

CHAPLIN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL NEWSLETTER



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October 2020

From the Principal...

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When Chaplin Elementary School made the decision to return to five-day-a-week in-person learning, we considered every aspect of school that we could imagine. I hope you would agree that we are fortunate to have been able to do this while schools in nearby towns had to take on a hybrid model. I communicated with you throughout the summer to keep you up to date with our intentions and how we could do this keeping so many factors in mind. The need for children to interact with the adults at school as well as their peers and engage in an environment that supports their growth has not changed due to the pandemic. As we are at the end of our first two months, we feel that it is a good time to update you with how we are doing with the changes in school due to COVID-19.

Our first responsibility is to focus on the health and safety of our community. We took the steps to devise a plan that would allow us to be most effective in mitigating the risk of exposure to everyone. We knew that there would be circumstances in which some of the strategies would not be realistic, so we determined which strategies would have to be enhanced at those times. Besides our cleaning and disinfecting of the school, we routinely clean and disinfect equipment that the school population at large uses. The two playscape areas are sanitized throughout the week even though these are areas that have been listed as areas of low risk for the transmission of COVID-19.

We have provided our children with individual kits for materials that are not realistic for us to clean and disinfect. However, there are times that children will share materials such as sensory development materials in our youngest grades or larger equipment involved in class lessons. Our children can safely share experiences and interact with one another so long as we ensure that we are following the proper mitigating strategies. Students wash/sanitize their hands before the sharing of any materials and immediately after the time in which the sharing occurred. The materials are also sanitized immediately or put to the side for proper cleaning and disinfecting later in the day. We also are careful to ensure that the children maintain physical distancing during times without their masks on.

Cohorting is a term that we have all become very familiar with. Interestingly enough, the Center for Disease Control has no specific guidelines that give a specific threshold or optimal size for developing cohorts. We have devised different cohorts for different times of the day. The first and most obvious cohort is the individual classes. This is the smallest group in the smallest area of the school. However, there are times that classes come together such as recess. The two fifth grade classes come together to have recess at the same time, so the entire fifth grade is considered a cohort. The same can be said for the two sixth grade classes. At times the students are impulsive and forget about some of our precautions, so the staff keeps a close watch over the students and discourages any physical contact between students such as high fives, fist pumps, or hugging. (ctd p2)

At Chaplin School, we strive to cultivate a strong, collaborative school climate and culture that is focused on high academic development and achievement for all students. – High standards for curriculum implementation and student learning.

Important Dates

- Nov 3- No School– Election Day
- Nov 11- No School— Veteran's Day
- Nov 23, 24, 25- Early Dismissal
- Nov 23 & 24– Virtual Parent/Teacher Conferences
- Nov 26 & 27– Thanksgiving Recess

Ctd from p1

We have one recess wave that consists of the first, second, and third grade classes. We know that direct person-to-person spread of the virus through respiratory droplets is the most likely route of transmission, so the adults on duty give gentle reminders to the children to space themselves appropriately while still giving attention to the children's need to play and interact in cooperative play and sharing. Our desire is to balance the needs with the steps necessary to keep everyone safe and healthy. This has caused us to be mindful of the flexibilities we put into practice. We originally thought that we would keep every class separated at recess, but based on the changing guidance from the Public Health Department, the CDC, the Office of Early Childhood, and the CT State Department of Education, we have found that some of the earliest guidance is changing. The three grades have become another cohort in the event of necessary contact tracing. Although the three grades are at recess together and the different grades mix for play, the children are spread across the soccer field, the playscape, the courts, and the grass area near the school building.

In a recent video from the CSDE, it was stated that, "cohorting does not require all children to remain six feet apart or be separated by barriers at all times." This has allowed the teachers to consider how they work with small groups or have students work collaboratively which varies by grade level. We will continue to do our part to use the appropriate strategies for the environment and situation, but knowing that the kids can be near one another for short periods of time relieves some of the daily stress experienced by the staff.

Maintaining a positive learning community through adversity has brought about a different framework for moving our students forward as they deserve the same education that students before the pandemic received. Our thinking will continue to evolve as we continue to learn more about the virus as well as make observations that open opportunities for dialogue in order for us to move together.

K Chavez

Conferences

Report cards will be coming home soon, so I want to take some time to explain the report card. If you visit the school website (chaplinschool.org) and open the links under Students & Parents, you will find a link to Report Cards & Benchmarks. Once here, you will find a folder for each grade. The Benchmark/Rubric sheets give a description of what constitutes the different scores reported. Some of the clusters show different benchmarks for the different trimesters, and some show the end of the year expectations.

Because the benchmarks change from one trimester to the next, student grades will often change; they may score a 3 in the first trimester and then a 2 in the second. This is because the benchmark for the next trimester is more rigorous. You will find Reading, Writing, and Listening & Speaking on the ELA Benchmarks. If a trimester is missing, that indicates that this contains skills and concepts that have not been introduced or are not expected to be worked on enough to assess the student's level of understanding for that time in the year.

The scores that are reported are based on a number of factors that include, but not limited to, growth on daily class assignments, school-based curricular assessments that are either part of a program the school uses or teacher made assessments, and observations made during class discussions.

The recipients for the Perseverance Spirit Sticks in October are: Pre-K– Antonella & Charlotte ; K– Jackson & Hinton; G1– Vanessa, Isaiah, & Camden ; G2– Dara, Zachary, & Amelia; G3– ; G4– Trent;G5– Shaeli & KyLeah ; G6– Maximus, Hallie-Grace, Julie, Ethan, Jaina

2 We are so proud of you for persevering when the situation calls for that extra effort!

Social/Emotional Learning

Social and emotional health and growth have always been a focus area for schools. However, this year, the well-being of the students has been amplified due to the current status of the community, the state, the nation, and the world. The underlying concepts is to build strategies in our children that they can choose from depending on the situation.

