



February 19, 2021

Dear Oaklyn School Community,

Happy Friday! Hoping all is well and you've each had a great week. We wanted to take time to share some of the wonderful things taking place across our school community. Please take a look:

Board Office

The Board Office would like to thank all who have participated in Kindness Week and look forward to hearing about your continuing acts of kindness throughout the remainder of the year. #bekind



Special Education

Students in the IGNITE program celebrated [Kindness Week](#) by making treats for family members and educators who support their growth. They delivered their treats to staff with a kind message. They also spent a morning reading menus and budgeting for a tasty snack from Westmont Bagel. They picked up the items, separated food into orders and delivered food to students learning remotely at home. During this process, the students used a variety of skills learned during their math, language arts, and vocational classes.



Buildings & Grounds

This week the [National Weather Service](#) issued a winter storm watch for 17 New Jersey counties ahead of a storm that was expected to dump 4 to 8 inches of [snow and sleet across our region Thursday](#) and early Friday, along with a thick layer of ice in some areas. The [winter storm watch](#) covered all of northern New Jersey, most of central New Jersey and the western region of South Jersey. It was effective from early Thursday morning through Friday afternoon, with the exact times varying from region to region. Despite the challenging weather conditions and extreme temperatures, our Buildings and Grounds professionals have been working around the clock to ensure that we have clean, safe learning environments. Please join me in thanking them for their service to our school community.

Preschool/ Early Childhood Education

Last week, our students across grades Preschool - 5th grade celebrated "[Kindness Week](#)." Staff and students joined together to hear a variety of read aloud stories surrounding themes of kindness and participated in a number of "spirit" and kindness-related activities. While every day was a celebration of kindness, we definitely think our "unsung hero" day was one everyone enjoyed! We thank our friends in Collingswood for partnering with us through this very #bekind week, and we particularly thank Mrs. Christy Graham and Mrs. Faith Hvidas for the tremendous resources they planned to support our goals of spreading kindness throughout our community.



Nutritional Services



As Julia Childs would say "*You don't have to cook fancy or complicated masterpieces – just good food from fresh ingredients*". Stop by on Wednesdays and receive 7 days of breakfasts and lunches, including ½ gallon of milk, for any child under the age of 18 regardless of financial status. Special funding has been provided this year and everyone is welcome whether you are a Collingswood/Oaklyn resident or not. In addition, children do not need to be enrolled in the school district to be eligible. Please take advantage of this resource. For more information, please reach out to our Food Service Director Nancy Hibbard at cwd@nsfm.com or 856-962-5701 ext. 6139.

Oaklyn School

Mrs. Hvidsdas and Mrs. Barnett will be hosting a 5th Grade Book Club and the Oaklyn PTA will be purchasing the book for interested students! This virtual book club will provide an opportunity for interested fifth graders to help with their transition to middle school next year. We have selected the book, *The 47 People You'll Meet in Middle School* by Kristin Mahoney and we will also be offering "middle school munchies" as an added enticement for students to participate. [5th Grade Book Club](#)

Ms. DerHagopian's family started an initiative "Every Sandwich Counts." With help from their community, they have donated over 37,000 sandwiches to organizations like the Cathedral Kitchen and Project Home. Ms. DerHagopian's class is going to participate next week. Her students will be making sandwiches for those in need. Every sandwich will be put into a Ziploc bag with a kind message. The students will of course wear masks, social distance, and wear gloves!

We would also like to recognize Mrs. Gotthelf's kindergarten students! Her students came up with a COVID friendly plan to celebrate Valentine's Day this year all on their own. Since students were not able to exchange Valentine's Day cards, they decided to decorate their plastic desk barriers with kind messages addressed to their classmates for all to see!

Counseling/ College Readiness

The beginning of February marked National School Counseling Week! Our amazing school counselors have been working hard this year to ensure the success of ALL students, embedding this year's American School Counselor Association motto of "We are ALL in for ALL students." The School Counseling Team would also like to thank the entire school community for always supporting our department!

