

Cougar Tales

...news from Crandall School

April 1, 2020

Welcome to the Crandall newsletter! Please click on each item in the Table of Contents to take you directly to that section. We hope you will read it all but if you need to save time just CTRL-click on the sections that are interesting to you at that moment.

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Principal's Message

Dear Crandall Family,

Happy April! None of us expected this to last this long when we left school on March 12th. We are currently out of school in Connecticut until April 20th. As your family deals with this challenge please let us help you if we can. A contact list is included at the end of this document. You can always contact me at rsills@enfieldschools.org.

Below is information about the new **packets that we will be distributing this FRIDAY from 10 am – 6 pm**. These packets will get us to Spring Break which starts with Good Friday (April 10th) and runs through Friday, April 17th.

I am proud to work in Enfield with each of you. I miss you and our kids. Please be safe and be well!

New Packets

Packet distribution for Crandall Cougars will be at Crandall School from 10:00am- 6:00pm on Friday, April 3rd. We will be distributing on the front sidewalk. Cars will line up and we ask you to stay in your car (to practice social distancing). A staff member will ask you what students you are picking up for and bring the packets to the table for you.

*** Packets will also be available on the EPS website:

http://www.enfieldschools.org/for_students/special_resources.

Please keep all previously completed packets at home to be turned in a later time!

TEAM Expectations

Our teachers, students and families are making an unplanned transition to distance learning and this will continue, at a minimum, until April 20th. We are asking our families, students and teachers to do things that we have not done before. Please be patient with us as we learn.

Just like my teachers do things differently in their classrooms I expect that they will do things differently during this period. Our teachers want to connect with your children – please help us do so. If you child has not been in touch with his/her teacher please reach out to them using the contact information below.

Many of our students have been able to connect using our Microsoft TEAMS online program. This format allows students and teachers to see and talk to each other in real time, share

information and model learning strategies. This is new for our kids – to help them we have created the following guidelines. Please review these with your child at your convenience.



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CRANDALL COUGARS

TEAMS EXPECTATIONS

Wait for speaker to finish their thought before responding.

Wait for a response to your questions from your teacher.

Use kind and school appropriate words on video calls and through chat.

Interact with all students and teachers.

Only post or chat during the hours of 8am and 8pm.

Complete your assignments without being asked and in a timely manner.

Only post words, emojis, and classroom relevant content in classroom chats.

Put in your best effort and try a few different ways before contacting your teacher for help.

Scroll through the team thread to view all the resources.

Comment, message, and conference with your teacher when scheduled.

Reply to the resources teachers are posting.

Celebrations

The Crandall Staff Parade was a HUGE success! Thank you to Kelsey Bruce-McGuire and Julie Nuzzo for putting this together for our school community. And Thank You to all the families who waved, made signs, decorated sidewalks, etc...We needed to connect with you as much as you needed to connect with us! Below are just some of the hundreds of pictures on the [Prudence Crandall Families Facebook page](#) – if you are not already a member, please join!



Crandall Learns!

Connect with Your Child's Teachers

All of our teachers are available to help support you and your kids. They are primarily using a combination of classroom apps (Remind, Class Dojo, etc..) and Microsoft Teams to connect with your kids. If you have not been able to connect please email your child's teacher(s) – See the "Contact Us" list at this newsletter.

Need More Books?

Hello Prudence Crandall Families, I hope you're all doing well and staying healthy. I know that you may be running of books to read, so I wanted to tell you all about two sites where you can get your hands on some great books.

Tumble Books is a free site that has been approved by our Central Office. I've checked it out and it's awesome! Here is the information you will need: www.tumblebooklibrary.com

Username: tumble735 Password: books

The second site is called Hoopla. This site requires your Enfield Public library card. You can use your library card to create an account giving you access to books, movies, music and more. You can go to www.hoopladigital.com to get started.

