

Dear Parents,

As we face unprecedented times, I want to share just a few thoughts with you...

When I first started thinking about all of the children who will now be learning outside of school, I felt overwhelmed. But after a few days to get used to the idea, some time to reflect, and a whole of time finding and screening resources online, I feel much more encouraged to see this time as an opportunity.

As Mr. Sievers said in his email, ***learning will continue*** (these are not snow days!) and now you will have the chance to participate more in your child's learning. Maybe you feel overwhelmed like I did at first, or you're wondering how on earth you're going to find the time or the resources to help your child learn at home. But with so many companies offering free resources, so many teachers pooling their resources, and your child's own boundless imagination, **you can do this!**

After all, ***you were your child's first teacher!*** *Even if you can't do all the things, you can do some things* and some things are WAY better than nothing.

From an ESS standpoint, here is what you can do to keep your child learning so that (s)he doesn't lose ground during this time:

- 1) **Set a (flexible) daily schedule** and try to stick to it. Students are used to routines and especially with the world in such chaotic times, these rhythms help kids of all ages stay grounded.

[Setting a Schedule](#)

- 2) **Do what your child's classroom teachers recommend** and stay on pace. All parents will receive recommendations from classroom teachers and these will be important to follow so your child continues to make progress.

[Scholastic Learn at Home](#) - grade-by-grade resources, PreK-8th grade

[Virtual Field Trips](#)

- 3) **READ**. Every day. Your child can read the books you have at home, e-books, audiobooks, magazines, comic books, whatever. Remember that reading *to* and *with* your children are great options too-- and don't let your 13-year-old tell you differently! My high school English teachers still read aloud to their classes and I'll never forget it.

[Access the Public Library Online](#)

[More Digital Library Resources](#)

[Khan Academy Reading by Grade Level](#)

[RAZ-Kids Books Online](#) (all students through 5th grade who receive ESS support have an account and I will be assigning books at the right levels- password: bcs)

[Famous People Reading Books](#)

[Astronauts Reading from Space](#)

- 4) **Do some math**. Keep up that developing sense of numbers and patterns.

[K-2nd Math Activities](#)

[Khan Academy Math by Grade Level](#)

- 5) **Get your kids off screens**. We're grateful for this internet age that enables us to participate in learning tasks and many items will likely require screen time. But **don't let your child spend hours upon hours** on screens-- research proves over and over again that this is no good for developing minds. Consider ditching or limiting video games and social media for your kids. Be wary of Googling "online learning for kids" and things like that-- rather, take suggestions from actual teachers.

Instead of more screen time, help your child learn a **practical task** like doing the laundry or setting a budget; encourage them to spend some time **outdoors**; get some **exercise**; **build or create** something 2D or 3D; **learn a new skill** they wouldn't learn in school-- lettering or watercolor painting or how to fix a four-wheeler.

[Ideas to Get Moving](#)

[Screen-Free Activities](#)

[Even More Fun Activities](#)

[100 Activities for Kids](#)

- 6) Remember that **our kids take their cues from us**: the more we show we're enjoying our kids being home and taking social distancing recommendations seriously while keeping our own anxiety in check, the more they will too.

I read recently, “Unless your reason for going out is mission-critical, stay home.” Staying away from each other is hard, but it’s an act of loving our neighbors. People who are at risk -our neighbors- are depending on us.

**Don’t hesitate to contact me for questions, suggestions, or ideas. We can do this!**

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