

April 23, 2020

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Greetings! I hope this letter finds you and your families safe and well as we all navigate these very unusual times together. As none of us have ever experienced life quite like this, I must start by applauding all of our Preston and Damascus families for your kindness, flexibility, and willingness to trust in our ability to handle anything that comes our way. I have spoken to so many of you in recent weeks, and in every case, we have agreed that we can do hard things together, that we can still have high expectations for our young people together even when so much is uncertain, and that we WILL bounce back together in the future. I am always exceptionally proud of our school communities, but never as much as I have been during this school closure.

The Wayne Highlands School District will not open its doors for the conclusion of the 2019-2020 school year, as announced by Governor Wolf last week. However, school is still most certainly happening! Our teachers, paraprofessionals, and support staff are working very hard to provide our students, your children, with the best possible educational experience to finish the school year. Each week, students have access to the most updated assignments and enrichment opportunities through our Continuity of Education plan. Your children have many exciting opportunities to engage with their classmates and teachers through Google Classroom. As you read this, we have transitioned from optional review and enrichment activities to mandatory participation.

Please note that we are NOT expecting that students will spend a full day at their computer watching live lessons. Teachers are working to develop instructional plans that allow for students to have flexibility when they access Google classrooms at different times of the day. There may be lessons posted that involve video, or audio recordings of lessons. There will be opportunities for students to contact teachers for assistance and help. Teachers will be reaching out to students to ensure they are accessing and understanding the lessons. But, as I stated earlier, participation is required for all students in all of their classes.

All of your students' teachers have Google classrooms. Students are responsible for logging into their daily classes multiple times weekly. Students are responsible for logging into ALL of their special area classes as well, at least one time weekly. Weekly schedules and materials will be posted before Monday each week, so that parents and students can plan their week.

Our Continuity of Education Plan is being delivered and maintained through our school district's [Online Google Classroom](#). We are encouraging each student (K-12) to join your current teachers' classes through our Google Classroom student domain ([whsdk12.me](https://www.whsdk12.me)). Please logon to our website for more information on how to join the classroom and for technical support at <https://www.whsdk12.com/googleclassroom>. If your student(s) are in need of assistance regarding their student e-mail username or password to access Google Classroom, or need Technology Support, please reference the attached letter. You may call our technology office at 570-253-1950 or e-mail ipadhelp@whsdk12.com if you have continuing technical issues.

All of your children's teachers are available Monday through Friday for students to contact through their student email addresses. Teacher email accounts are available on the district website as well, sorted by school. Teacher office hours are from 9-11 AM and from 1-3 PM. During these times, teachers should be available for prompt responses. Outside of these times, please feel free to contact teachers, but be prepared to wait for a response.

The district has ended marking period 3 as of March 13, 2020. Report cards will be mailed home May 6. Marking period 4 will run through the last day of school, which will be June 12. All teachers will assign grades of **O** for Outstanding, **S** for Satisfactory, or **U** for Unsatisfactory for the fourth quarter, based on student participation, effort, and engagement.

Regarding personal belongings at school, teachers have been collecting student belongings from desks and lockers and bagging them. They are including instructional materials that will be used from home going forward. On **Wednesday April 29 and Thursday April 30**, parents are to drive to Preston and Damascus to pick up these bags between **11 AM and 2 PM**. Follow the flow of traffic. Stay in your vehicle. We will bring items to your vehicles.

Breakfasts and Lunches will now be distributed Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 11 AM-1 PM at the Preston Area School and Damascus Area School. Meals include a variety of main dishes, plus breakfast options, fruit, veggies, and drinks. Free for anyone 18 and under. You may pick up meals from either location. We are here to help, so please call either school at 570-798-2516 (Preston) or 570-224-4114 (Damascus) if you need assistance. More details are on the enclosed Frequently Asked Questions document.

