EXPRESS
ELMIRA CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

INSIDE
EDUCATION IN A ‘NEW NORMAL’

EDUCATING ADMIST A GLOBAL PANDEMIC

ALSO INSIDE
A TRIBUTE TO THE CLASS OF 2020
A THANK YOU TO OUR FRONTLINE HEROES
PRE-K REGISTRATION AND FAMILY SUPPORT
Dear friends,

After ringing in the New Year, 2020 began as it normally would with resolutions for a fresh start, rigorous mid-winter sports schedules, winter musical concerts, Snow Ball, Regents exams and Mid-Year Graduation. Then, in early March, everything changed. The Coronavirus came in like a storm and disrupted every bit of normalcy we knew. Our students, families and staff went from attending school every day and experiencing their lives as they normally would to triple duty - working, parenting and teaching from home. On Saturday, March 14, an order was issued to suspend classroom and extra-curricular functions in order to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

It’s important to note that while our schools closed to students, in no way did education stop. In many ways, we’ve ramped up the services and offerings to our families. I’m proud of the work of our staff and of the resilience of our families. Our administrative faculty worked together throughout the weekend of March 14-15 to prepare for the extended school closure. By Monday morning March 16, students had packets of prepared educational materials to take home. Our faculty said good-bye to their students and each other, not knowing the next time they’d be together again. But as educators do, our staff made sure students left with warm smiles and hope for the unknown next chapter of this unwritten story. Retrospectively, we can now recognize this time period as “Phase 1.”

By Tuesday March 17, our Food Services staff began distributing free breakfast and free lunch meals at all of our school buildings to any child under the age of 18 in Elmira. Beginning on March 20, we opened three additional meal sites at the Golden Glow, East Hill and Wellsburg Fire Departments. As of the date of my writing this letter, we have served over 50,000 meals to our families. In addition to educational offerings, providing food assurance to our families consistently remains one of our most important moral duties. I encourage you to read more about our emergency feeding program on pages 5-6. We are especially grateful for our frontline staff and community partners for their dedication.

Phase 1 of instruction during the closure included review materials for our families to utilize safely from home. Phase 1 work and directions provided on March 16 were intended to continue through April 10, 2020. Swiftly, District Administration worked with our technology team to prepare for “Phase 2” of instruction. Phase 2 of learning began on April 13, offering students three strong learning platforms - online, print, and live sessions with our Elmira educators. With support from our technology team, we were able to prepare over 1,150 devices for families to sign-out for distance learning. Our goal is to ensure every student has what they need in order to be successful. Should your family need a device to access online learning, please reach-out to your student’s building principal.

Our strong group of Community Schools partners quickly rallied together to develop virtual supports for our students. From food assurance to extended learning, family engagement, social, and emotional support, our strength is found in these imperative partnerships. In a sense, our foundational Community Schools model has prepared us for this never-foreseen global health emergency. We can’t do what we do without our community. And during trying times, we are soaring because of these dedicated partnerships.

Our teachers continue to prepare diligently to educate all students under this new format, our Food Services staff are on-site every day, and our custodial/maintenance staff has ensured clean and save working environments. I would like to thank our teachers and express our gratitude for their work to help our children. Helping our families through these uncharted waters continues to prove the collective strength and ingenuity of our community. Our administration teams have been unwavering in their commitment to lead in a fast, yet effective fashion.

In the spirit of recognition and future-casting, we know that our students and families will rise together and come back stronger after all of this. We are working on plans to recognize our senior class of 2020. And we look forward to community-wide support in acknowledging our 400+ seniors. Please look to pages 7-8 in this newsletter for a tribute our seniors.

This Special Edition Newsletter provides a review of the programs and services being delivered during COVID-19. I am proud of the resiliency of our community. And as the District tagline suggests, our family, school and community will succeed together! Stay Express Strong!

Go Express!

Hillary J. Austin
Superintendent of Schools
Elmira City School District

A special thanks to Elmira City School District alumn, Andrew LaVere, for sharing his artful talents with our Riverside community! These curb-side inspirational messages have been appreciated by so many during this difficult time.
WE WILL RISE UP

“Now and always, we find the positive from our hopeful youth.”

