



## ATHOL-ROYALSTON REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

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April 7, 2020

Dear Parents/ Guardians,

The Athol Royalston Regional School District hopes everyone is well. Over the last week, the district has received more and more guidance from the state in regard to remote learning. The new guidance calls for closer examination of our district formats for communication to students, in particular video chatting, equity for students who do not have the internet at home, and request for students to surf the net by teachers.

In the last week, the district has sought counsel on what are the best formats to support our students. The district has decided on the following:

- Teachers will exclusively use Google Meet for video chat with students. The reason for this is that Google Meet is compliant with the Children Online Privacy Protection Rules (COPPA). Teachers will be able to begin using this venue as of April 13, 2020.
- The district has purchased Zoom, an online platform for video chat, to use for IEP meetings. Zoom has put in controls to conduct meetings that allow only people into the meeting who are invited. Anyone joining the meeting is put into a virtual waiting room.; the individual conducting the meeting then curates the attendees to allow them to take part. The Special Education department will begin contacting families to set up these meetings. Families are free to opt-out of video online meetings. At parent request, IEP team meetings can be held via phone or postponed until school reopens.
- Students without the internet will continue to receive support from teachers through the delivery of packets home via the buses and direct calls to the student's home at least twice a week for a general education student and four times a week for students with special needs. The purpose of these calls will be to help students with any support they may need. Students who have internet service may email their teachers for support and ask for a call if they are in need of assistance.

April vacation is almost upon us. Our district will be closed from April 20 - April 24. The vacation will allow all our teachers and staff a much-needed break. We are aware that many of our families are relying on food from the district to supplement budgets. The district will be putting together a plan for families who desire food support during the break. Please pay close attention to next week's highlights on our web page and all call on how families will be able to access this support.

As always, ARRSB is here to support all our families in this time of crisis. Please be safe!

Sincerely,

Darcy Fernandes  
Superintendent  
Athol Royalston Regional School District