If you are in need of help with providing food during this time, there are multiple outlets providing assistance. As opportunities cross my desk, I will share them as openly as I can. Here in Wayne County, The Wayne County Emergency Food Relief Program has been created to help Wayne County residents of any age impacted by the COVID-19 Pandemic. To receive groceries through this program, please call the Wayne County Area Agency on Aging at 570-253-4262 or visit www.waynecountypa.gov. We have arranged for groceries for this program to be brought to the Damascus and Preston Schools on Fridays for distribution. Please share this information with others who may be in need of this help.

Our school counselors, Mrs. Gries (Damascus) and Mr. Diefenbach (Preston) have Google Classrooms as well, where you will find resources for helping to cope during this very difficult time for our young people and our families. I encourage all of you to view and share these resources as you see fit.

As I began this letter, it has been my pleasure to serve the Damascus and Preston School communities for seven years now. We have accomplished much, learned many lessons along the way, shared laughs and tears, and been very much committed to our young people and their education. Our schools become our sanctuaries for our young people as they learn so many of life's lessons. We now trust that you will help us in making these lessons available for our students. Let your home be a place where learning is a routine and lessons are abundant. Let learning together be one routine that is certain, despite the stresses of uncertain times. Celebrate each other! Learn new things together! Create and experience new things together! Take time to laugh together, to work together, and even to cry together! You are all important to our school communities, even if they look a little different right now.

Please contact me at djagger@whsdk12.com, or by phone at (570)798-2516 (Preston) or (570)224-4114 (Damascus) if I can be of any assistance.

Most Sincerely,

David A. Jagger
Principal
Damascus Area School
Preston Area School

Damascus and Preston Area Schools

Remote Learning Frequently Asked Questions

- **Question:** *Where can my son/daughter get information on how to logon to each teachers' Google Classroom page?*

Answer: The technology department has built a specific webpage (<https://www.whsdk12.com/services/technology/classroom>) to help with access each Google Classroom. If you need any additional support you can contact the tech department by email at ipadhelp@whsdk12.com or by calling 570-253-1950.

- **Question:** *What do I do if I do not have a device for my son/daughter to access the Google Classrooms?*

Answer: On April 10th our technology department arranged a distribution of devices for families who needed one. If you missed that opportunity you may contact the technology department at ipadhelp@whsdk12.com or by calling 570-253-1950 to see if this could be accommodated now.

- **Question:** *What do I do if I do not have any connectivity anywhere for my son/daughter to access Google Classroom?*

Answer: You should contact Mr. Jagger at djagger@whsdk12.com or call 570-224-4114 (Damascus) or 570-798-2516 (Preston) and leave a message for Mr. Jagger. We can then connect to discuss the possibility of your son/daughter receiving a packet of learning/instructional materials to be mailed to your home.

- **Question:** *What is going to happen with report cards and how will grading work from now until the end of the school year?*

Answer: The end of the 3rd marking period will be recorded as March 13th. On May 6th we will be mailing home your son/daughter's 3rd marking period report card. For the 4th marking period students will earn an **Outstanding, Satisfactory, or Unsatisfactory** for each of their classes based on their participation, effort, and engagement in our remote learning plan. Those 4th marking period grades will then be taken under consideration with students first three marking period grades for final grade consideration.

- **Question:** *What does my son/daughter do about their special area classes for the 4th marking period?*

Answer: On May 4th our special area teachers (Art, Music, Tech Ed, and Family Consumer Science) will remove their 3rd marking period students from their Google Classroom. Also, on May 4th students should then go on the Google Classroom Website (<https://www.whsdk12.com/services/technology/classroom>) and get the classroom codes for their 4th marking period special to virtually enroll in their new Special Area class. They will then participate in that class from May 4th through June 12th. Grades K-2 switch from Guidance to Computers with Mr. Burchell. Grades 3-5 switch from Computers to Guidance with Mr. Diefenbach. Grades 6-8 switch from Technology Education with Mr. Adams to Family and Consumer Science with Mrs. Kussoff or vice versa.