RWJ Barnabas Health is offering some virtual support opportunities for children and families:

Mondays at 6pm

[Smile, Breathe, and Go: Stress Management for Kids](#)

[Zoom Link](#)

1 (929) 205-6099

Meeting ID: 837 998 7908 Passcode: 340982

Tuesdays at 7pm

[From Stuck to Soaring: Stress Management for Teens](#)

[Zoom Link](#)

1 (929) 205-6099

Meeting ID: 837 998 7908 Passcode: 008654

Wednesdays at 4:30pm

[Bored in the House: Youth Hangout \(Ages 14-18\)](#)

[Zoom Link](#)

1 (929) 205-6099

Meeting ID: 947 3214 9652 Passcode: 726468

Wednesdays at 8pm

[Supporting Families: Group for Parents and Caregivers](#)

[Zoom Link](#)

1 (929) 205-6099

Meeting ID: 963 9055 3396 Passcode: 522856

Collingswood Middle School

Collingswood Middle School 6th grade students visited the Metropolitan Museum of Art for a virtual tour of the museum's collection of ancient Egyptian artifacts. Mrs. Lisa Winkler's classes then created several artworks related to what they had seen at the Met. The Intermediate Art class will visit with the Philadelphia Museum of Art for a tour titled "Black Art, Black Voices: Identity, Activism, and Influence." The virtual visit with the Philadelphia Museum of Art is being generously funded by a Collingswood Middle School PTA Teacher Mini Grant. Samples of CMS 6th grade Egyptian artworks inspired by the Metropolitan Museum of Art virtual tour:




Virtual Valentines: The CMS Kindness Club -- under the direction of Ms. Sarah Whitman -- spread some love in our socially distant state by coordinating a process of sending "virtual valentines." The basic concept involved the creation of a form that students could fill out anonymously to send a kind message to a classmate or staff member. The CMS Kindness Club members designed different Valentine "templates", and the person filling out the form was able to choose a template and a musical clip that was sent to the recipient via email. Prior to sending the messages, they were checked over to ensure that they were school-appropriate. Nearly 600 "virtual valentines" were submitted.

Collingswood High

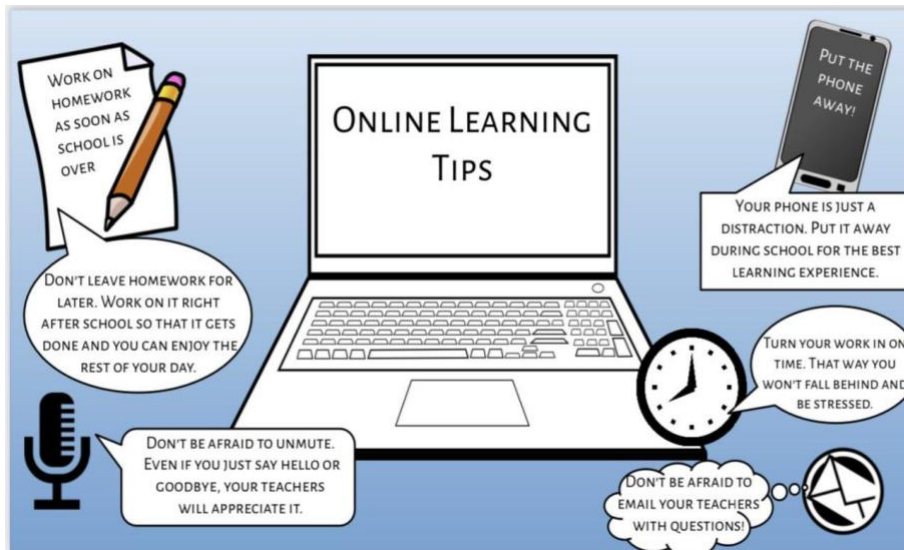
On February 5th, high school science teacher Ms. Dominiak coordinated a COVID-19 vaccine question and answer session with our District Physician, Dr. Lambert. 108 students and staff participated in the session. After the vaccine information was discussed, English teacher Mr. Paolucci talked to students about strategies for researching reliable information online. For their excellent effort and participation, the following students were named by Spanish teacher Ms. Andino as "Students of the Quarter" for the second marking period:

