meet the needs of all our families.

With more than two weeks under our belt, I want to sincerely thank our staff, our students and you, our parents and families for all your support, cooperation, flexibility and patience regarding our 20-21 return to school as we could not have done this successfully without you. So far, we have welcomed back students in Cohorts A, B and C both virtually and in-person at Thomas Jefferson as well as Lincoln students from Cohort C at the Assembly of God, and believe me, it was wonderful to "see" and interact with them all, whether they were home or in the building. We also look forward to the scheduled re-opening of Lincoln Elementary for our remaining in-person students on October 5th.

Again many thanks for helping us navigate these uncharted waters and as always, please stay safe and healthy.

Phyllis Alpaugh
Superintendent of Schools

ROCKAWAY BOROUGH NOW PARTICIPATING IN THE USDA CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAM

GOOD NEWS!

Rockaway Borough will now be participating in the USDA Child Nutrition Program which means that School Meals are FREE for EVERY STUDENT!

Benefits of School Meals:

Packed with nutrition
Convenient
Popular Meals each week
NO COST to PARENT!

Where are meals available?

Thomas Jefferson School
95 East Main Street
Rockaway, NJ 07866

NEW LOCATION:

In the back of the building near the kitchen door

Starting the week of September 21st, all district students, regardless of status, will be eligible to receive five meals a week including breakfast.

Interested students are asked to pre-order their meals for the coming week using the online ordering system on our website.

Orders should be placed no later than Thursday at noon for pick up the following week on Mondays from 1:00-2:00 pm in the back of Thomas Jefferson School by the kitchen door.

If school is closed on Monday, distribution will take place on Tuesday.

[CLICK HERE FOR MORE INFORMATION REGARDING WEEKLY MENUS AND ORDER FORMS](#)

This issue's FEATURED ARTICLE... What is Hybrid Learning?

Hybrid learning, aka blended learning isn't a new concept in education. It has been around for decades, but has become very popular as a result of our recent health situation and COVID-19 pandemic as it provides flexibility and options to educate students when the non-traditional classroom option is not available.



In essence, hybrid learning is an educational model where some students attend class in-person while others join in virtually from home. Educators can teach remotely or in-person at the same time and take advantage of technology such as video conferencing tools and hardware to support online instruction.

In Rockaway Borough, we have chosen a split time model where students spend designated days learning in school in-person followed by designated days learning remotely at home. Models vary in the number or sequences of the days students attend in-person versus learn from home.

Some common features of hybrid learning include the following:

- Instruction that includes both synchronous as well as asynchronous learning elements.
- In-person instruction on site balanced by remote learning where students do some work on their own outside of the face-to-face experience.
- Classes that are ideally designed so the teacher can present content via both virtual and in-person platforms.
- A structured and set schedule for daily instruction no matter what the given platform is.

There are many potential benefits of hybrid learning in today's COVID-19 world as it provides tremendous flexibility especially for students who are unable to attend in-person classes and/or whose families choose remote learning. In the case of Rockaway Borough, the hybrid model was also chosen as it supports social distancing, but also allows for much needed social interaction between students and staff and also student themselves. It allowed the district to reopen our schools and bring students and staff safely into both our buildings to engage in in-person instruction and engagement.

Hybrid learning can also allow students the freedom to excel academically at their own pace, the freedom to learn from the location of their choosing, the freedom to revisit material any number of times, and the freedom to develop asynchronous

discourse with peers.

Since this is our “new normal”, here are some parent tips to help your child(ren) succeed with our current hybrid learning model:

- Stay calm and learn everything about our district’s given model your child’s individual schedule. Discuss together and frequently about what the school day looks like both in-person and remotely.
- Review safety guidelines that apply to in-person days such as wearing a mask and keeping appropriate social distancing in the school building, in the classroom and on the bus, as these are essential for daily success.
- Discuss the need for structure and routines for virtual/remote days and what it looks like, as these days should mirror in-person days. Set up a designated “classroom space” and make sure appropriate supplies are ready and available for each class or subject.
- While accessing electronic devices is a must for remote learning, make sure students are not sitting in front of a device for any extended length of time and make sure movement breaks and physical activity are part of the day’s schedule. Also reinforce district policies regarding internet etiquette and live-streaming protocols for the safety and security of all parties.
- Whether your child(ren) are totally remote or attending in-person, make sure they are connecting in some way with their peers because these relationships foster overall engagement and are vital for both academic, but also social-emotional growth.



ROCKAWAY BOROUGH SCHOOLS www.rockboro.org

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