



The Link Letter

School newsletter for the GRCDC community

4.24.2020

Keep Up With Us



[Link to the school's Google Calendar](#)

Upcoming Events

4/25 - Classroom Zoom Meeting:

- Ms. Parker, 10:00 AM

4/27 - Distance Learning begins!

4/27 - Every Monday please check your email for an email from your teacher with the Zoom meeting links for this week.

4/27 - Classroom Zoom Meetings:

- Ms. Swartz, 11:00 AM
- Ms. Amash, 10:00 AM
- Mrs. Jana, 12:00 PM

4/28 - Para Office Hours today - see article below for details

4/28 - Classroom Zoom Meetings:

- Ms. Harmony, 9:00 AM
- Mrs. Ruth, 1:00 PM

4/29 - Classroom Zoom Meetings:

- Mrs. Memmott, 9:00 AM

Important Links

- [School Calendar](#)
- [Staff Email Contact List](#)
- [General Information](#)
- [Family & Student Guidebook](#)

- Mr. K, 9:00 AM

4/30 - Classroom Zoom Meetings:

- Ms. Hegarty, 2:00 PM
- Mrs. Trout, 1:00 PM
- Ms. Elly, 11:30 AM
- Ms. Lindsay, 12:00 PM

5/1 - Teacher Office Hours today - see article below for details

Connect With Us!

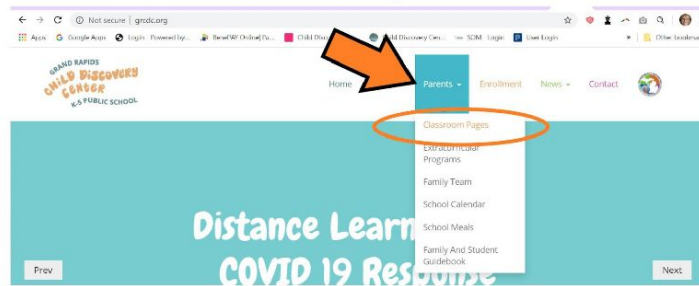
Do you have feedback to share, an idea to float, a question, comment or concern? If you aren't sure who to connect with, **please fill out the survey here!** The Leadership Team monitors this survey regularly. Thank you!

Distance Learning Starts April 27th!

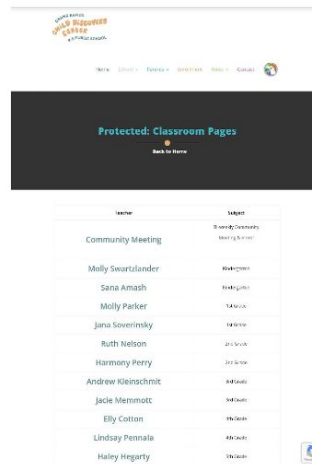
Each week, we will be posting new mini lesson videos and assignments from your child's teacher on our website www.grcdc.org. We will keep the content up for a 2 week span so students can work at their own pace. To access the content, please follow these steps:

How to access the videos and assignments from your child's teacher (will be live on 4/27/2020)

1. Navigate to grcdc.org
2. Click on "Parents" then "Classroom Pages"



3. Scroll to find your teacher's name and click. You will also access Community Meeting content from this page as well.



We are dedicated to your child's success! We know that there will be some bumps in the road as we move to this new digital format. If you are having technical issues or are struggling with the content, please reach out! Start with your child's teacher. If there is a technical problem that they can't solve, they will escalate your problem to someone who can help.

We have already heard about a couple issues with viewing the classroom mini-lesson video.

YouTube Access: In order to access the instructional videos, your child will need to use the regular YouTube app, not YouTube Kids. We are unable to get permission to post our instructional videos on YouTube kids. Please be aware that families may want to ensure that students do not search or explore other content on YouTube, as much of the content on the open channel app may be inappropriate for children. Children should only use the app to access their learning videos. If you have questions, please let us know.

If you click on a link and get a page that says "YouTube refused to

connect", there is a workaround for this issue. Please follow these steps:

1. Place the cursor over the video link.
2. Right click on the mouse or double tap on a touchpad (depending on the kind of tech that you have)
3. Select the option to open the link in a new window or tab.
4. Go to the new window or tab to watch the video.