Students of the Quarter

Quarter 2- Effort and Participation

<p><u>Spanish 2/Period A</u> Vincenzo Angelucci Mark Dowdy- Henderson</p>	<p><u>Spanish 3/ Period B</u> Eduardo Popoca Kelly McGeehan</p>	<p><u>Spanish 4 Honors</u> Victoria Stone Anna Sherr Emily Waldron</p>
<p><u>Spanish 2/ Period F</u> John Howkins Alexander Noguera Layla Spearman</p>	<p><u>Spanish 3 Honors/ Period B</u> Jessica Rivera</p>	<p><u>Spanish 5 AP</u> Fiona Basewitz Tara Hislip Lila DiMasi</p>
	<p><u>Spanish 3/ Period E</u> Sebastian Chamberlain Christian Shine</p>	
	<p><u>Spanish 3 Honors/ Period E</u> Jacob Corson Bastion Pizzutillo</p>	

Listening to Our Students: Science teacher Ms. Dominiak asked her students to share tips for being successful with online learning. Various examples, such as the one below, were posted to social media for other students to see.



Superintendent's Note

Superintendent Entry Plan: Phase One of the plan is well underway. This phase consists of meetings with district staff, school staff, and community members to discuss current district goals and initiatives to learn about the strengths, challenges, and areas of investment for Collingswood and Oaklyn Public Schools. It is important to listen and learn from students, parents, district staff, and the community. Diverse perspectives are needed to gain a clear understanding of how to move the district forward. Starting in March, the Superintendent will be visiting classrooms in-person and virtually. He would love to meet you, so turn on your cameras and say hello!



Restarting & Reinventing School: Learning in the Time of COVID and Beyond

As the school year progresses, we'd like to take time to thank you for your continued engagement on the topic of re-opening. Our outstanding teachers are working hard to continually implement high leverage strategies to engage and support the needs of all students, but nothing can replace the student-teacher connections established face to face. I do believe it's important that I share with you the range of factors contributing to the school district's decisions to come. We're all in this together and it is critically important that we support each other as we address once in a generation challenges.

School District Leaders meet weekly with Camden County Public Health Officials. Camden County is currently in Yellow status (Moderate) and public health officials are recommending against full-time in-person instruction at this time. The latest [COVID Activity Level Index](#) indicates that our community is moving in the right direction, but it is critical that we continue adhering to the recommendations from our public health officials.