Our goal is to build relationships with and among our students in order for them to feel a sense of belonging, empathy, self-awareness, self-regulation, and social awareness. All of this should continue to build on itself year after year in order for our students to feel understood and understand others. We desire for our students to understand their own feelings, so they understand their emotions. We want the students to gain and use social skills in order to build an understanding of how to interact with others. In the end, it comes down to the big idea of how to choose and make wise decisions that will affect their future.

The teachers are involved in a year-long professional development process to gain a better understanding of how to incorporate much of this into the regular school day. Teachers are already building their repertoire of strategies. I have seen so many positive acts from everyone as the students practice mindfulness yoga and other stress relieving rituals. Some of our students are using journaling with their teachers to gain an understanding of themselves and their behaviors.

People change people! Keeping this thought at the forefront of our minds, we know that if we emphasize positive experiences every day, we can counterbalance the difficulties that children experience or perceive throughout their day. Our motto of "Take care of yourself; Take care of each other; Take care of our school has an amplified importance today. We pledge to take care of the children as well as one another.

Questions

One of the best strategies that we can use in school for students to draft their thinking and make revisions to these thoughts is class dialogue. Dialog is best defined as a free exchange of ideas among three or more people.

We are working to improve our questions and questioning techniques in the classrooms. You may remember being in a class where the teacher asked a question and threw a beach ball to a student to respond. The teacher accepted the answer as right or wrong and then moved on to a different question or student. These days are gone. I would prefer to think of dialog as a volleyball game where the ball moves back and forth among the players without a set pattern.

The teachers are giving careful consideration to the questions they ask. Rather than firing off a long series of questions with short, correct/incorrect answers, our questions need to be those that foster careful consideration— questions that use facts and proof in order to create a original thought rather than a response regurgitated from a book or a previous class lesson.

Such questions call students to use better listening skills as they question one another about their thinking— not about their answer. When students question one another, students have to reflect on their thinking process and find places that need revision or rewording in order to help others understand.



Notes from the Nurse

October 2020

8 Steps for a Healthy School Year!

Start off with a healthy breakfast. A good breakfast provides energy and will help keep you alert and attentive in class. Free breakfast and lunch is being offered this year to all students.

Drink plenty of water. Water is the best fluid to stay hydrated without the added sugar found in some juice and soft drinks. Remember to pack a refillable water bottle every day!

Keep washing your hands! Good hand hygiene is even more important this year and can help keep us healthy.

Wear your face mask properly. Face masks should fit snugly over the nose and mouth. Cloth face masks should be washed daily. Have back-up masks on hand.

Pack a healthy snack every day. Try to cut back on sugar and salty snacks, they can harm your teeth and leave you feeling tired and weak.

Get at least 30 minutes of exercise every day, at recess and at home. Exercise helps our bodies to be strong, flexible, and resilient.

Get plenty of sleep. Turn off the TV and video games at least one hour prior to bedtime. Take time to relax, take a bath or shower, brush your teeth, and pack up for the morning.

Talk to your child's doctor about getting a flu vaccine. This is especially important this year because we don't know yet if being sick with COVID-19 at the same time as the flu will result in more severe illness. A yearly flu vaccine is a requirement for Pre-K, please provide documentation to the school.

Please continue to screen students each morning for [signs of illness](#). If your child has a temperature of 100.4 degrees or higher, they should not go to school. Make sure your child does not have a cough or other signs of illness, like a sore throat, severe headache, diarrhea, vomiting, or body aches. If your child has had close contact to a COVID-19 case, they should not go to school. Contact your child's health care provider. Please refer to the parent screening tool that is on the Chaplin School website from Eastern Highlands Health District for reference: <https://chaplinschool.org/covid-19-parent-daily-checklist/>

Let's all do our best to keep ourselves and each other healthy!

Betsy Woodward RN

Chaplin Elementary School Nurse



Haunted Places Logic Problem

Use the table to help you solve the logic problem. Each square represents a possible answer. Follow the rows and columns to find the correct combination. Draw a dot in a square for the answer where the vertical and horizontal squares meet. Draw an "x" in a square that isn't the answer.

	Monday	Tuesday	Friday	Sunday	Ghost	Noise	Voice	Bats
Cemetery								
Ghost Town								
Prison								
Cave								
Ghost								
Noise								
Voice								
Bats								



Mariah and her friends want to visit some haunted places: a cemetery, abandoned prison, cave and an old ghost town. They visit each place on a different day: Monday, Tuesday, Friday and Sunday. At each place, they have a favorite experience: ghost sighting, scared by bats, loud noises and an eery voice. Can you figure out what day they went to which place and what their favorite experience was?

1. The group of friends went to the old ghost town after they visited the cave.
2. The ghost sighting was not in the old ghost town, nor was it in the cave.
3. On Monday they were scared by bats, but not in the abandoned prison.
4. The eery voice was heard in the prison, which did not occur on a weekday.
5. The group of friends heard the noise after they saw the ghost.

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The following students have been chosen as a Soaring Eagle or Bucket Filler (kindergarten) during the month of October:

(K) Addison, Emmiline, Catie (1) Isaiah, Lev, Matthew, Vanessa, Noah A, Terralyn, Odin, Kallen (2) Amelia, Carley, Ella, Dara (3) Isaac, Andrew, Kaylee (4) Sam, Jayce, Aneila (5) Alanna, Jack, Jocelyn, Beela A, Kyeah, Shaeli (6) Abe, Jaina, Hallie-Grace, Braidan, Jaina

Congratulations!