Office Hours Explained

What are office hours? Office hours are a 1/2 hour block of time for a student or a family member to hop into a Zoom meeting with a teacher or a paraprofessional. If you have a question, need help with an assignment, this is the time set aside for you to connect with your classroom team. Paras will be hosting office hours every Tuesday. The first 15 minutes of the para office hours are dedicated to questions about math content and the second 15 minutes is dedicated to questions about literacy content. Teachers will be hosting office hours every Friday. Each week, a link to the Office Hours Zoom Meeting will be emailed to you on Monday. The days and times of the office hours for each grade level are listed below:

Para Office Hours:

Every Tuesday @
Kindergarten: 9:00 AM
1st Grade: 9:30 AM
2nd Grade: 10:00 AM
3rd Grade: 10:30 AM
4th Grade: 11:00 AM
5th Grade: 11:30 AM

Teacher Office Hours:

Every Friday @
Kindergarten: 12:30 PM
1st Grade: 12:00 PM
2nd Grade: 11:30 AM
3rd Grade: 11:00 AM
4th Grade: 10:30 AM
5th Grade: 10:00 AM

What is Zoom?

Zoom is a video conferencing website that we have chosen to use for distance learning and classroom connection. You only need to click on the link provided via email every Monday to join a Zoom meeting. Your child will not need to set up their own Zoom account to participate in the meetings. On most laptops, clicking the link will take you directly to the meeting. If have your own Chromebook or are accessing from a tablet, you will need to install the Zoom app. Chromebooks borrowed from school are already set up with the Zoom app. When is your child's classroom Zoom? Check out the Upcoming Events section at the top of this newsletter to find out.

Additional Information about Zoom from Ms. Heyne

As you know, our teachers and students are using the Zoom platform for now for class meetings and office hours. Full class instruction will not be taking place on Zoom, those will be recorded mini-lessons posted "on demand" on our website. Our special education teachers and our interventionists may use either Zoom or a direct phone call for 1 on 1 instruction. The links to any 1 on 1 Zoom meetings will be sent directly to the family. In contrast, the Zoom classroom meetings are social connection based, and although highly, highly encouraged, not mandatory. Office hours for paras and teachers are optional/as needed, as well.

We are aware that there were some widely publicized security concerns with using Zoom at first when distance learning began for some districts. Since then, Zoom has taken steps to address those concerns. We carefully considered what platform to use and for the time being decided to go with Zoom since many of our staff had already used it and were familiar and comfortable with it.

That being said, we are taking precautions to try to minimize any potential risk to our students and teachers.

1. Zoom links and passwords are being sent via private email only, not posted to our FB page nor our website.
2. All Zoom rooms will require that teachers and paras admit students and parents individually to the Zoom room
3. Students will not be permitted to share their screen, only staff

We did consult with the educational tech team at Kent ISD to double check if there was something more we should be considering regarding our choice to use Zoom. They said, "If you want to move forward with Zoom, they have made a number of adjustments to their platforms since they fell under scrutiny. I'd say they're safe to use now as long as you follow these settings (attached). The real advantage of Zoom is there's a bit more control over your participants (muting/unmuting audio and video), organization of your screen and access to breakout rooms."

We will be implementing their security setting recommendations, **found here.**

Community Meeting

Community Meeting will be recorded and available on demand. We will release a new video every other Thursday. We posted our offering yesterday for the April 23rd Community Meeting. **Here is the link for you to participate!**

Central Office Updates

- **2020-2021 Calendar:** The tentative first day will be **Monday, August 17th** with Orientation taking place on **August 13th from 2:00 - 6:00 PM**. Orientation is required for all students, returning and new. As the situation around COVID-19 is still uncertain, these dates are subject to change.
 - **Summer Curriculum Option:** GRPS is offering a 9 week program in reading and math for grades K-8. The program helps students retain skills learned during the past school year and helps to prevent summer learning loss. The cost is \$38 for one subject or \$68 for both math and reading, per child. If you would like to purchase this program, please register at <http://grasp.grps.org/>. This program would begin on June 8th.
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Social Emotional Learning

Well, who knew that SEL could be done through YouTube videos and distance learning. But I'd say we've done it! What a great first week. Mr. Fiore, Ms. Megan, and I (Mr. Trevor) spent this past week reviewing the concepts, terms, and activities that filled our first six-plus months of school. For this coming week, Mr. Fiore will be diving back into the Lizard/Wizard Brain for our Kindergarteners and 1st graders. For the rest of our classrooms, Ms. Megan and I will lead you through some reflecting on Strengths and Weaknesses. We will challenge the children to think about what these terms really mean for each of us, as well as what it takes to overcome a weakness.