Hillary J. Austin
Superintendent of Schools
Elmira City School District

Aubriannah Reid, second grader, practices virtual yoga while home during extended school closure.
Almost immediately after announcing the school closure in mid-March, we began hearing from our community partners with ideas to continue enrichment and support services to our students. From book giveaways to social and emotional support, tutoring, and extended learning, we are grateful for our community agencies! Community partners are helping to ensure the social/emotional security for our families, delivering food, providing educational materials, and serving as active partners as we all work through this difficult time.

The Steele Memorial Library and all the branch libraries are still here for you, and teens, online! Events, books, classes, and more are digitally available to you! Access language Learning, Databases, Download free music, and e-magazines with your library card from the Steele Library website. http://ccld.lib.ny.us/steele-memorial-library/

Thank you to Ms. Aleta and The Rockwell Museum for continuing the Great Circle Artist in Residency in an online virtual format (designed for Grade 1)! BONUS: writing competitions, art events, weekly art activities (for all ages), and easy art lab activities are available on The Rockwell Museum’s website. https://rockwellmuseum.org/

Thank you to the Chemung County Historical Society and Educator, Ms. Susan Zehnder, for a virtual story of the ‘Kindergarten Colonial!’ Families can access this story and others on the District’s YouTube channel. @ElmiraCitySchoolDistrict

Thank you to the Family Reading Partnership of Chemung Valley for supplying free books for our students to pick-up at the meal distribution school sites throughout this closure. Read, Kids, read!

Thank you to Chemung County and The Food Bank of the Southern Tier for continuing to provide weekend food packs to our Elmira families.
Mental Health Support is More Important Than Ever

This is a time of uncertainty and many have asked about how to best talk to their children about COVID-19. In the case your student would like to talk to a counseling professional throughout the time of this closure, we have school counselors available for video and/or telephone communication. We are running counseling services on-line daily where students or parents can call in and request to speak with a counselor if they are struggling with any aspect associated with the extended closure. Counseling arrangements can be made by emailing the District at covid19@elmiracityschools.com.

Additionally, and in collaboration with our community agency partners, we have published a list of social and emotional resources for our families during this time of uncertainty on our website.

https://elmiracityschools.com/community/c_o_v_i_d-19_u_p_d_a_t_e

Our school counselors are posting a series of helpful videos, including social and emotional techniques to practice during this time of change and uncertainty, on the District’s YouTube channel.

YouTube @ElmiraCitySchoolDistrict

Teens! Join SafeZones on Zoom

Advisor, Kim Stanton’s, Contact Information - Students can contact Kim for questions, more information or to get codes and passwords to attend online programs.

Email-kstanton@gstcontractors.com
Phone (text only please) 607-483-0285

CORONAVIRUS TRIPLE DUTY: WORKING, PARENTING, AND TEACHING FROM HOME

Like so many other parents around the country, our faculty and staff are transitioning to full-time remote work while preparing to support their own family through this crisis.

Thank you to our dedicated staff for their perseverance through this difficult time.
Meet the Heroes on the Front Lines of the Coronavirus Fight
Our Food Services staff have served over 50,000 meals since March 17 and our maintenance and custodial staff have cleaned over 1,455,167 square foot of space across our District amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.

Our cafeteria workers are figuring out innovative ways to serve children free, nutritious school meals in the middle of a pandemic. And this makes what we’ve known all along abundantly clear -- our school cafeteria staff care deeply for the students they feed.

The maintenance and custodial staff are keeping our work spaces safe and have spent the last month deep cleaning every surface of our schools. Our maintenance and custodial staff’s contributions make it possible for our Food Services staff to prepare and serve food safely every day.

We are so grateful for our frontline staff members.

KIDS EAT FREE

Pre-packaged breakfast and lunch are available at all schools for pick-up, Monday through Friday from 9:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. Meals are also available every day at three mobile feeding sites just outside the city, at Wellsburg, East Hill and Golden Glow Fire Departments. The Wellsburg mobile food assistance site will be open at the Wellsburg Fire Department from 10:15 - 11 a.m. daily and will also park at the Carriage Estates Offices from 9:00 a.m. - 9:30 a.m., daily, the Bel-Aire Trailer Park from 9:45 to 10:15 a.m., daily.

