



WEST SENECA CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

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March 23, 2020

Dear West Seneca Families,

We hope this letter finds you and yours doing well during this time of uncertainty. Please know that we look to continually provide you with information and updates as they become available, in particular when it comes to available resources and their relation to continuing your child(ren)'s education.

Attached, please find a chart that outlines some specific education goals during this time of school closure. The expectations provide an organized layout for how your child(ren) may structure their days ahead.

We do not wish to add to the possible strain that many of us are feeling as a result of these times, rather, we wish to provide you with a resource and tool to help you and your child(ren) navigate these uncharted waters with peace of mind. Our goal is to help students maintain their ability to progress towards grade level expectations.

We realize that our teachers have begun to reach out to many of you already, and regular communication will become a natural part of this new educational routine for the time being. We also understand that not everyone has the ability to access technology. Know that we are making every effort to create provisions for all students so that they may continue with their education, regardless of technological capabilities.

Beginning on Monday, March 23rd, "Learn-at-Home" programming will become available for all of New York's students in response to school closings across the state. The New York State Education Department has partnered with PBS to provide students in Pre-K through 12th Grade access to educational programming every weekday through free, over-the-air broadcasts. For the Buffalo viewing area, PBS programming can be accessed through the various channels of WNED, i.e., PBS KIDS.

Pre-K and young learners can still watch familiar shows like *Sesame Street*. Elementary student broadcast schedules include trusted programs like *Wild Kratts*, *Peg + Cat*, and *Cyberchase*. Middle school and high school programming include shows like *Nova*, *History Detectives*, and *Shakespeare Uncovered*. As always, many additional programs are also available to stream on the free PBS Video and PBS KIDS Video apps.

For children between the ages of four and seven (Prekindergarten to 3rd grade), PBS will continue to broadcast their 24/7 PBS Kids channel throughout the state. This free, over-the-air digital channel features shows that focus on four key areas of childhood development: cognitive, social, emotional, and physical. PBS KIDS offers content in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM), inviting children to explore and develop interest and appreciation for the natural and life sciences through programs including Sid the Science Kid, Curious George, Cyberchase and Dinosaur Train.

For older elementary and possibly secondary school, PBS will broadcast special educational content during a preempted daytime schedule. New York's stations plan to preempt daytime schedules to provide educational content for kids in the 4th grade to 12th grade, starting with at least three to five hours of content on March 23rd. PBS already creates engaging on-air content in science, history, social studies, and public affairs, and with available study guides, these shows can provide even more enrichment.

The first week of PBS Distance Learning Broadcasting includes:

- *NOVA* – This long-running, award-winning documentary series focuses on science – the speculation, history and researchers associated with it and its many applications.
- *HISTORY DETECTIVES* – Digging deeper into the complexities of historical mysteries, this popular PBS program uses traditional investigative techniques, modern technologies and old-fashioned legwork to provide new insights into our national history, and oftentimes presents a human story associated with age-old artifacts.
- *ANCIENT SKIES* – Discover how centuries of knowledge, experimentation and engineering helped our ancestors understand the mysteries of space. Expert contributors decode astronomical myths and uncover the science behind their origins.
- *BREAKTHROUGH IDEAS* - Take a mind-blowing journey through human history, told through six iconic objects that modern people take for granted, and see how science, invention and technology built on one another to change everything. These are the secrets of how we got to our modern world.
- *SHAKESPEARE UNCOVERED* – Shakespeare Uncovered combines history, biography, iconic performances, new analysis, and the personal passions of its celebrated hosts Helen Hunt, F. Murray Abraham, Romola Garai, Brian Cox, Simon Russell Beale and Sir Antony Sher host the third season to tell the stories behind the stories of Shakespeare’s greatest plays.
- *MASTERPIECE* – "Masterpiece " presents adaptations of classic literature and the work of contemporary writers as acted out by prestigious thespians. Among the stories that have been featured in the series' run are "I, Claudius," "Henry VIII" and "The Forsyte Saga."
- *BLACK AMERICA SINCE MLK: STILL I RISE* – Professor Henry Louis Gates Jr. hosts a personal journey through the past 50 years of black history in the United States, citing both the progress made and obstacles yet to be overcome. Featuring comments from Jesse Jackson, Nas and Donna Brazile, the series provides interviews as well as archival footage that document the struggle for black equality and America's changing racial landscape, from the civil rights era through present day. Eric Holder, Shonda Rhimes and DeRay Mckesson also offer insight into the state of black America – and the nation as a whole.

As always, it is advisable to help your child(ren) select grade level appropriate programming. Again, we share this information with you as a potential resource for use during this time. As we continue to learn more and have access to additional information, we will keep you apprised of new developments.

Today and always, we wish you the best, and sincerely hope that you and your family stay healthy and safe!

Sincerely,

Carmelina Persico
Assistant Superintendent of Educational Operations