I hope that you can all enjoy these sites and the great books that they have to offer. Again, I hope you are all healthy and safe. I miss seeing you and will look forward to the next time we can be together. Enjoy reading every day! Mrs. Meers, Crandall Media Specialist

Virtual Chorus Performs Mozart Ave Verum Corpus

Our wonderful music and chorus teacher, Melissa Clark, participated in a virtual chorus production of Mozart's Ave Verum Corpus. See if you can find her in the mix of wonderful musicians in this video on YouTube <https://youtu.be/TH4-ztDGLlk>



5th Grade Teachers

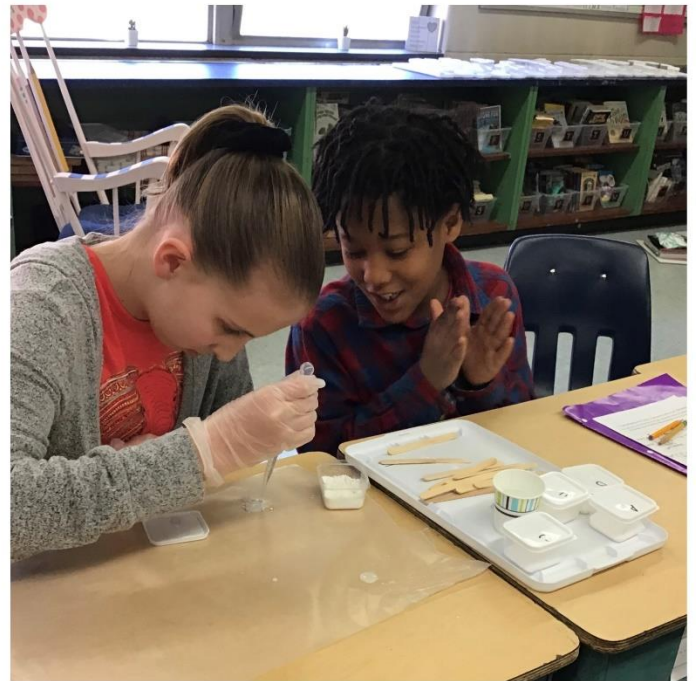
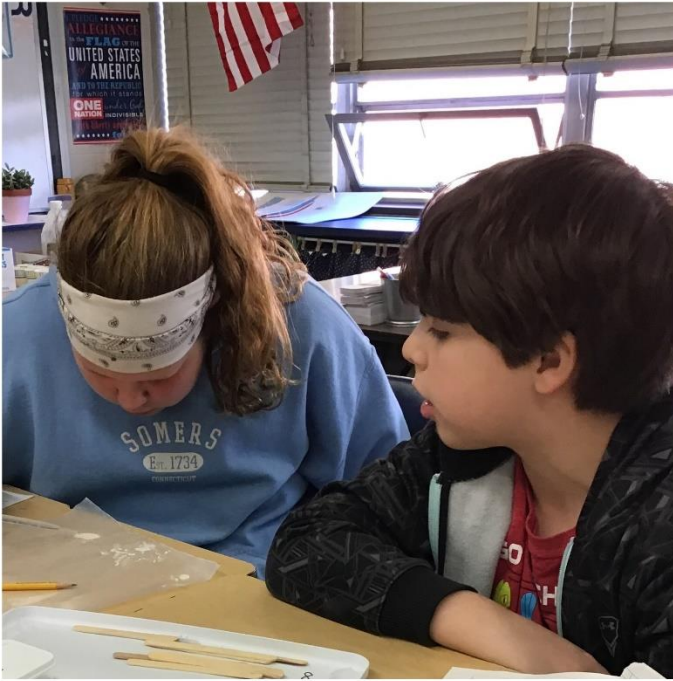


To our AWESOME Fifth Graders,

Even though we couldn't be with you on St. Patrick's Day, we were thinking about all of you and how lucky we are to be your teachers! Please email us if you need any help or just to say hi! We miss you!!

Love, Mrs. O'Connor, Miss Kelly, Mrs. McManus, Mrs. Winans, Mrs. Dennis, Mrs. Nuzzo, Mrs. Silkowski, and Mrs. Champion

Science (from before Coronavirus)



Mrs. McManus led students from Rooms 22 and 24 as they conducted “Mystery Powder” experiments this week in Science! They examined physical properties, formed hypotheses and mixed water, vinegar, and iodine with each powder to observe chemical reactions to figure out what each powder was!