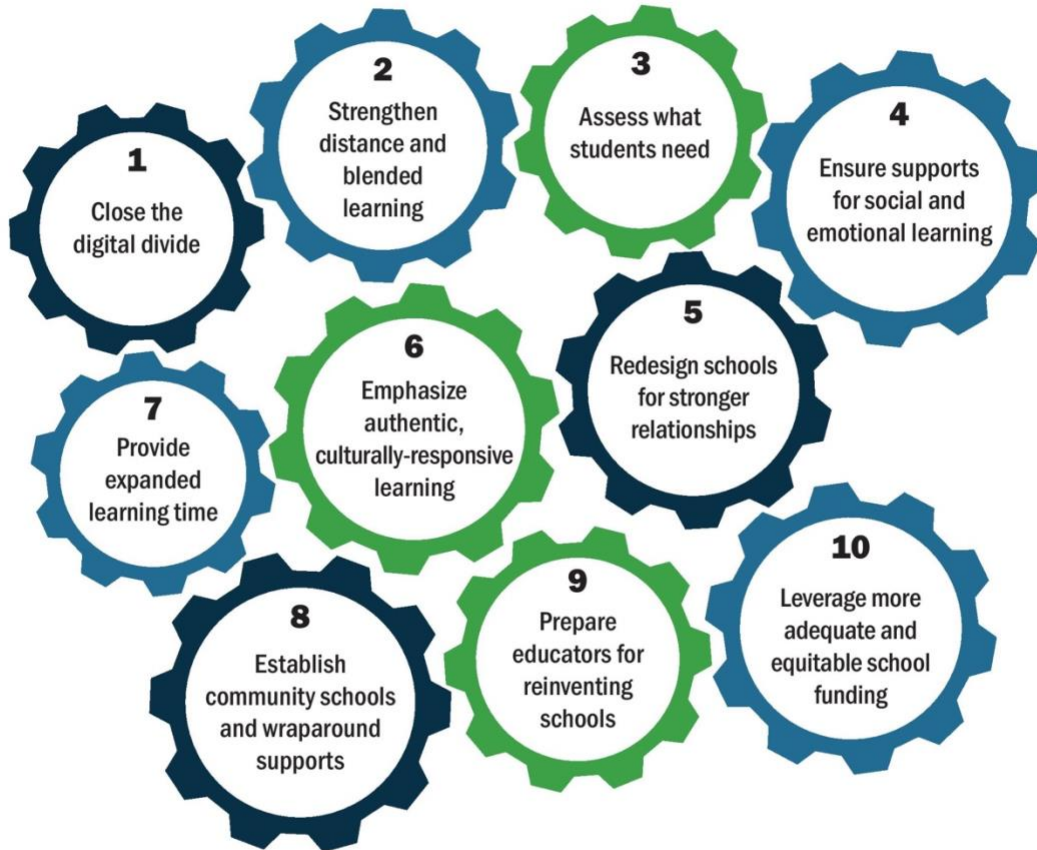
Our Boards of Education have discussed this important topic and support our intent to transition from "Restart & Recovery" to "Restart & Reinvent" and thoughtfully develop the plan to phase into full-time in-person learning as quickly and safely as possible. Unfortunately, we are still at the behest of the virus, state implementation of vaccine administration, and community spread. Our number one priority is to protect and health and safety of students and staff.

In the interim, schools have been using targeted data to reach out directly to the most impacted families (English learners, Special Education, Significant Family Issues) in an effort to offer them additional support. But in order to maintain CDC and Camden County public health guidance for schools, this has been done on a case by case basis based on enrollment numbers, social distancing restraints, and the severity of family challenge. Each school's process looks different because each school's level of need varies. If your family is experiencing unnecessary hardship, please follow up with your Building Administrator or Counselor for additional information.

In the coming weeks, there will be lots of discussion; driven by public health guidance, department of education guidance, school board policy, and most importantly, educator and community feedback. There has been insurmountable loss due to COVID-19 and it is vital that we begin addressing it as a community. National dialogue is important, but local concerns and needs will drive our focus and the decision-making process. As a framework, the school district will be leveraging research conducted by the Learning Policy Institute. Our goal is to create an equitable and effective teaching and learning environment that utilizes evidence-based policies and practices that allow us to rethink the way in which school happens for students and educators.

The framework below highlights and focuses on how educators can support students regardless of the mechanism for instruction. (in-person/virtual). The key priorities below will be addressed by our educators in the coming weeks as we develop our plan.

A Framework for Restarting and Reinventing School



Reopening Resources:

COVID One Stop Shop for Collingswood and Oaklyn Public Schools

<https://5il.co/kley>

Restarting and Reinventing School: Learning in the Time of COVID and Beyond

<https://restart-reinvent.learningpolicyinstitute.org/executive-summary>

CDC K-12 Operational Strategy for Schools

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/community/schools-childcare/K-12-Operational-Strategy-02142021.pdf>

Stop Fixating on Learning Loss and Listen to Our Students

<https://www.edweek.org/leadership/opinion-students-respond-to-adults-fixation-on-learning-loss/2021/02>