



CASCO BAY HIGH SCHOOL FOR EXPEDITIONARY LEARNING

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PORTLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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Dear Casco Bay Families

Some of you have asked for advice on how to best support your teenager during this unprecedented time of remote learning. I offer what follows as a fellow parent in this crucial, daunting work, bumbling along as best I can...

- First and foremost, of course, take care of your child's physical and mental health - and let us know if you need help. (And don't forget to take care of yourself.) We are all in this together. We are Crew.
- Create a schedule for when your child should be doing to school - and when they are not doing school. And strive to stick to it. We've devised a 9am-3:30 schedule for students - including 90 minutes of "flex time" midday for lunch. If our schedule does not work for your child or family, help your child carve out some designated, sacred time to do school.
- Encourage your child to exercise and get outside every day. Scott Shibles will be sending some wellness and fitness suggestions along soon.
- Help your child find a relatively quiet and comfortable place to do school. We know many of us will be working from homes that are more crowded than usual, so do the best you can.
- Have your child show you how Google Classroom, Google Hangouts and Zoom work in practice, if you do not know already. These will be the key platforms for online learning. (More in an attached letter.)
- Encourage your child to be away from any kind of screen for several (waking!) hours a day (phones, computers, tv's).
- If you want to provide academic support to your child, ask to see the description of the assignment on Google Classroom, and, if relevant, the scoring rubric that goes with it.
- Consider having some kind of "family meeting" to discuss who's going to do what and when in your household, including school, (adult) work and home responsibilities. Many of us - even your teenagers - may have to be taking on more responsibilities in the home.
- Encourage patience, flexibility, perseverance and kindness. We will all need plenty of these virtues in the days ahead.
- Confused? Have questions? Use your child's crew advisor as your first point of contact. And watch for school updates via email, the CBHS homepage and/or CBHS social media.
- You can also call the PPS Community Helpdesk - 207-874-8159 - to connect about any school question, including technology access and food distribution. Language facilitators are available to respond to questions in Acholi, Arabic, English, French, Khmer, Portuguese, Somali, Spanish and Vietnamese
- Please reach out for assistance when you need it. Our crew advisors, administration, counselors, nurse and social worker stand ready to support you and your child however we can through this most challenging stretch. And if we can't help you, we may be able to steer you towards folks who can. (See the attached letters for more details.)

We know it will be easy for kids to become discouraged, to feel powerless and sad in the coming days. We also know students will feel an especially strong desire to stay connected, to help out and serve others. We already

witnessed this during our virtual crew last Tuesday. We will be looking for ways to capitalize on your teenagers' compassion and we encourage you to do the same. We will also be looking to tap into the budding wisdom and flexible thinking of these remarkable young people; Together, we can conquer the problems we are bound to face - with tenacity, creativity and (mostly) love.

Sincerely,

Derek Pierce

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