

Hello Spartan Families –

First, I apologize for the length of this correspondence. It does contain very important information. Please read carefully. I would like to personally thank you for your ongoing support during these unprecedented times. The COVID-19 outbreak and actions at the local and state level are continually evolving. We will continue to update our Spartan community periodically throughout this situation. At this time we have the following updates to share:

### **Announcement of Flexible Learning**

In light of the Pennsylvania Governor Wolf-imposed school shutdown, the North Schuylkill School District maintains a commitment to our mission to provide our students with opportunities designed to meet individual needs and to ensure that every child has experiences that promote growth and excellence in all academic and social development areas. Today, we are fully engaged in such a challenge. The District is going to offer our students the opportunity to engage in Flexible Learning activities while schools remain closed.

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### **Phone call from Homeroom teacher**

Starting on Monday, March 30 and continuing Tuesday, March 31, homeroom teachers will begin making initial contact with all students and/or parents of Kindergarten through Twelfth Grade. Our goal is to provide updates, present our continuity of education plan, and ask questions regarding technology. Teachers will be calling using a Google Classroom function that may block or provide an out of the area phone number. Please answer your phone on Monday and Tuesday, expecting to receive an unknown number. Numbers could be originated from the Philadelphia or New York areas.

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### **Enrichment and Review**

The goal during this extended school closure is to ensure that everyone is successful – students, parents and teachers. Our teachers have planned weekly review and enrichment activities. It is recommended that students spend at the elementary level approximately 30-45 minutes per subject each week. At the high school level, it is recommended that students spend approximately 60 minutes per subject each week. These activities are not meant to replace daily classroom instruction. We are encouraging all students to do their best to complete the assigned material.

Teachers are providing technology (Google Classroom) and non-technology (packets) options. We ask that you choose the option that works for you. Your homeroom teacher will be able to provide you with an explanation of these options to guide you through this Flexible Instruction process. Families will be surveyed for Internet access and devices by homeroom teachers. Students who do have Internet access but not a devices will be issued a District Chromebook.

Schuylkill Technology Center (STC), Fountain Springs Cyber Academy (FSCA) and Bloomsburg Advance College Experience (ACE) students are expected to receive further clarification regarding their education in the upcoming week.

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### **Google Classroom**

Connecting to Google Classroom on your computer, iPad or smartphone will give you a direct connection to your teacher. Your child can log on using their student id number [@gapps.northschuylkill.net](mailto:@gapps.northschuylkill.net) account. If your child is not able to access Google Classroom, you can contact your child's teacher via email. Information will be available online on a weekly basis every Friday with the exception of this week which will be on Wednesday, April 1st. All virtual review and enrichment materials/activities will be available for you through Google Classroom.

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### **Packet Work**

For student without Internet access distribution of paper handouts will occur bi-weekly on Fridays from 4PM-6PM and the following Monday from 9AM-11AM at the North Schuylkill Elementary School. The first pick up of physical materials will be Friday, April 3rd and Monday, April 6th. To ensure proper social distancing, we ask that you drive up to the curb at the elementary school and pop your trunk. A North Schuylkill staff member will bring the materials to you and place them in your trunk. No one is permitted to enter the school building. Packets will not be returned to teachers.

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### **Communication with Teacher**

Your child's classroom teacher is your best resource to help you with the work he/she is being asked to complete. Communication will occur in other platforms including Google, remind, class dojo, email, phone calls, homework blogs, etc. Feedback will be provided on activities. All teachers will be hosting office hours every Tuesday and Thursday from 1PM-3PM in Google Meet to answer questions or provide clarification on any of the material for each week.

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### **Special Education**

We understand that there may be unique challenges for students with disabilities and that this may be a stressful time for our families. Throughout the closure, your child's special education team will work to provide access to the Flexible Learning framework while considering each child's specific needs. For support, please reach out to your child's teacher or therapist. You can also contact Special Education Director, Mr. Knute Brayford, [kbrayford@northschuylkill.net](mailto:kbrayford@northschuylkill.net) or Assistant Director of Special Education, Mrs. Christine Greblich [cgreblich@northschuylkill.net](mailto:cgreblich@northschuylkill.net).

