

# RBS DIGITAL DISTANCE LEARNING

DIGITAL CHALK TALK NO. 4

## FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

April 5, 2020

**Special Note:** THE RBS SPRING BREAK IS ON AS SCHEDULED!

As previously noted... Our regularly scheduled Spring Break ~ Friday, April 10 through Sunday, April 19, 2020, (along with all other previously announced holidays on the RBS School Calendar) will occur this year as scheduled. Please note that our school nurse, school counselor, and all members of the Rock Brook Leadership Team will be available throughout the spring break if needed. Simply reach out to us via email. Enjoy your time off!

Dear Rock Brook Families,

As we get ready for another week of remote learning, I would like to acknowledge all members of the Rock Brook staff who have been working almost non-stop to develop innovative and meaningful remote learning for our students. This has not been an easy time for anyone, but our staff has truly been amazing!

I would also like to thank our families for your continued patience and understanding as we learn along with you and try to develop lessons and activities that serve our students and serve your family needs. I understand the stress that this forced school closure has placed upon your family. and we recognize the importance of having a teacher or staff member that understands your at-home challenges.

Important Acceptable Use Reminder: All RBS families are reminded that students and families are prohibited from altering, capturing and/or distributing any video images of classmates and RBS staff members while taking part in remote learning through our DDLP. All live real-time lessons via Google Meet are an extension of our traditional classroom practices and instruction; students who violate the RBS Acceptable Use Policy may be subject to loss of computer privileges and/or other disciplinary actions.

In order to protect the privacy of our students and preserve the integrity of our lessons, we ask that parents/guardians and other family members refrain from participating in live Google Meet sessions, unless you have previously been granted an invitation, or given explicit permission by RBS staff at the time of the live session.

Please know that we are working hard to ensure a meaningful experience for your child through our DDLP program and your assistance with privacy and confidentiality will allow our staff to operate in a productive, comfortable and professional atmosphere. Thank you!

In closing, we have extended the deadline for our DDLP survey and encourage your participation. Your feedback will be helpful as we move forward with our DDLP. Please click the link below to complete the survey: [RBS DDLP Family Survey](#). Thank you for your input!

*Glenn Famous*

## FROM THE PRINCIPAL'S PEN!

To all our families- thank you! Thank you for being thrust into having yet even more roles to carry out-classroom teacher, classroom assistant, therapist, school counselor, and again rising to that occasion! You are amazing! As I have been reading lots of articles on how best to help support children during this time, there are not a lot of articles out there with how to balance working from home (with your own job), helping your child with their schooling, and also taking care of yourself!

And of those articles out there, a lot don't even talk about how to balance that all out if your child has special needs. A parent shared with me an article from the New York Times that highlights some tips for parents of kids with special needs. Number one was **patience**- patience with everyone! Patience with ourselves, patience with the teachers and therapists who are trying to make it all work, patience with our children.

Next, parent *and* teach your child as best you can! If a structured schedule works for you and your child, great! If a flexible schedule works, then that's great too! You know your children best and you need to do what you believe is best. We are here to help support you in any way we can! So if certain times don't work for Google Meets, then let us know and we will work with you. The article ended with talking about **paying attention to your own needs, too**. So take one day at a time!

I also read another article from *Child Mind Institute* that has tips to help calm fears, manage stress, and keep the peace. This article talked about doing new activities with your kids- cooking, yoga, even household projects. In terms of feeling anxious, it advised to avoid talking about your concerns when your children are within earshot and if you are feeling overwhelmed, step away or take a break- taking a shower, going into another room, or even just taking a few deep breaths.

Also, expect behaviors! Kids who are tantruming more than usual, being defiant or acting out may actually be feeling anxious. *Let us know if this is happening and we can help you!*

It's also ok to keep kids in the loop about why they can't be at school, but keep it simple. "We can't go to school right now, but we will again soon!" Some kids may be able to handle more detail, but we don't want them to feel scared.