- **Question:** *When can my son/daughter get into the building to get personal items out of their locker, including a band instrument?*

Answer: Student materials from lockers and instructional materials have been placed in bags for each student by teachers. Pickup of materials will be as follows:

Wednesday April 29 and Thursday April 30: 11:00 AM-2:00 PM

- Similar to the pickup of student work packets on March 26 and 27, all vehicles will pull to the main office, following the flow of traffic. All student materials will be placed in the trunk or back seat of vehicles.
- No one will be permitted to exit their vehicles to receive materials. This is to protect all of us. Please be respectful of this request.

- **Question:** *When can my son/daughter return their textbooks or other items/resources that the school collects at the end of each school year?*

Answer: We are asking students to hold onto these items because they may need to use them during the remainder of the remote learning plan for this school year. When cleaning lockers out we are going to be taking any academic materials out of lockers to be put in the bags that you can pick up and take home on April 29th or 30th. So, your son/daughter should have all their necessary academic resources to participate in the remote learning plan at home with them. Between now and the end of the year we will develop a plan to collect those items back from students and communicate that plan to parents/guardians when appropriate.

- **Question:** *Where is the best place to look to get the most updated information the district announces regarding the remote learning plan?*

Answer: The district will be using the school website (<https://www.whsdk12.com/>) and social media pages to release updated information. If you use Facebook, I encourage you to like our school district “Wayne Highlands School District” and “Preston” or “Damascus” Facebook pages which will post announcements and information. This includes virtual TV announcements (like we do in school) for our students to watch and hear updated information. Our district will utilize our One-Call system to remind and update parents/guardians as well and you can sign up for that at <https://www.whsdk12.com/services/technology/alerts>.

- **Question:** *Where could I go to find some online educational resources beyond what is on each Google Classroom page?*

Answer: Our technology department created an outstanding data base of online resources to help students while participating in the remote learning plan. I strongly encourage parents/guardians to explore this website <https://sites.google.com/whsdk12.com/learning-opportunities/home>.

- **Question: What can a student do if they feel they are struggling mentally and could use some support?**

Answer: Students or parents/guardians should contact a teacher they feel comfortable with through email or their Google Classroom and any staff member can help. Students can contact me (djagger@whsdk12.com), Mrs. Gries (Damascus School Counselor) (agries@whsdk12.com), Mr. Diefenbach (bdiefenbach@whsdk12.com) or can access other resources via <https://www.whsdk12.com/services/student-services/crisis>. The important thing for students to know is that help is available for coping with stress, dealing with crisis, or struggling with these uncertain times.

- **Question: What can I do about getting my son/daughter lunch during this school closure?**

Answer: Wayne Highlands School District will be continuing to offer the **FREE** Grab and Go Breakfast/Lunch Program for the remainder of the State ordered school closure. The Program is open to all children eighteen (18) and younger. Beginning Monday, April 27, 2020 there will be a change in the schedule. Grab and Go Breakfast/Lunch will now be served on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday at Damascus Area School, Honesdale High School, Preston Area School, and the Cooperage. To accommodate the schedule change and to assure that the same number of meals are made available to each child, meals for Tuesday will be distributed at the Monday pick-up and meals for Thursday will be distributed at the Wednesday pick-up. The Program is **FREE!** Everyone is encouraged to participate. Please see the details below.

Damascus Area School ~ 174 High School Road ~ Damascus, PA

Honesdale High School ~ 459 Terrace Street ~ Honesdale, PA

Preston Area School ~ 1493 Crosstown Highway ~ Lakewood, PA

The Cooperage – 1030 Main Street ~ Honesdale, PA

Breakfast/Lunch ~ 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

If you have any questions, contact Superintendent Gregory Frigoletto at 570-253-4661 or Food Service Director Ryne Spaulding at 570-253-6083.

The above questions are questions that have been asked frequently, but certainly do not encompass all questions that comes up. Please feel free to contact me at djagger@whsdk12.com or by leaving me a message at 570-798-2516 (Preston) or 570-224-4114 (Damascus) with any other questions I may assist in answering.