Family Supports

What Do Families Need to Do (repeated as a resource)

(GREAT article copied from CNN.com) School closures due to the COVID-19 outbreak mean millions of parents and guardians who have grown accustomed to sending their children to traditional schools are now faced with the task of educating them at home.

The coronavirus has turned caregivers around the world into homeschoolers.

This transition is daunting. It's unfamiliar. And it's also critically important to ameliorate the disruptions the virus has caused in education for the year.

CNN spoke with several parents, teachers and homeschooling experts about how to make the most of homeschooling for your family.

Recognize homeschool is not school

The most important caveat about temporary homeschooling is that it simply isn't school. Kids accustomed to the school environment won't be as focused. Lessons won't be as professional as the ones they're used to getting. And since local governments are encouraging everyone to minimize interactions with others, socialization will be tough.



How to survive coronavirus lockdown as a parent, especially for moms carrying the burden

Kimberly Fox, staff developer for [The Reading and Writing Project](#) at Columbia University in New York, said it's important for parents to suspend disbelief and doubt and lean into the new format.

"We don't have to be school," said Fox, who lives in Brooklyn. "Under these circumstances, we're not going to entirely replace all of the structures that happen at school. But we can do a couple of things to make kids feel more secure and to make us feel like we're making the most of this time."

Let kids be a part of the decision-making

Many schools and school districts have set up online learning platforms or sent kids home with packets of schoolwork to complete. These assignments are non-negotiable. Beyond these requirements, however, parents can give their children a say in what else they'll learn.

Jamie Heston, a board member of the [Homeschool Association of California](#), said the best way to do this is to have your kids make a list of things they'd like to do and learn. From there, she said, you can whittle down the options as a family.

"There are lots of ways you can have fun and have it be educational, [and] not just be sitting at a table with a book open," said Heston, who lives in Hayward, California.

Possibilities include math and chemistry through baking; botany through gardening; basic carpentry; or learning about space through a mobile app.

Make a schedule

Once you and your children have identified the subjects they will study, make a schedule and display it prominently so everyone in the family knows what's coming and when it's over. Most kids work off a schedule in their classrooms, so recreating something similar at home can ease the transition to a different learning environment for the foreseeable future.

At the same time, said Jen Reyneri, who has homeschooled two sons (ages 16 and 12), each family should embrace the opportunity to create a rhythm of life that works for them. "Include chores, family dinners or breakfasts, and family projects in your new family routines," said Reyneri, [who runs a blog](#) and co-owns an Italian restaurant in Hobe Sound, Florida. "Because this is such a unique situation, it's also OK to let everyone sleep in a bit later."

Other options for a schedule might include basics such as math, writing, reading and music (to name a few). Some families might also set aside time for educational games accessed by computer or mobile device.

For parents who are planning to cultivate a more project-based learning environment — rebuilding a car engine, for instance — put that on the schedule, too.

Acknowledge that kids have different needs

Schools — particularly public schools — are equipped to teach a variety of children with different learning abilities and different needs. For children with special needs, districts are required by state law to devise individualized education plans (IEPs) to help kids succeed. While parents are an important part of developing these plans, they are generally not the ones who administer them. But in a homeschool environment, parents must run the show.

This can get particularly complicated in families with multiple children. Monica Smith, who lives in Healdsburg, California, has twin 7-year-old boys and said one was recently diagnosed with ADHD. Smith said her district just completed an IEP for this child, and she admitted she is anxious about how she'll be able to manage his special needs while also being there for her neurotypical child.

"Without the help of [school] resources, I'm nervous about how to best meet his needs and keep him engaged," she said of her special-needs child. "I also need to be conscious of what his twin brother needs, and make sure he doesn't feel 'ignored' just because he has the ability to work independently."

One way to address this conundrum is to remember that different kids have different needs, whether at home or at school.