Community Resources



Pandemic EBT Program

Families with children who received free or reduced-cost lunches at school qualify for new program

The Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer Program (P-EBT) provides temporary funding to address emergency food needs for families affected by the pandemic.

P-EBT food assistance benefits will go to Michigan families with students ages 5-18 that are eligible for free or reduced-price school meals. This includes families currently receiving Food Assistance Program benefits, as well as those not currently enrolled in the program. No application is necessary for eligible families to receive P-EBT benefits.



Families currently receiving Food Assistance Program (FAP) benefits will receive additional benefits on their Bridge Card:

Eligible families currently receiving food assistance benefits will be issued additional benefits directly on their Bridge Card. These additional food assistance benefits can be used the same way as families would typically use their Bridge Card to purchase food items. P-EBT benefits can also be used to participate in the Double Up Food Bucks program.

- **March and April combined benefits: \$193.80 per eligible student** will be loaded on the family's Bridge Card by the end of April.
- **May and June combined benefits: \$182.40 per eligible student** will be loaded on the family's Bridge Card on a later date. Issuance schedule for these benefits still to be announced.

Families not currently receiving Food Assistance Program (FAP) benefits will receive an EBT card in the mail:



Eligible families not currently receiving food assistance benefits will receive in the mail a pre-loaded Electronic Benefits Transaction (EBT) card issued under the name of the oldest student in the household. Benefits for all eligible school-aged children in the home will be loaded onto this one EBT card. Prior to receiving the card, families will get a letter from MDHHS describing how to use their EBT card, how to set up their PIN, and other information about food assistance benefits. This EBT card can be used to purchase food items only, in-person, at any SNAP retailer. The P-EBT card may look different from the Bridge Card, but the card and benefits can be used the same way as the Bridge Card.

- **March and April combined benefits:** Families will receive an EBT card in the mail **by the end of the first week in May**. The card will come pre-loaded with **\$193.80 per eligible student**.
- **May and June combined benefits: \$182.40 per eligible student** will be loaded on the family's EBT card on a later date. Issuance schedule for these benefits still to be announced.



Material produced by the Food Bank Council of Michigan, with information provided by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Stronger Than COVID: Ideas for Families

Has your child experienced any of the following behaviors in the past month?

Irritability, whining, aggressive

Clinging, nightmares

Sleep/appetite disturbance

Physical symptoms (headaches, stomachaches)

Withdrawal from peers, loss of interest

Competition for parents' attention

Forgetfulness about chores and new information learned through educational

activities

If the answer is yes, here are some suggestions on how families and caregivers can help:

Patience, tolerance, and reassurance

Play sessions and staying in touch with friends through telephone and internet

Regular exercise and stretching

Engage in educational activities (workbooks, educational games)

Participate in structured household chores

Set gentle but firm limits

Discuss the current outbreak and encourage questions, include what is being done in the family and community

Encourage expression through play and conversation

Help family create ideas for enhancing health promotion behaviors and maintaining family routines

Limit media exposure, talking about what they have seen/heard including at school

Address any stigma or discrimination occurring and clarify misinformation

Need Some Narwhal Gear?

Get your Narwhal Gear anytime by visiting:
<https://www.byfred.co/collections/grcdc/>

During the school year, the gear will be delivered to school at no extra charge.

A \$5 shipping fee will be charged for summer orders

Children's Crisis Response

This is a service that provides free crisis intervention service for those through age 20 who live in Kent County. The counselors can help in person or over the phone who can help to resolve behavioral or emotional crises wherever help is needed including;

- Suicide and self harm concerns
- Angry or out of control behavior
- Family conflict

Please call 616.333.1000 to get help now.

Grand Rapids Child Discovery Center
616.450.0330
grcdc.org

