

Hello GFB Families,

I hope this update finds you both physically and emotionally well. Nothing is more important to the Fort Banks team than our students and families. With that in mind, I will reach out by email at the beginning of each week to keep you current with any new information about the status of our schools as well as additional educational opportunities and resources for your student. These weekly updates will replace my monthly Fort Report and be posted in our usual Fort Report section on our school's webpage.

The list of resources previously sent and posted on our website does address specific content areas and levels of learning; "formalized guidance" and mandatory time on tasks however is really in the hands of parents. With that said, I am conducting weekly (virtual) meetings with lead teachers to further enhance and bolster the resources we make available. We are trying to balance providing families with useful information while avoiding the anxiety created by information/resource overload. **Please check the learning resource list on our school website on a regular basis.** My goal is to update it weekly with new resources.

We are aware that many sites are experiencing excessive use and as a result several aren't always or consistently accessible. Please know we cannot troubleshoot these issues but we encourage you to keep trying and/or contacting the vendor directly. Some teachers have made additional and very discipline-specific information available on their classroom webpages. Families are encouraged to **visit classroom webpages to see if more resources and suggestions are available.**

Below is a **link to a Parent Guide to the Massachusetts State Standards** provided by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. It is designed to help families and students work together to support learning. The guide is available in English, Spanish, Brazilian Portuguese and simple Chinese. Included in this guide are some great videos to watch that provide an overview of how educators are approaching the standards-based learning in different content areas and grades.

Link: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/highstandards/>

Additional helpful links:

<http://www.doe.mass.edu/highstandards/english.html>

<http://www.doe.mass.edu/highstandards/spanish.html>

<http://www.doe.mass.edu/highstandards/portuguese.html>

In addition to the standards, you might find our scope and sequence helpful in knowing what content we typically cover at this time of year. If you go to our school's website and click the "for parents" tab at the top and then move to curriculum and instruction, you will be able to easily access this guiding document. The scope and sequence as well as the MA Standards are important and informative documents that should be referenced frequently as they are the foundation for content coverage and student learning outcomes.

As you know **report cards** were scheduled to be distributed this past Friday, March 20th. With schools closed and no access to staff, mailing reports cards is not an option. Report cards will be distributed within a day or two of when we return.

The following is offered by Anita Preble on behalf of Winthrop Parents Network.

Some **ways to help yourself and your children stay calm** are:

- 1) Keep a routine - time to get up, time to do school work, meals, bedtimes
- 2) Limit time spent watching the news (all the talk about the virus increases anxiety especially for kids)
- 3) Do some fun things during the day - listen to music, do some arts and crafts, play a board game, do yoga or other exercises (dancing is great!)

Below are some links to help you - the first is Yoga for Kids and the second is on handling anxiety about the coronavirus.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X655B4ISakg>

<https://www.today.com/parents/4-ways-parents-can-help-children-handle-coronavirus-anxiety-t176156>

Please feel free to contact Anita Preble, Winthrop Parents Network, coordinator (winthropparentsnetwork12@gmail.com) with questions or comments.

Families who may **need to retrieve a child's medication from our school** should email Ms. Feeley directly at nfeeley@winthrop.k12.ma.us. Arrangements to get the medications from school and to your home will be made if needed.

The Town of Winthrop's Office of Council on Aging will be running a **food bank** out of the Arthur T. Cummings School. Food donations will be accepted Mondays and Wednesdays, 11am-1pm. Food distributions will be Tuesdays and Thursdays 11am-1pm. If you have anyone who is homebound/cannot get to the food bank to pick up food, please contact Matthew Rodes, Assistant Director/Outreach Coordinator at 617-846-1852 ext. 1602 or at mrodes@town.winthrop.ma.us.

I can appreciate the anxiety and concern both parents and students may be feeling over this extended interruption to our usual routines and learning. I hope this information and the resources assembled by our staff are helpful and provide you with some sense of comfort and control.

Your partner in education,
Ms. Pearson, Principal