"Nobody knows your kids better than you do," said J. Allen Weston, executive director of the National Home School Association in Denver. "It's OK to take the time to give [each of them] what they need."

Build in recess (see links to physical activities in [District Family Resources](#))

All traditional school programs incorporate some sort of recess or outdoor time, and a homeschool schedule should be no different.

Dr. Jessie Voigts, a homeschooler and founder of [Wandering Educators](#), a global community of educators sharing travel experiences, said it doesn't matter if this time is structured or unstructured, so long as the kids get outside.

"A walk in the woods is not only healthy for your body and spirit, but your mind, too," said Voigts, who has a PhD in international education and is based in Kalamazoo, Michigan.

"What new plants are growing? What bugs can you find under decaying logs? Count the tree rings in a downed tree. Reroute a waterway in a little creek. See how the sun moves through the sky. There are so many ways to learn."

Downtime is your friend

Downtime, or time for kids to work on projects quietly and independently, is just as important as active time outside. Voigts noted that kids need time to "disconnect" every day — from each other, from parents, from technology and from the outside world.

Other experts agree. [Hannah Gauri Ma](#), a homeschooler and blogger currently living in St. Albans, in the United Kingdom, said this space allows for independent exploration but also can help reduce friction.

"Kids will react differently to a parent as 'teacher,' and they will push back in ways they don't at school," said Ma. "Allow for the fact that kids will be holding a lot of tension around all these sudden and often stressful changes to their routines and lives."

Get crafty

Art is an important part of education, and homeschooling also provides parents with an opportunity to get creative with crafts.

Amanda Kingloff, founder of [Projectkid.com](#), a website with tips for crafting, suggested getting creative with materials for different art projects every week. In particular, Kingloff advised reusing washers, buttons, fabric swatches and ribbons, as well as used jars, plastic bottles and cardboard tubes from toilet paper rolls to form the basis for recycled art.

"You probably have these things around the house anyway," said Kingloff, who lives in Brooklyn. "Many of these materials allow kids to create three-dimensionally without the challenge of sculpting something or making something out of clay."

Kingloff noted it's important that parents don't stress about the mess these projects create, since that only detracts from the fun.

"Put down an oil cloth and let it get messy," she added. "Nobody worries about the mess at school."

<https://www.smartschoolhouse.com/diy-crafts/ideas-for-kids>

Accept your limits

Children aren't the only ones relegated to working from home in the immediate future. Many parents with office jobs have been asked to do the same. This means that hundreds of thousands of mothers and fathers likely will be forced to balance homeschooling with their day-to-day responsibilities at work. It means a whole lot of parents will be forced to juggle like court jesters and circus clowns.

