

March 18, 2020

Dear Families and Friends,

I hope you are all doing well during this challenging time. This is truly a time to work together and help each other as we figure out what school and daily life looks like for the time being. Thank you for your patience and understanding as our schools work to ensure we are supporting you the best that we can.

53 Green St.
Brattleboro
Vermont
05301

It is clear that, at least through April 6, 2020, students will be learning from home. We understand this can be a burden for families and we are doing everything we can to ease that burden while still providing our students with an education. For many reasons, this means developing ways for students to learn electronically and to interact with their teachers virtually and through telecommunication. We have, therefore, decided to send home Chromebooks for students to use at home, if they need one. Your school will contact you with a plan for families to pick up a Chromebook if your family needs one.

Generally, students at the elementary level do not take school computers home with them. There are several reasons for this, and therefore reasons that need to be understood by those caring for your children during, what would normally be, school hours.

1. At school we can filter and monitor what students access online. Our ability to block inappropriate sites does not work outside of the school building. Therefore, it is important that students understand the purpose of their Chromebooks at home and that they only use sites approved by parents, guardians, and their teachers. We will be able to monitor student usage of Chromebooks, but we will not be able to filter or block sites.
2. Please be aware of sites that can target children through texting or other forms of communication. Be clear with students about who they are in contact with online and that, as always, they should not talk to strangers.
3. Please use the sites that teachers are sending home! These sites are designed to help students continue to learn; they are also safe, engaging, and educational. Our teachers are working hard to find the best ways to educate our students.
4. Chromebooks are breakable. Please remind students to treat their Chromebooks with care. They should not be eating or drinking while on their computer, they should not carry it by the screen, and they should do their best not to drop or lose their Chromebook. We teach our students to use electronics responsibly, and that work should continue at home.
5. The Chromebooks and chargers are school property. Please use them for school purposes only. It is strongly advised that the Chromebook stay in the parent or guardian's possession when not being used by the student for school work.

Ideally we will get to a point where our students can interact with their teachers via their electronic devices. While we are still developing these opportunities, do not hesitate to email your child's teachers. Or even better, have your child email their teacher!

If you have any questions regarding Chromebook use at home, please feel free to reach out to your child's teacher or the principal of your child's school.

Sincerely,

Lyle Holiday
Superintendent of Schools