Additionally, there is a drive-up location at the front entrance of Elmira High School during the regular time of distribution, 9:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. for families to access meals without having to enter the school building.

Children 18 and under are eligible to participate and families can pick-up food from any feeding site location.
Hey Gang!

Your first week at EHS, we challenged you to decide what your legacy would be and how you would make a positive impact on Elmira High School and the world. The Class of 2020 has certainly met those goals, and given our unusual circumstances this year; you have far surpassed all the bars we set. You entered your senior year did not follow the usual traditions, this is an experience you will be able to talk about for decades to come. You have risen above all to become a group of young adults that have shown endurance, intelligence, passion, honor, and dedication to Elmira, NY.

While your senior year did not follow the usual traditions, this is an experience you will be able to talk about for decades to come. You have risen above all to become a group of young adults that have shown endurance, intelligence, passion, honor, and dedication to Elmira, NY.

Thank you from the bottom of my heart, and always know that the excellence and perseverance you have developed here will stay with you throughout your lives.

We cannot wait to watch all the amazing things the Class of 2020 will accomplish, and we hope that your time here, although shortened, has been a wonderful and memorable time!

-Mr. Krantz
Building Principal | Elmira High School

Friday Night Lights

The Southern Tier Athletic Conference has organized a recognition for the Class of 2020 and spring athletes by asking surrounding school districts to light up their Friday Night Lights throughout the COVID-19 school closure. The effort shows support for the group most impacted scholastically by the COVID-19 crisis, as they lose their senior spring sports season entirely, along with the chance to spend time with and say final farewells to classmates.

The Express Baseball field and Tennis courts are lit on Friday nights from 8:20 p.m. - 8:40 p.m. (20:20 military time) as a way to recognize our seniors.

