



April 20, 2020

Dear Ridgewood School Community,

Last week, Governor Murphy announced that he would provide more information about the length of our school closure by May 15. I know many of us wanted to hear more concrete information about whether schools would reopen this year. While I also want to know, I understand this incremental decision making. I must admit that I will be pleasantly surprised if we open this year. Based on information reported in the news, many things have to happen before we can open as a society; this includes opening schools, which by their very nature are large group gatherings. I bring this up so that during this time of uncertainty, you are prepared for continued widespread school closures and social distancing.

Many of us have reached the phase where everything that was unique, fun, and possibly exciting about being confined to our homes is getting tedious. I have three of my five adult children at home, and they are getting tired of constantly being confined. Luckily, they can work independently. Those of you with younger children who need more direction and support are in a much more challenging position. The question is, how do we continue to take the necessary actions to bring this health crisis under control and move toward normalcy, whatever that may be in the future.

First, each family must commit to follow the social distancing guidelines to avoid a potential second wave of this insidious virus. We must be creative in ways to make our situation better. This may take many forms, but it is critical that we do so for our own mental, physical, and spiritual health. Share what you are doing to keep positive with family and friends. If your child is suffering and needs help, please contact your child's principal for assistance.

We were fortunate to have had beautiful weather yesterday, but on days like this, we must be extra vigilant about social distancing. Please make sure you know where your kids are going when they go out for a bike ride, walk or run. It is very tempting to meet friends in the neighborhood. To fight COVID-19, we must keep apart so that in the future we can be together again. The grit and resolve to do so need to come from all of us.

Please see the attached column titled *Looking for the Helpers and You will Find Healing* by Lauren DePinto LCSW - District Coordinator of School-Based Mental Health Services.

RIDGEWOOD NEEDS YOUR HELP:

While we can't get out and host a traditional fundraiser, we can still support our community. Below are links to help during this time of crisis. Please note these are community-based people or organizations who are working to help.



Stringing Together Ridgewood

Some RHS students have come up with an idea for a fundraiser that can be done entirely remotely. They are selling friendship bracelets to raise money to be donated to Valley Hospital to help with COVID-19 relief. Please see the link below.

<https://sites.google.com/view/stringingtogetherridgewood>

Ridgewood Helps - Senior Citizen Help

Right now, our senior citizens need our help. Below is a link to opportunities to help our senior citizens in Ridgewood. Please take a look at it and help in any way you can. If you have a neighbor who is a senior citizen, please check in with them. We must continue to look out for each other. Thank you in advance for all of your assistance.

http://mods.ridgewoodnj.net/pdf/covidinfo/RidgewoodHelpsV3.pdf?fbclid=IwAR2xLK5-VLkT7qz68jgdu8AcnQ50lNnTWuY9-Efoe_2v83AGtshg2p8m8sc

Feed the Frontlines Initiative

Feed the Frontlines Initiative is a call-to-action to provide meals prepared by local Ridgewood restaurants to first responders and community groups during the Coronavirus pandemic. It is an organized way for people to help feed local healthcare workers and first responders while supporting local restaurants who have been hit hard economically. *Feeding the Frontlines* is made up of The Ridgewood Chamber of Commerce, HealthBarn Foundation 501(c)(3), and many resident volunteers under the leadership of Mayor Hache. It is a creative solution to help where help is needed.

To donate: <http://www.healthbarnfoundation.org/donations/feed-the-frontlines/>

To help deliver: feedthefrontlinesvolunteer@gmail.com

T-Shirts for Valley UNITED

A Ridgewood community member has created t-shirts that honor and memorialize this common experience we are all going through together. 100% of the proceeds go to Valley. <http://unitee.biz/>

Toiletry Tuesday

Tuesday, May 5 will be Toiletry Tuesday to support Ridgecrest Senior Housing within the Village of Ridgewood. They are asking that direct monetary donations are made so supplies can be ordered in bulk. Toiletry Tuesday provides basic essentials for up to 3/4 of the year for this beloved community. <https://www.ridgecrestseneiorhousing.org/get-involved>

Phone Chargers Needed:

The Junior League of Bergen County is collecting used/extra phone chargers and baby monitors on behalf of area hospitals, such as Holy Name Medical Center and Valley Hospital. Because most people who wind up in the hospital with the coronavirus are brought under emergency circumstances, they come into the ER with only what is on their person. For most people, their cell phone is their only way to communicate with family, but people are not coming in with phone chargers. Due to overcrowding in area hospitals, the reality is that patients are often parked in hallways for hours on end before a dedicated room is able to be found for them. In many cases, their cell phone batteries are dying, and they have no way to recharge them. In the case of baby monitors, nurses are in need of these as a way to keep a closer eye on critical patients. If you have an extra phone charger or baby monitors that you no longer

need, please consider donating them. The JLBC will wipe these items down with disinfectant and individually bag them to be donated. Items will be collected through May 31 and can be dropped off at 281 Spring Avenue in Ridgewood. There will be a box put out daily on the front stoop where you can drop off items. We appreciate your support!