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### **Student Expectations**

- Monitoring Google Classroom daily or work on packet daily
- Establishing daily routines for engaging in the learning experiences
- Being responsible for independent learning and maintaining a positive growth mindset
- Engaging in all learning with academic honesty
- Being an advocate and communicating with your teachers
- Complying with School Internet Safety policies including expectations for online etiquette
- Completing work by Friday at 3:00PM which will serve as evidence of completion

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### **State Assessments**

All PSSA testing and Keystone exams for the 2019-20 school year have been cancelled by the Pennsylvania Department of Education. Additionally, standardized testing for students in career and technical education (STC) programs for the 2019-20 school year have been cancelled.

On March 20, The College Board posted some very important information concerning this year's AP Exams. AP Exams will not be conducted face-to-face this year and tests will be adjusted to reflect school closures.

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### **Technology Support**

We will communicate our plans to distribute District issued Chromebooks in the near future, if one is requested. Additionally, we are not able to repair personal devices. If you need assistance with a District issued Chromebook or Google Classroom please view the student help documents and forms located on our District website.

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### **End of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Marking Period**

Based on the most recent information from PDE in regards to the additional week closure, paired with the uncertainty of what may lie beyond April 7th, we will close the third marking period. Report cards will be available during the second week of April.

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### **Meals**

We will continue to provide Grab-and-Go Bagged Breakfast and Lunches at three locations throughout the district during the flexible learning days. In the first week we were able to provide 9,360 meals to our students. For more information visit: <https://bit.ly/NSLunches>

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### **School Calendar**

At this point, we have been granted latitude in the mandatory 180 days of school. We will continue to monitor the situation, follow guidelines provided to us by governmental agencies and determine an updated calendar as soon as possible. The last day of school has not been determined at this point. Spring break will be one day, Good Friday, April 10<sup>th</sup>. Again, we are not sure if and when we will return to normal operations.

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### **Prom and Graduation**

Personally, of all the many negative things that this closure has caused, I think the most negative affect has been on our 12th graders' senior year. Please know that we will do everything possible to safe guard these events. In addition, we also realize that some of our seniors have plans shortly after the original date of graduation. Students are going to the armed forces, military academies, and post-secondary education endeavors. We will certainly consider these issues when finalizing schedules and school calendars moving forward. At this time we have been in discussion with Capriottis and are certain the prom will need to be rescheduled to a date in the summer.

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### Building Level Contacts

High School Principal, Ken Roseberry [krseberry@northschuykill.net](mailto:krseberry@northschuykill.net)

High School Assistant Principal, Liza Ulceski [lulceski@northschuykill.net](mailto:lulceski@northschuykill.net)

Elementary Principal, Janice Whitaker [jwhitaker@northschuykill.net](mailto:jwhitaker@northschuykill.net)

Elementary Assistant Principal, Janel Hansbury [jhansbury@northschuykill.net](mailto:jhansbury@northschuykill.net)

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### Resources

Several resources have been assembled on the District website, and can be accessed by simply clicking on the grade level button that is most appropriate for your child. The resources can be found here: [http://www.northschuykill.net/covid/covid\\_resources.html](http://www.northschuykill.net/covid/covid_resources.html)

Please note that the resources contained within this site are purely optional, and students who do not complete these activities will not fall behind, nor will they be penalized. Our primary concern is for the health and well-being of our Spartan community. This resource, as well as other resources on the website, are available to keep our students engaged in the learning process for those that desire such an opportunity.

In addition to your child's teacher(s), administrators, counselors, nurses, occupational therapists, behavior specialists, speech therapists, gifted teachers, English as a Second Language teacher, psychologists, special education teachers, and social workers are also available during the day via email. Feel free to contact them as needed to provide support and respond to your questions or concerns.

Finally, the link below provides resources for mental health.

[http://www.northschuykill.net/covid/covid\\_health.html](http://www.northschuykill.net/covid/covid_health.html)

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Once again, I feel compelled to express my sincere gratitude for the support of this amazing North Schuykill community that we are truly blessed to be a part of.

We will continue to update all our stakeholders as appropriate. Thank you for your cooperation during this very trying time. As always, if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at [rackell@northschuykill.net](mailto:rackell@northschuykill.net)

Remember it is important as a community we STAY CALM, STAY HOME, AND STAY SAFE.

Spartan Pride!



Robert J Ackell, Ed.D.  
Superintendent