

Dear Culver Families,

We hope you and your families are all safe and healthy.

We know that you are eager to learn the plans for the 2020-2021 school year so you can plan and prepare your children.

### **Teacher Updates**

We are excited to welcome three new staff members to the Culver family and one familiar face. Beata Soltys has transitioned from teaching assistant to first grade teacher. Amanda Mistretta is joining us as a special education teacher. She will be working primarily with middle school students. Nancy Kalinowski joins us as our speech/language pathologist, sharing the role with Gina Rossi and Abby Ranzer. Allie Mennella has moved from first to third grade, and Alan Hirsch has moved from tech to fourth grade.

### **First Week of School**

Families will pick up iPads or Chromebooks and learning kits on Wednesday, August 26th. [Here's](#) the day's schedule. Learning kits are bags of materials to make remote learning more engaging and not completely computer-dependent. Learning kits will be distributed about every three weeks.

The first day of enhanced remote learning is Thursday, August 27th. This day, students will spend time with their teachers, engaging in video conferencing, discussing their weekly schedule, and learning about remote expectations.

School supply lists are posted on our [district website](#). Teachers will be encouraging students to use the supplies during enhanced remote learning. Thank you for supplying your children with these items for school.

### **Remote Learning Schedule**

[Click here to access the Remote Learning Grade Level Schedules that were shared on 8/20/2020](#). Students can now access PowerSchool to view their homeroom teacher assignments, as well as class schedules for students in middle school.

### **Current Plans For the Start of School**

All students will begin the year with our Enhanced Remote Learning Program (see description below). Full-time remote learning will continue for all students through September 25, 2020. As the Covid situation allows, students will begin a gradual

transition to a hybrid learning environment with some in-person instruction on Monday, September 28th.

In making this decision, the primary focus is on the safety of students and staff. In addition, the District is guided by:

- A student-centered approach that addresses students' health, academic and social-emotional needs.
- Developing a plan that focuses District resources towards the most supportive launch to the year.
- The knowledge that no matter what plan the District implements, it is not possible for any school to return to a pre-March 13th "normal" for the foreseeable future.

We are making other preparations for the eventual phase-in to in-person learning. We hope that students will have an opportunity to meet in-person with their teachers during the week of September 21st. We do not yet know yet what the daily schedule might look like for students. The administration will work closely with all stakeholders to provide for the gradual and safe return to in-person instruction.

Band, orchestra, enrichment, and intervention programs are on hold for the beginning of the school year. After the first few weeks of enhanced remote learning, programs may continue again. We will keep families updated.

### **Preschool Program**

The Culver Preschool Program will be offered remotely this year, at least initially, to students who were accepted into either the AM or PM class. Remote preschool consists of activities that will be shared with parents electronically, either through email or by logging on to our website, for parents to do with their child. Live group video sessions will take place once per week for all students and small group sessions will be held with students who are qualified for special education services or are considered high-risk during the hours of 9AM and 3PM.

### **Curriculum Night**

We will host a remote Curriculum Night on Thursday, September 10th, from 6:30-8:00. Please mark your calendars; we look forward to this event.

### **PTA**

Our PTA will be at Culver to welcome you to the new school year during tech pick up on Wednesday, August 26th. If you are interested in becoming a PTA member, you can sign

up online. The PTA has generously offered to provide Culver yard signs in all our families' yards, a perfect way to show Culver pride. Stop by their table near Ms. Lurie's classroom (southwest side of building) on August 26th. Please see the *attachment* for more information.

### **Technology Expectations**

Our enhanced remote learning plan includes video conferencing with teachers. There are ways to make conferencing more successful and engaging for all students. Please see our [video conferencing expectations](#) for families.

### **Grading**

A traditional grading system will be used in the fall. Students are encouraged to turn in all work on time and reach out to the teacher with any questions or needs.

Feedback is part of the educational process. It is a challenge to give those fun smiley faces/stickers on assignments, via computer. But, formative feedback can and should be part of small group and individual student meetings. In addition, teachers will be providing written feedback on assignments.

### **Online Registration for All Families**

Registration for the 2020-2021 school year is online this year. Please [CLICK HERE](#) to complete registration for both new and returning families. You can click on "make a one-time payment" for registration fees. New families and returning families with incoming kindergarteners will be contacted by Ms. Kim Gordon, the Principal's Secretary, to complete additional requirements.

Once you have completed the online registration form, you are able to pay the student registration fees.

### **Registration Fees**

All families of students in K-8 are required to pay annual registration fees. Registration fees are \$100 per student and no more than \$300 per family. In order to pay your registration fees online, please [CLICK HERE](#).

Preschool parents do not pay registration fees.

If you have any questions, please contact the main office at 847-966-9280.

### **Families Moving Out of District**

If your family is moving or has moved out of the District, we are in the office to provide you with the necessary transfer out paperwork. Please contact Ms. Gordon to learn the steps in the transfer out process so your child's records can be shared with the new school.

If you have any questions, please reach out to Ms. Gordon at [kgordon@niles71.org](mailto:kgordon@niles71.org) or at 847-966-9280.

### **Health Education Resources**

As our State transitions to Phase 4, our children will need your support in developing new habits including wearing a face covering when out in public and continuing to physically distance ourselves when we are outside of our immediate families. Your assistance in building these habits now will help support your child in transitioning to in-person instruction at school. The following resources may be useful to you as you work to build these habits with your child provided by

[Healthychildren.org](http://Healthychildren.org).

[Masks for Children](#)

[Getting Outside During Social Distancing](#)

### **Weekly School Meals**

Culver will continue to distribute weekly meal bags, each Friday, from 12:30-1:30. We serve meal bags from the door near Ms. Lurie's classroom, in the west lot, closest to the baseball field.

Meals are not limited to students receiving free and reduced lunches, and there is no income verification process. The weekly bags are quite heavy, as they contain lots of food.

### **Appreciation & Final Thoughts**

If you or your family are experiencing any hardships or are in need of assistance, please be sure to email Dr. Smolinski at [esmolinski@niles71.org](mailto:esmolinski@niles71.org). Our staff is available to help.

The pandemic is a fluid situation, resulting in uncertainty which makes it difficult for families to plan for the next school year and has required us all to be patiently persistent. We appreciate your continued support, as we all work toward the ultimate goal of returning all of our students to in-person instruction as soon as safely possible. Dear Culver Families,

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