

B U F F A L O P U B L I C S C H O O L S



Houghton Academy #69
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Mrs. Rose Schneider, Principal
Mr. Kevin Garcia, Assistant Principal

Kriner Cash
Superintendent of Schools

September 4, 2020

Dear Students and Families,

Welcome back to school! We miss you all so much. While this isn't the way we wanted our school year to start, we know this is going to be an amazing year together at Houghton Academy. We will get through these difficult times together! I hope this FAQ document is helpful to you as we embark on a very different start to the school year. As always, please reach out if you have questions or concerns, or if we can help you and your family in any way.

Sincerely,

Rose Schneider
Principal

Homeroom teachers of PreK-8th grade will contact students on their roster to ensure they are prepared for virtual learning.

What is the expectation for students?

Students in PreK-1st will be supported with paper learning packets until such time the District is able to provide an iPad. The District is hoping to deploy devices for PK-1 by the middle of October. Students in 2nd -8th grade will be required to join their virtual classes each day at the times listed on their individual schedules where they will receive instruction from their teachers. Students can find their schedule in their online Schoology folder as well as copy is included in this mailing. Below is a link to a Schoology instructional video that can be found on our website <https://www.buffaloschools.org/PS69>. This four-minute video gives you and your child, step by step instructions of how to connect their teacher.

How to use BPS Schoology video link:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=12&v=DKQZCx9GIN8&feature=emb_logo

How will I know what is going on at school?

- Visit our webpage at this address <https://www.buffaloschools.org/PS69>
- We will also utilize Dojo again this year to stay connected with you all. Your child's teacher will send you a class code. We will post important information on Dojo, and it will be the best means of communication with your child's teachers.
- Make sure your contact information is up to date. Call the school office if you have an updated phone number, email address, or address. You can also access the Parent Contact Information Update Form at this address <https://www.buffaloschools.org/contact>
- School Messenger is the trusted platform for communicating with parent. Contacts will automatically receive school and district phone calls and emails.

What will remote learning look like? Will we receive packets?

Remote learning will look very different from the spring, and students will not be receiving packets. We will utilize Clever to access Microsoft Teams and Schoology, along with several other Clever apps, for online learning. The New York State Department of Education has guidelines for how much instruction is required in each subject area, and we will be operating on a schedule that is very similar to a "normal" day of school. We will provide instruction in math, ELA, social studies, art, PE, and social-emotional learning. Each student will receive a paper copy of their schedule, and it will be posted in Schoology. PreK-1st grade will receive paper learning packets.

What are some tips for virtual leaning?

- *Keep a routine*

First and foremost, keeping a routine is key for virtual learning. Since students are in their home environment, it can be difficult to feel focused. Have students prepare as if they are truly going to school — get up, put on an outfit, and eat breakfast. Then, they'll be ready to learn virtually with their teachers! Although it isn't the same as hopping on the school bus and stepping into the classroom, keeping a routine will keep them in the school mindset.

- *Pick a good place to learn*

Although most homes aren't equipped to turn into classrooms, it's important to make sure that the learning environment is geared to the success of your student! There are a few factors to consider when figuring out where they will be doing virtual school. If they're in a place that is too isolated, they may not pay much attention since no one is watching them. Perhaps set up a place in the kitchen but be conscious of their space throughout the day to limit distractions. Of course, you can ask them what space they prefer as well!

- ***Gather school supplies***

Although students will be doing schoolwork at home, they still need to be equipped with the right school supplies to succeed! A list of supplies for each grade level can be found on our website: <https://www.buffaloschools.org/PS69>

What are all these tech tools you mentioned?

- ***Clever:*** Clever is our single sign-in, "one stop shop" for all remote learning apps/sites. Students can access all of their instructional software applications by logging in to Clever.

Once they sign in to Clever, students will see icons for all of the various applications that are available to them.

Note: some of these may require logging in for a second time using the same login information. Clever can be accessed through a web browser at this address <https://clever.com/in/buffalo> Families can load the Clever App onto phones and mobile devices.

- ***Microsoft Teams:*** Many of you are familiar with Zoom, and Teams is very similar. The district will be conducting all face-to-face class meetings on Microsoft Teams. This can be accessed through Clever.
- ***Schoology:*** All assignments, schedules, and class information will be housed in Schoology. This can be accessed through Clever, or on the Schoology app on the iPads.

Will you be taking attendance?

Yes, we will take attendance as usual. Your student will be marked present if he/she is online each day at 9:00 AM for homeroom. The school day will last until 4:00 PM, and your child is expected to be present for each subject area in order to be marked present for the entire day.

How will my child be graded?

Your child will turn assignments in on Schoology and receive grades from his/her teachers, as usual.

What if we don't have access to a device or internet access?

No worries! All students in 2nd - 8th grade will receive a device, and we have hotspot wireless access points available upon request. We anticipate students in PreK-1st grade to receive a device by the middle of October.

How can I pick up my child's device?

Beginning September 8, 2020 parent/guardians of students in 2nd to 8th grade can pick up their child's device at 1515 South Park Avenue from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM

How can I pick up my child's instructional materials?

Please use the main parking lot entrance to enter school property (across from Weichec's) and pull your vehicle up to the pickup location outside of the cafeteria door on the following dates and times:

Grade - Specific Pick Up Dates and Times	
Grade 1	Wednesday, September 9, 2020 (9:00 AM - 3:00 PM)
Kindergarten	Thursday, September 10, 2020 (9:00 AM - 3:00 PM)
Pre - K	Friday, September 11, 2020 (9:00 AM - 3:00 PM)
Grades 2 - 4	Monday, September 14, 2020 (9:00 AM - 3:00 PM)
Grades 3 - 6	Tuesday, September 15, 2020 (9:00 AM - 3:00 PM)
Grades 7 & 8	Wednesday, September 16, 2020 (9:00 AM - 3:00 PM)

Despite school buildings not being open,
Houghton Academy students will continue to learn!

We remain #HoughtonStrong