ELMIRACITYSCHOOLS.COM
Be The Light

Jacob Kobbe
Lauryn Kobbe
Victoria Kohler
Jeffrey Konrad
Tori Kramer
Izzabella Kurta
Xander Kurta
Seth LaBeff
Nathan Latshaw
Emily Leonard
Jarrod Lewis
Jon Lewis
Richard Lewis Jr
Noah Lindsey
Raymond Logan-Polite
Tatiana Lopez
Julia Loudenslager
Jared Lounsberry
Elijah Lovett
Jessie Lucas
Jaelon Lynch
Kylie Lynch
Evangeline Mackey
Ryan Mahon
Croix Maisonet-Thomas
Grace Maloney
Riley Manchester
Adrian March
Makayla Martin
Sierra Martin
Connor Marvin
Zariyah Mathis
Joseph Matthewson
Bryce Mattison
Christopher Mattoon
Dustin May
Madison Maynard
Ryan Mayo
Maighan McArthur
Olive McCall
Aliyah McCann
Siobhan McClave
John McCormick
Nolan McCormick
Jayzell McCoy
Ceirra McDowell
Halil McKinley
Keria McRae
Jami Miller
Katelynn Miller
Reece Miller
Ethan Millered
Marshall Mingos
Mariah Molina
Janessa Monroe
Fred Morrison
Mackenzie Morseman
Alexis Moyer
Dakota Mueller
Kyier Muhammad
Selah Muhammad
Xabbi Muhammad
Ja’Miah Mulligan
Justin Munid
Deja Mundy
Ameen Murphy
Mitchell Murray
Hannah Myers
Lidia Nelan
James Neufer
Hezekiah Northrup
Max Odum
Zachary Odum
Helaina Osterhout
Alexis Ostrander
Robert Ostrander
Collin Pack
Darlene Palmer
Tyler Parker
Vincent Parker
Larry Parker III
Kendelynne Parshall
Nathan Patchen
Cheyanne Paulino
Jacob Paulo
Brianna Payne
Nicholas Poeller
Jose Polanco
Luis Polanco
Noah Polovic
DeSean Poole
Don Pound
Laura Pratt
Reggie Purvis
Nyaun Quinnichett
Katelyne Ramsey
Sarah Ravert
Joseph Raymondi
Connor Reilly
Michael Reynolds
Katelyn Rice
Kirstyn Richer
Davyn Riddell
Joshua Rimany-Miller
Zachary Ringer
Rachyl Rinwalske
Cody Ripley
Ashley Rivera
Misil Rivera
Haley Roberson-Marshall
John Robyck
Brandon Rodriguez
Amber Rogers
Brandon Rogers
Destiny Roof
Rebecca Rose
Brighid Rosekrans
Madisyn Ross
McKenna Ross
Elias Rounsllie
Ian Roy
Aaron Saccucci
Kailob Salisbury
Michael Saufley
Konner Scharborough
Katelyn Schrom
Willie Schuyler
Andrew Scott
Jasmine Scott
Katelyn Sechrist
Savannah Sechrist
Raylin Seeley
Nathan Semski
Jose’ Servin
Alayah Sexton
Logan Shadduck
Klowi Shaffer
Nicholas Shaw
Aurora Shemelia
Jaiden Sherman
Andrew Sherwood
Juliano Sidari
Dillon Silvia
Kayeala Simmons
Stacia Simoens
Barbara Simons
Dillon Simpson
Ethan Simpson
Karan Singh
Bryce Smith
Decoda Smith
Samantha Smith
Theresa Smith
Hannah Snegosky
Tezazia Sparbane
Noah Sperduto
Nicholas Spicer
Griffin Squires
Logan Stage
Emily Stark
Tayrn Steadman
Alexandra Stedge
Juliana Steed
Chloe Steemeran
Kaleb Steemer
Joseph Stevens III
Austin Stewart
Victoria Stewart
Christian Stickler
Hannah Silson
Heaven Leigh
Starbeck
Nolan Storch
Shawn Stowe-Alington
Zachary Stuck
Alex Stukey
Ashley Sullivan
Mark Swartwood
Zachary Swartwood
Patrick Symonds
Safir Taborn
Makayla Tadder
Taylor Talad
Ciera Tarby
Michael Taylor
Jadyn Terkoski
Codey Thiel
Dominick Thomas
Jacob Thomas
Melissa Thomas
Brianne Thompson
Briana Tohafjian
Hizahna Tyler
Anna VanDewark
Emma VanGorder
Jeffrey VanNess
Elizabeth Verity
Rosa Vicioso
Dalton VonRapacki
Dylan Voorhees
Allison Wagner
Kevin Walburn Jr.
Prestley Walker
Jessica Wandell
Melissa Warlikowski
Tahzae Watkins
Tamari Watkins
Peyton Weideman
Artemus Wells
Ella Weston
Ian White
Lydia White
Nicholas White
Brandin Whitehair
Barbara Whifflty
Ethen Wilber
Patrick Wilcox
Storm Wildrick
Desmond Williams
LeeMark Williams
Sharon Williams
Jacob Williamson
Alexis Wilson
Jeffrey Wilson
Kaylie Wilson
Midandra Wilson
Xavier Wilson-Rhoads
Haleigh Winnter
Bradley Winton
Sierra Wolcott
Alexis Wood
James Wood
Sidney Wood
Jall Woodard
Bishop Wray
Bryan Wray II
McKenzie Wright
Olivia Wright
Truis Wyche
Britnely Young
Olivia Zerbe
Jakub Ziembicki
Heaven Zuke-Martone
Lexus Zwanka

Elmira City School District

special edition newsletter
COVID-19 | SPRING 2020

2020
No Computer at Home?
We have a Plan for Remote Learning

Our Technology staff, in partnership with Building Administration, disinfected, loaded and prepped devices for students and families to use at home during this unprecedented time of e-learning. Students who would like technology assistance, including borrowing a device for home, can reach out to building principals for arrangements.

Online Resources for At-Home Learning

The Elmira City School District uses a Learning Management System (LMS) called Schoology as the hub for curricular resources and activities during this extended closure. Educational resources, organized by grade, and classroom, can be found on the FAMILIES page of the District’s website. This page is the hub for all educational resources and can be accessed from the homepage.

elmiracityschools.com/families_and_students
Virtual Instruction Amidst a Global Pandemic

The challenges we are facing due to the rapid spread of the Coronavirus throughout our world, our country and our state are unprecedented. Like every school district, we have quickly adjusted our traditional educational delivery system to an e-learning model that allows for the continuation of instruction.