For some of our kids who love predictability and looking ahead to things, still make plans so they (and you) have something to look forward to. Maybe a special dinner one night, a virtual play date, something that would be fun and exciting! The ending message in this article is the same as the other with regard to remembering to be **reasonable and kind to yourself**.

Please know that we are here for you! Remember to fill out the family survey (if you haven't already) so we can know how to better help support you during our distance learning. Stay strong, stay connected, and hope to see you soon!

## SCHOOL HEALTH SPOTLIGHT

I hope you are all safe and feeling healthy during these challenging and rapidly changing times. It is amazing how quickly all of our lives have changed due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the need for social distancing. Now we must be reliant on our online platforms to communicate with each other, support one another, and continue to engage in the education process.

When looking for up-to-date information about the coronavirus, please make sure to use reliable sources such as your township or county health department. Misinformation from social platforms or other forms of media can be dangerous. Here are a few reliable websites:

<https://www.cdc.gov/> "Center for Disease Control and Prevention"

<https://www.who.int/> "World Health Organization"

<https://www.nj.gov/health/> "Department of Health, New Jersey"

I want you all to know that I will be here as a resource for you in any way that I am able. Please reach out to me via email, and we can work out the best way to discuss any issues you need help with and I will be back in touch with you.

Lisa Mantz, RN NJ-CSN Rock Brook School Nurse

[lisa.mantz@rock-brook.org](mailto:lisa.mantz@rock-brook.org)

## COUNSELOR'S CORNER...

Dear RBS Parents,

I am happy to share some resources as we learn to navigate this challenging and uncertain time together with our Rock Brook family. There are SO many resources, which can be overwhelming, so I am going to highlight some that stand out below. Please feel free to reach out to me with specific questions or concerns that pertain to your child and/or family. Also remember that I can be reached via Google Voice should you want to reach me in a more timely manner than email. Please understand that I am in sessions throughout the day so may not be able to pick up right away but will respond as soon as I can if you leave me a voicemail.

Please know that we at RBS understand how challenging it can be to navigate your child's education in this new way and we are all learning together! We are happy to help and work with you -please just reach out. Although this is a stressful and uncertain time, I am delighted to see communities coming together to do great things and different professions banding together to share ideas and resources. It certainly is bringing out a sense of community which can maybe shine a little light of positivity during this tough time.

See below for a couple of comprehensive and helpful links and feel free to forward any other resources you find helpful and I will share with the Rock Brook community. Most importantly, remember to take some time for self-care during this challenging time. Be well!

**Jessica Gosses, M.Ed, LPC**

School Counselor

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**Google voice number: 848-467-5513**

- Managing crises- If the situation is an emergency, dial 911. If your situation is not immediately life-threatening you can contact PerformCare at **1-877-652-7624** and follow the menu prompts provided for an urgent situation. They will ask you a series of questions to determine how they can best help.

- A great site with a lot of information on different topics related to the Coronavirus:

<https://childmind.org/coping-during-covid-19-resources-for-parents/>

- Short webinar for parents on helping children deal with the pandemic

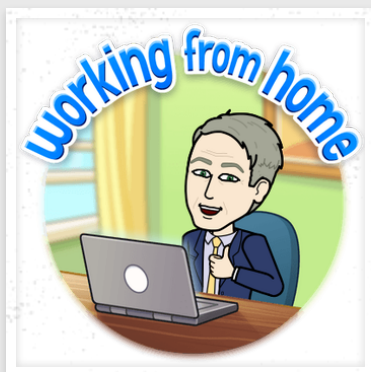
<https://vimeo.com/user109043156/review/402755052/1e4d641690>

- Some easy and quick indoor games:

<https://www.fatherly.com/play/activities/best-indoor-games-for-kids-and-families-coronavirus-quarantine/>

- POAC Autism Services has live events you can take part in- information sessions, virtual yoga, story time etc:

<https://www.poac.net/events/>



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