



OGDENSBURG BOROUGH BOARD OF EDUCATION
100 Main Street Ogdensburg, NJ 07439



Dave Astor
Superintendent/Principal

Skye Patete
Vice Principal

Richard Rennie
Business Administrator/Board Secretary

3/5/21

Hello Parents;

Let me start by stating how much we appreciate the support that we have had from our Ogdensburg community throughout this pandemic. The community has been helpful and appreciative of all of the hard work our teachers have put in in order to provide a challenging yet flexible educational plan for all of our students. In return, we understand and appreciate the challenges that you, the parent/guardian, have been faced with being the parent and, at times, the teacher's assistant. This certainly has been a challenging time and we can only get through this together.

I write this letter after examining student cumulative grades. The academic success of many of our students has declined substantially. Not only have more students been struggling to pass classes, but there has been a large increase in students that are in jeopardy of retention. We understand the situation we are in and want to work with you and your students in order to educate them to their fullest capacity. Since the beginning of the year, the teachers made suggestions on ways students could navigate these uncharted times and come out with success. Some students have followed those suggestions and are doing well; others have struggled to follow those suggestions and have also struggled to achieve academic success. Even after offering assistance, reminders to the students, and comments on progress reports and report cards, some of these suggestions for success have not been followed.

I ask for your assistance in helping your child achieve the success they are capable of and are deserving of. There is nothing we can do regarding this pandemic or the hybrid schedule. We can not change the guidance that has been passed down from the state and the DOH (Department of Health). We can only do what we can do; we understand and appreciate all of your efforts. The students have to do their part and turn their assignments in, and this is the overwhelming reason why they are not succeeding as they should be. What I ask is that you remove the extra monitors and devices from their workstations; they do not need them. Stress the importance of staying focused on the remote class and not on the video games that they are watching during class. Participate in the class discussion instead of texting/face-timing classmates while the teacher is providing instruction. I know this is not easy to hear but this is what is occurring and has been validated to me by *several* middle school students. Regularly sign into your student's



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grade portal. Monitor which assignments they have turned in and which they have not. Again, the ownership is on the students to complete their work.

Included in this letter is a list of suggestions that will assist in the student's success and a list of services that the teachers have implemented throughout the year. Again, I understand the frustration and anxiety this situation we all find ourselves in has caused. I cast no blame because we all are struggling, but only together can we achieve success. If you should have any questions or suggestions, please feel free to contact me. Thank you and please stay safe and sane as we come closer to "normalcy".

Dave Astor

Ogdensburg School Student Expectations

While logged into your Zoom Meetings, please adhere to the following guidelines:

- Sign in for the Zoom meeting on time according to the class schedule, including homeroom, using the student's school name. If you have issues, contact the teacher of the main office.
- Be sure you are awake and ready to learn. Eat breakfast before class, not during class. Use the bathroom before or immediately after class (make sure you have enough time to log on at the expected times).
- Work at an appropriate learning environment i.e. sitting at a desk, dining room/kitchen table, etc. A bed is not an appropriate learning environment. Be aware of the surroundings in view of the camera. Check mirrors, open doors, etc. for appropriateness.
- Students working virtually should NOT have other electronics in use during class, including additional computers, mobile devices, gaming consoles, televisions, etc. There should be no need for extra monitors or devices to complete school assignments. These devices will only serve to distract the student.



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- Remind others in your household that you are “in class” so that the distractions are minimized.
- You must adhere to the school dress code when in class either in-person or virtual.
- Your **camera** must be on at **ALL TIMES** during the class period. You must be visible from the shoulders up. Students with legitimate camera issues must contact the main office.
- Keep your microphone muted unless called upon by the teacher. If called on, unmute and answer the question which was posed by the teacher. If we can not verify that the student is present and engaged in class, they will be marked absent. The teacher will make an attempt to engage the student but the ownership is on the student to prove they are involved in the class.
- Recording or taking pictures during the class session is prohibited.
- Make sure that you are logged off at the end of each session.
- If the teacher is disconnected from the Zoom meeting, log out and try to join the meeting again.
- **Complete work and turn it in by the due date to earn full credit.** The majority of students that are struggling academically are struggling due to not completing or turning in assignments.

While attending in-person classes please adhere to the following guidelines:

- Be sure you are awake and ready to learn. Eat breakfast before attending school.
- Have all of your materials on hand and be prepared for the day’s activities.
- Be engaged and participate in the class activities.
- Mobile devices secured in backpacks or storage boxes. Eliminate anything that might distract the student from their area.



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List of Academic Supports for Middle School Students

1. When hybrid, Wednesdays are used for extra help and review. Each core subject area has a time students can sign on.
2. When hybrid or in person, paraprofessionals hold extra help sessions from 9-12. Students can sign up for 15-minute increments to go over assignments or study.
3. When fully virtual, teachers have small group afternoon sessions daily. **These sessions are mandatory for some students.**
4. Teachers consistently update progress on Grade Portal to communicate with families. Notes on attendance at extra help sessions, homework/ assignment submission, effort, etc.
5. Teacher emails sent to parents regarding grades or effort.
6. Special Education teachers have worked on special area assignments during ELA.
7. The administration has spoken to students regarding their grades. Offered assistance as needed.
8. The administration has set up Chromebooks or hotspots for students to have the appropriate access.
9. Letters have been sent home from administration informing parents of academic probation or failing grades.
10. Assisted in setting up tutors when requested.
11. Admin encouraged special education students to begin attending school in person four days a week for MP3. Schedules and class sizes were rearranged.
12. RTI, 504, or CST meetings to discuss specific accommodations in place.