Our Instructional Learning Plan includes three Phases of instruction. On March 16, students took school work home with them to complete at home. Teachers distributed resources and activities intended to help our students stay engaged in learning during the closure. These assignments and activities were focused on review and enrichment for all students, and were tailored to individual grade levels, kindergarten through 12. Instructional staff participated in training and planning sessions throughout the last two weeks of March in order to ensure a smooth transition into Phase 2 of instruction on April 13. Phase 2 introduces new content learning for students and a grading system for teachers and students to evaluate school work.

Our teachers have begun hosting virtual “office hours” as a way to connect with students. Teachers and our families are working collectively and individually to establish routines and schedules. Students and faculty are working together to assess materials and to work toward an academically strong fourth marking period!

Meeting the Needs of Students with Special Needs via Teletherapy

Related services such as speech, occupational or physical therapies for special education students have taken a turn towards technology during this closure. Our related service providers have been offering to provide services to students through teletherapy, which provides services that are not “in person” but are delivered “face to face” through the use of technology, which is an exciting option for the students, providers and parents given that traditional in-person sessions are not feasible during this time. We have many parents who have consented to this innovative approach to service delivery and we are happy that students and related services providers are able to stay virtually connected during this time. If you are a parent who has a child with Individual Education Plan (IEP) related services and are interested in teletherapies, please contact your child’s related service provider or the district CSE office.

Online Tutoring

Three of our certified Elmira teachers are now offering tutoring services virtually. This “hotline” type of academic support is for students in grades K-12! Tutors will utilize emails, phone calls or even Zoom to work with you.

Contact a tutor today!

Mrs. Thomas K-8 Tutoring
cthomas@elmiracityschools.com

Mrs. Malloy, K-12 tutoring
kmalloy@elmiracityschools.com

Mrs. Alexander, K-12 Tutoring
talexan@elmiracityschools.com

https://resources.overdrive.com/sora-sweet-reads/

During this extended school closure, the Elmira City School District wants to help students find new ways to learn while away from the classroom. We have an exciting reading service available through Sora, the student reading app, which provides free 24/7 access to ebooks and audiobooks. What better way to engage your student’s mind than through reading?

From now through July 31, 2020, the Sora Sweet Reads program will offer a collection of Juvenile and Young Adult titles that will be prominently displayed in Sora for quick and easy unlimited access. You can explore the title offerings and learn more about the program here:
CREATIVE WAYS TO CONNECT

STAYING TOGETHER WHILE SOCIALLY DISTANCED

Our teachers, families and students are getting creative with the way they connect socially and academically online!

Mrs. Morrell and her family are celebrating Express Spirit Day, showing off their Express shirts for an online class!

First grade friends found a surprise art kit delivered just outside their front door from their teacher, Mrs. Maloney!

Ms. Billbe’s students come together online for Mustache Monday!

Mr. Donovan is sharing some sunshine for her Riverside friends!

Ms. Billbe’s students come together online for Mustache Monday!

Ms. Worth’s students take turns writing on the board during “Virtual Morning Meeting!”

Ms. Worth’s students take turns writing on the board during “Virtual Morning Meeting!”

Mr. Monks and other PE teachers across the District are offering online physical education lessons and more can be found on the District’s YouTube channel!

Read-alouds with teachers, coping strategies with school counselors, music tutorials, physical education lessons and more can be found on the District’s YouTube channel!

Ms. Guyette challenged her kindergarten friends to bread-baking! Great work families.

Dr. Burroughs hasn’t missed a beat - sharing online instrumental instruction for students.
Family and Community Outreach Coordinators

OUR FAMILY & COMMUNITY OUTREACH COORDINATORS ARE AVAILABLE TO HELP

The role of a Family and Community Outreach Coordinator (FCOC) is to help bridge the gap between school and home and to create positive relationships with families. Some of the responsibilities of an FCOC include:

- Collaborating with community members to connect students, families and staff to expanded learning opportunities and community services.
- Sending helpful tips on creating an easier learning environment at home.
- Assisting with getting out materials and supplying parents/families with learning materials, community resources and creating social emotional supports.
- Setting up and helping plan family night to help keep families engaged in their child’s education.

