



Apache Junction Unified School District

Office of the Superintendent

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Superintendent of Schools

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Serving Apache Junction, Gold Canyon, Queen Valley and Unincorporated Pinal County

April 5, 2020

Good evening,

I hope that everyone is staying safe and healthy as you settle into your new routines. I have spoken with the principals and teachers this week and the feedback has been positive. Each day more students and their families are engaging through phone calls, emails, video conferencing and the completion of activities.

I realize that this has been a learning curve not only for my staff but also for you and your children. We appreciate all that everyone is doing to work together and make the best of a very challenging situation.

My communication home this weekend to families is about engagement and interacting appropriately with teachers and other students. COVID-19 closures have changed the daily school day, but it is important that the community of Apache Junction Unified School District remember that we as a school district are still committed to providing your child with an educational environment that is engaging.

In spite of difficult circumstances we are seeing positive results. For instance, Lydia Henry had this to say about her students at CCJH:

“I was so proud of how many students submitted work and really tried to do everything I asked of them. 67% of my 3rd hour responded to activities or IXL, and one student in my Honors Algebra 1 class got the challenge activity correct. The answer was, “The total mass of all humans in the world is about 10 times the total mass of all ants.”

Your child, while not having their activities graded, will be receiving participation and engagement points that can significantly boost their current grade for the 4th quarter. With guidance from the state department, all students have begun the 4th quarter with the grade they ended 3rd quarter with. Beginning on Monday, April 13 your child will begin to receive points that can help them improve the current grade that they have. We are giving all children the first few weeks of our online learning to understand the activities and these new means of engagement with their teachers. Again, we remind you all that your contact with your classroom teacher will impact your child’s weekly points. No child will lose points from their current grade but you are encouraged to have contact with teachers and engage in activities each week to improve your 4th quarter grade.

Having your student actively engage with their studies and communicate with their teachers will not only help them academically, it will also provide a sense of normalcy in an uncertain time during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Tina Jada, a seventh grade math teacher had this to say:

“For me success is the connection I feel with my CCJH family. Whether it is watching and sharing Mr.D’s video announcements, video chatting with my team and students or commenting on activities that are completed I feel like we are in this together. I encourage more students to log in and see the great things we have to offer!”

Structure is also essential. It is important that you share the following guidelines with your student and remind them about how to work collaboratively online with both their teachers and other students. The expectation is that while not physically together, students must treat others with respect and understanding, and each student is ultimately responsible for their behavior. We have created guidelines for all students to follow to be sure that each online learning experience is positive and safe for each student.

Please review the following expectations with your child:

- Students will use their first and last names when joining video conferencing sessions.
- Students will make sure there are no inappropriate items behind them and be in a well lit area.
- Students will remain muted until teachers ask them to unmute.
- Students will only share their screens with teacher permission.

- Students will use chat features appropriately to ask questions and make comments only about what is being discussed.
- Students will not record any video conferencing sessions.
- Students will be mindful of the AJUSD dress code.
- Students will continue to abide by AJUSD policies as outlined in the student handbook.

As always we are a team when it comes to your child's learning and we appreciate the role you play in helping your child to understand the importance of these guidelines as they are engaging in online learning. If a student does not adhere to appropriate behavioral expectations as listed, they are likely to receive consequences as appropriate.

This week the district leadership team made the decision to hand out chromebooks to students who attend Cactus Canyon Junior High School. By working closely with the technology department we were able to prepare devices to hand out to junior high school students during this upcoming week. Once the devices have been offered to families, all of our 7-12th graders will have received a device from us.

Please continue to work together with your child and their teachers to make this experience a positive one. I understand the challenges that learning at home has on families during COVID-19. We are committed to providing you a positive educational experience while being committed to the safety and well-being of our staff and the community. We appreciate your support and understanding during this challenging time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Krista L. Anderson".

Dr. Krista Anderson
Superintendent