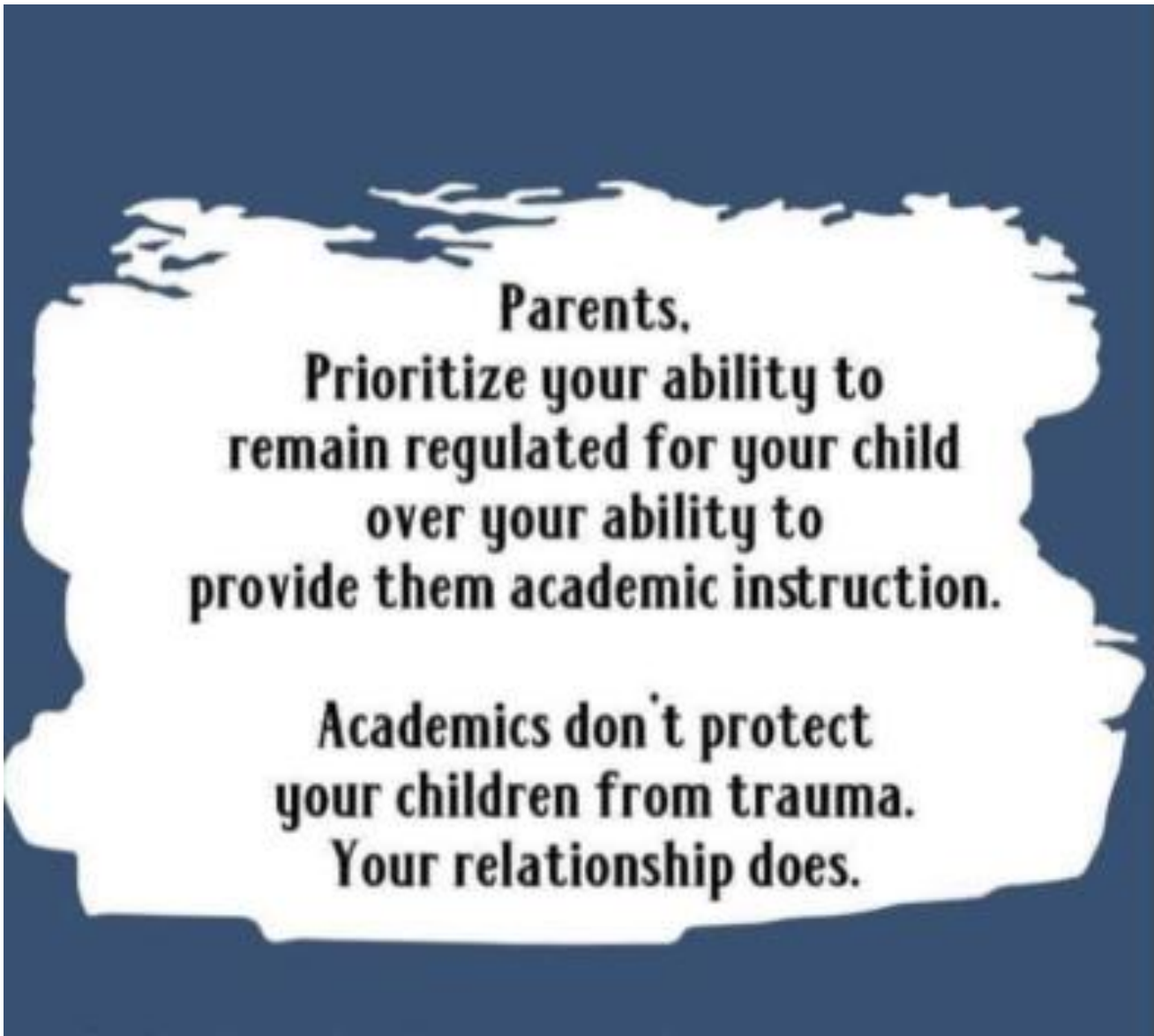
Andrew Matranga, a college professor and father of three in Longmont, Colorado, said he thinks it's "ridiculous" to be expected to shoulder the dual burdens of educating his children and the responsibilities of his job, so he's just going to do what he can.

"We just need to try to do our best, whether we're teachers, parents or working professionals," he said. "There's no map for this journey that we're on."

Matt Villano is a freelance writer and editor based in Northern California. He's also the father of three daughters, ages 10, 8 and 4 (which means he'll be homeschooling just like everyone else). Learn more about him at whalehead.com.

Health Update on Coronavirus

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>



STRESS

This situation creates excessive stress for you and your family.

- We recognize that the current public health emergency is resulting in an increase of stress on families.
- If you or your child are experiencing an immediate safety concern call 911.
- If you or your child are experiencing a behavioral mental health crisis call 211.

- If you would like to access support services, please contact the following:
- For children over 8 years of age, please call Youth and Family Services at 860-253-6380.
- For children under 8 years of age, please call the Family Resource Center 860-253-5214.
- If you would like to contact your child's counselor or social worker, please do so via their school email address.

Family Resources

- Peaceful Parenting – a support for parents and caregivers to help you during this challenging time. A copy is attached to this email.
- [District Resources Document](#) – Link to a folder that contains a continually updated list of resources for our families. Please bookmark it and check back often!

Contact Us!

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Comette, Selena	scomette@enfieldschools.org	3	7
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