MENTAL HEALTH ASSISTANCE.

- This is important information from Bergen County Mental Health Division: <https://mhanational.org/covid19>
- Interesting article: A Message to Families During COVID-19 <https://thriveglobal.com/stories/a-message-to-families-during-covid-19-from-a-stanford-educator/>
- Strategies for Keeping Stress at Bay Through the Ongoing COVID-19 Crisis <https://thriveglobal.com/stories/positive-psychology-strategies-stress-coronavirus-crisis/>

GET INFORMATION FROM THE VILLAGE OF RIDGEWOOD AND THE RIDGEWOOD PUBLIC SCHOOLS:

Use the links below for important information from the Village and the district.

- **MOST RECENT - Important Message from the Village of Ridgewood (April 13):** <https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0/#search/village+of+ridgewood/WhctKJVqtvZnxjNqLmgrbmDbkRmFPmTLJmHKZtWzdZNMbzpnVGRmzmZFTSgcZSgJpRdMKZg>
- Sign up for Village E-Notice System - <http://www.ridgewoodnj.net/village-info/enotices-and-alerts-registration>.
- Twitter Accounts - [@RwdPub Schools](#) and [@RWDSupt](#)
- District Facebook Page - [@RidgewoodPublicSchools](#).

ANNUAL SCHOOL ELECTION: The Annual School and Municipal Election will be held on Tuesday, May 12. All registered voters will be receiving vote-by-mail ballots, and there will be no polling places in the May 12, 2020 elections. For more information, click [here](#) to visit the website of the Bergen County Clerk's Office. You can still register to vote if you have not already done so. Information can be found [here](#).

CENSUS 2020: I heard Glen Rock is ahead of us on census response. Come on, Ridgewood! Don't forget to send your redacted "receipt" to your principal or just let your principal know it is complete. Let's see which school has the highest percentage of completed questionnaires. If you have multiple children in a school, each one counts. If you have children in multiple schools, send the receipt to each principal.

Fill out the Census online at <https://my2020census.gov/>
Or you can respond by phone at 844-330-2020.

Contest results as of 4.20.2020 (The contest is open until the Census 2020 closes.) Ridge took the lead from the middle of the pack

- 1st - Ridge
- 2nd - Somerville
- 3rd - Willard
- 4th - BF
- 5th - RHS

- 6th - GW
- 7th - Orchard
- 8th - Hawes
- 9th - Travell

TODAY'S GAME SUGGESTIONS: Houseparty - Played remotely. My kids play it with each other. They sound like they are having a blast! Sue and I don't get invited... I guess they have had enough of us!

Other things you can do:

- Remember the Ridgewood Public Library has online resources. <https://www.ridgewoodlibrary.org>
- **Ridgewood Library wants your help documenting coronavirus. Please see the attached description of what they are looking for, as well as a great time capsule workbook for your child.**
- **Different Show from the one sent in the last update: Ridgewood High School - New Players Company:** During the week of April 13, the following link to the Friday Cast B Show performance of New Players in Concert will be available. **Yes, these are RHS students! Be sure to check it out!**
- <https://youtu.be/CBA-ao7STvU>
- Movie/TV Fix For the Week - Academy Award Winning: *Darkest Hour* - Churchill Leadership unprecedented and historical time
- Book Club Book 5 -The Killer of the Flower Moon by David Grann. Read in our English 11 and 11 H. Here is a link to some discussion questions: https://mppl.org/check_it_out/book-discussion-questions-killers-of-the-flower-moon/
- Bake/Cook: Homemade pizza. The easy way. <https://www.food.com/recipe/easy-and-quick-homemade-pizza-22754>
- Home Project: Spring is window washing time. I am a bit scared about window washing. My mom loved clean windows, and we had old six over one windows with screens. Twice a year, my three siblings and I took an entire weekend to clean all of the windows.
- Call someone. I challenge you to call someone you have not spoken in years. College roommate, high school friends, etc.
- **REMINDER: 20 Days - This is for dads and students only.** Moms, look away! Mother's Day is Sunday, May 10. If you are like me, you purchase gifts for your wife at the last minute because she sees every credit card transaction. Online banking! So, strategize now about how to pull Mother's Day off without a florist, restaurant, or last-minute shopping trip. You do not want to mess this up when you have no place to escape! **NOT TIME TO PANIC YET!**
- Email your principal or teachers! They would love to hear from you!

