

March 27, 2020

Dear Giles Students and Families:

I want to start by taking a moment to convey how much I appreciate your incredible resilience, persistence, and positivity in meeting the challenge of learning remotely. I'm inspired by your collective efforts, and you should be very proud of yourselves.

Despite this tremendous challenge, we truly want our students to keep learning. As you have found out, however, online learning is simply different from in-person learning. If we try to continue eLearning as if it is the same as being at school, we will exhaust ourselves, our students and our parents. As we prepare for eLearning after Spring Break, now called Remote Learning, we need to make some adjustments so that we can all endure what I'm afraid will be more of a marathon, not a sprint. The choices we have made will help students stay on track to matriculate successfully to the next grade level curriculum.

We will be implementing the following modifications to our eLearning for Giles students starting March 31:

1. Spanish and STEAM: STEAM for all students and Spanish for 5th and 6th graders will be suspended starting March 31. Spanish for 7th and 8th graders will focus on finishing reading their book that they started and completing minimized lessons related to the book. Instead of Spanish and STEAM, 5th/6th graders will read their independent reading selection for 30 minutes a day. This will be monitored through their ELA teacher.
2. Specials and Band: Art and General Music will be suspended. Mr. Bucaro will provide instruction in video conference band sectionals. Social Studies curriculum will be suspended EXCEPT for 7th graders who are finishing their Constitution requirements for approximately two weeks.
3. ELA: our focus will be on an hour and a half of ELA curriculum per day, plus extra vocabulary one day a week, and two iReady Reading Lessons per week.
4. Math: students will be expected to learn new material with the goal of finishing the year's curriculum and continue with their iReady Math Lessons. Students will have an hour of math each day, plus whatever time it takes to do their two iReady lessons a week.
5. Science: NGSS lessons will be streamlined and stretched to teach over two days, what would have been covered in one block. Science teachers will be free to flex this, however, and require a longer engagement on some days in order to make the lessons make sense. Science teachers will be instrumental in keeping our students reading non-fiction. Students will have 60 minutes of science on average each day.
6. PE: Health will now end, and PE will include fitness and nutrition goal setting and tracking. 7th graders will have CPR in the Fall of 8th grade.

7. Counseling sessions: students who see Ms. Salo or Ms. Heilbrunn will continue with video conference sessions.
8. Students with Special Education, 504, and EL designation(s): case managers who work with these students in collaboration with parents, will further individualize eLearning for these students. Math and ELA will be required even if further modified, but any other modifications in the curriculum expectations will be documented and communicated to their teachers.

Our goal is to provide four hours of engaged learning to our students; some of our students will need more time to complete the lessons and may need reteaching and reassessing. The original eLearning guidelines are five hours, but this is really hard to gauge as many districts are finding out. If we assign the work that I have outlined above, I believe most of our students will actually work the five hours a day that were suggested in the guidelines.

TESTING: Illinois was approved for an IAR and ISA waiver; so there will be no IAR testing in April. D80 has also decided not to administer MAP for the third time in May.

Thank you for reading through all of this. To summarize student expectations:

ELA: approximately 60 min. a day

Writing: approximately 30 min. a day

Vocabulary: 30 min. 1x per week outside of ELA

iReady Reading: 20 min. avg per day--two lessons a week

Math: approximately 60 min. a day

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Science: approximately 60 min (including 20 min. non-fiction reading)

PE: 20 min. physical activity and nutrition tracking

5th/6th: Independent reading 30 min. a day (instead of Spanish)

7th: Spanish finish novel and activities (20 min. a day)

7th: Social Studies finish Constitution (approximately 2 weeks; 30 min. a day)

8th: Spanish finish novel and activities (20 min. a day)

We miss you and will send eLearning lessons for March 31-April 3 and for April 6-9 soon. Our current return to school date is April 13. When and if this changes, I will send information to you. If we return to school, we will return to our regular classes.

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Superintendent/Principal

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