See office hours and contact information here

Parent Academy | Learning the Ins-and-Outs of Schoology

Schoology is the online e-learning platform that our Elmira City School District students and staff use for distance learning. As this solution is new to most, our Technology and Educational Support staff hosted three “Virtual Parent Academy Sessions” for parents to log-in and learn more about Schoology. These sessions were also streamed LIVE on Facebook! We appreciate the difficulties that this situation is presenting and we are awe-inspired by parent’s dedication to their children’s education.

To access these Schoology 101 Parent Academy sessions, please visit elmiracityschools.com/families_and_students

TECH SUPPORT

If you have difficulty logging in or accessing Schoology, Conferences, Office 365, Zoom, or other programs and applications used by teachers during the closure, please email us at techhelp@elmiracityschools.com and we will get back to you to assist you and your student as soon as possible, typically within one business day or less.
Congratulations!

Welcoming the Class of 2034!

Elmira Girls Varsity Basketball finished with a 20-1 record, winning its fourth straight sectional championship and first Southern Tier Athletic Conference tournament crown. Kiara Fisher was named Section 4 Class AA girls champion and was selected Class AA Girls Player of the Year. Coach Jake Dailey was picked as Coach of the Year in the class. And Fisher was BCANY Player of the Year and BCANY Coach of the Year!

Devin Dennard, a senior of Elmira High School, made the 12th Team All-State for Basketball. A well-decorated senior athlete, Devin has quite a resume -- all conference team, all region team, Elite 10 team, Stars and Stripes All-Star, BCANY AA Player of the Year, and Kiwanis Male Athlete of the Winter Season!

Pre-Kindergarten Registration

Choose from three registration methods:

1. Submit Registration Documents through our Online Secure Document Portal. Parents/Guardians will need to take a photo with your smartphone or scan the completed paper documents to attach and upload. Other required documentation, such as Address Verification documents, Health Information forms from your doctor, immunization records, and others, can be uploaded. Click here to access the Document Portal: https://www.elmiracityschools.com

2. Full Registration Packets can be printed from District website. Completed packets can be dropped off to the feeding sites at Diven, Pine City, Fassett and Riverside Elementary Schools and at District Administration Building located at 430 W. Washington Ave. A secure drop-box can be found at the feeding site location within each school building. The drop-box will be accessible during regular meal distribution times of 9:30 a.m. – 11 a.m. daily and from 8 a.m. – Noon at District Administration. Due to social distancing, staff will not be available to make copies. Click here to access the Pre-Kindergarten Registration Packet: elmiracityschools.com

3. A Registration Packet can be mailed to your home for completion. Please call the District Administration building at 607.735.3000 or send an email with your name, address, and phone number to register@elmiracityschools.com to request a Pre-Kindergarten Registration packet. Completed packets can be dropped off to the feeding sites at Diven, Pine City, Fassett and Riverside Elementary Schools and at District Administration Building located at 430 W. Washington Ave. A secure drop-box can be found at the feeding site location within each school building. The drop-box will be accessible during regular meal distribution times of 9:30 a.m. – 11 a.m. daily and from 8 a.m. – Noon at District Administration. Due to social distancing, staff will not be available to make copies.
We’re listening. Please connect with us on social media and share your positive stories about the Elmira City School District. Use #GoExpress when posting!

@ECSD_Schools on Twitter, or Elmira City School District on Facebook.

ICYMI You Tell Us
IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

Elmira City School District
March 23, 2020 at 12:02 PM

We are educators. We want to be in school with our kids. We miss you. And we are still here for you.

Many of our teachers have been paying drive-by visits to their students at their homes. These small connections have substantial meaning. We miss you! And thank you.

#GoExpress

STAY CONNECTED

#GOEXPRESS

Read-alouds with teachers, coping strategies with school counselors, music tutorials, physical education lessons and more can be found on the District’s YouTube channel!

@ElmiraCitySchoolDistrict
FAMILY, SCHOOL, COMMUNITY: TOGETHER WE SUCCEED

Stay Healthy And Be Kind ❤️