#07450together Campaign to inspire and uplift our community by Ridgewood Walks.

- **Ridgewood Rocks** Each week, starting Sunday, April 12, colorfully painted rocks with inspirational messages will be hidden throughout the Village. Take time to walk through the central business district and neighboring streets to find them. We ask that you do not touch the rocks, but instead take photos of them and post on your favorite social media platforms with the hashtag **#07540together**.
- **Thankful Tuesday** Every Tuesday at 7 pm, go outside and make some noise for our frontline warriors! Bang, clap, and cheer for the doctors, nurses, healthcare workers, grocery store

employees, postal workers, educators, emergency service personnel, and all the other fearless helpers that are keeping us safe, fed, and informed.

- **Feeding the Frontlines** One way Ridgewood thanks our healthcare workers, first responders and those in need, is by donating to our local restaurants who are preparing two meals a day for various organizations, which are then delivered by local volunteers. Mayor Hache, the Ridgewood Chamber of Commerce, Health Barn Foundation 501(c)(3), Ridgewood Walks, and many resident volunteers are working around the clock to fulfill this mission. Please consider assisting our neighbors as they bear the weight of this crisis. Donation information is listed above.
- **Where to Eat? Where to Shop?** We love paying tribute to our local businesses!

The **Red Cross** is alerting everyone to blood and platelet shortage. Please donate if you can.
<https://www.redcrossblood.org/>

Keep supporting our local businesses. See #07450together above. Many restaurants are offering curbside pickup and delivery. Here are some helpful tips (www.today.com) if you want something besides a home-cooked meal:

- Order from a restaurant you trust
- Order directly from the restaurant when possible
- Opt for contactless delivery or pick up
- Discard all packaging
- Don't share, and wash your hands before and after

I wish you good health!

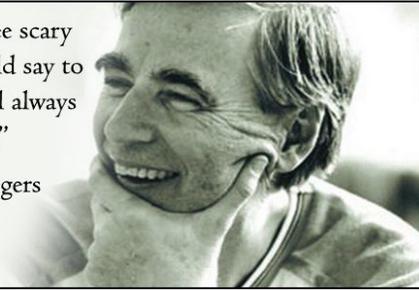
Sincerely,



Daniel Fishbein, Ed.D
Superintendent of Schools

“When I was a boy and I would see scary things in the news, my mother would say to me, “Look for the helpers. You will always find people who are helping.”

Fred Rogers



Look for the Helpers and You Will Find Healing

Lauren M. DePinto, LCSW - District Coordinator of School-Based Mental Health Services

Despite all of the uncertainty these past several weeks have caused, one thing is certain: The helpers in our community, the everyday heroes among us, are all around. We know and tell our children that helping is contagious; we are often inspired and moved by others’ expressions of service, kindness, and generosity. It has been said that COVID-19 survives via the very social and communal nature of human beings. This can seem to frustrate those of us who are in need of inspiration and a little grace, and a little contact! But, we do not have to look very far to notice the undeterred helpers among us, and it is these important people, and their important actions, that always encourage and HEAL. They instill feelings of safety, compassion, and gratitude-- and we need these feelings to keep moving forward.

Now is a time for actionable steps toward recovery that will promote our personal learning, growth, and psychological strength. In order to achieve growth from this collective traumatic experience -- let us focus our efforts, with disciplined attention, to bolstering the areas that we know support healing and cultivate resilience. Psychologists and post-traumatic growth researchers point to positive responses in five areas:

- **Appreciation of life**
- **Relationships with others**
- **New possibilities in life**
- **Personal strength**
- **Spiritual change**

As we move forward, with renewed confidence in ourselves and others, and begin to think about transitioning back to living a life of balance, well-being, purpose, and meaningful connections let us direct our efforts and energy on healing stronger and not only bouncing back but “bouncing forward.”