

Coffee with the Executive Director

Wednesday April 1, 2020

12:00 p.m.-1:01 p.m.

22 participants

Mercedes opens the meeting at 12:05 p.m.

Mercedes welcomes all to the 3rd Coffee with the Executive Director and welcomes the 17 participants. We welcome and appreciate the participation. Please know that all comments that are made are taken with the greatest gratitude. We know that you know that we are working as best as we can to make this possible for the community. We continue to appreciate the tone and the feedback. There are no sacred cows.

Before we jump to the agenda. There will be a demonstration of our new portal by Jennifer Jones while we are on the call. Jennifer will share her screen and walk us through the portal. If you have questions regarding the portal, please hold them until we get to that portion of the meeting.

First, I would like to get to questions and concerns. We do not have any updates to our May 15th date. Gov. Carney's modification to the calendar is still in place. I have no more information at this time. With that said, we have everyone from teachers on the call to our communications, to our Deans, to our Academic Dean who will be jumping on at 12:15 p.m.

Mayara shares that she is on.

Mercedes welcomes Dr. Shirley.

Mercedes opens the questions to all as all are represented. Please tell us your name and your child's name. You can also type your question in the chat.

Question: Are laptops still available?

Mercedes shares that there was a large scale distribution on Sunday. Michael Alverio, Jean and a group of parents showed up despite the risk. The decision for distribution was made around with the information that was brought back by the teachers when they did the initial needs assessments. The parents who indicated that their students had no devices and those who were unable to be reached were contacted again by paras. There were arrangements made for

pick up Sunday. At this time, due to our commitment to keep our community safe, there will be no second distribution. The question is not whether or not they are available because we are one to one technology. But, the question is, it safe. It is not and the school's decision is based on safety.

Mercedes thanks the parent for the question.

Mercedes shares that she knows the questions comes on behalf of her as well as teachers. It is heartbreaking that our community has needs, but we are committed to keeping our community safe.

Parent asked if the school year will end of time or will we be extending to the summer.

Mercedes shares that right now we are in the process of letting Dr. Bunting know that our response to this crisis is to go uninterrupted based on the resources that are provided to families and through the portal, we are scheduled to complete our calendar year as we were. Our teachers will not have to make up time. Our students will not have to make up tie. We will be ending on time. At this time, we

Mercedes asks if Mayara will be able to share the dates.

Mayara shares the last day for students will be June 12 which is a Friday and for teachers, the last day would be June 16 which is a Tuesday.

Parents questions about homeschool for the remainder of the year and concern around social distancing.

Mercedes shares that the state's position is that if we return to school, attendance would continue to be taken. With a note, the absence would be excused. But, in the absence of a doctor's note for immune compromised or asthma for instance, there is the expectation of attendance. The directive as of now is that if we return we all return. But, we will keep you updated around that very personal choice.

Parents shares that, that is her concern as well. Her son has asthma. If the date is the 15th of May, when would you need the note?

Mercedes shares that you would bring the doctor's note on the first day of school and we as a school or as an Admin Team would make sure that he had access. It would be for all students who have a doctor's recommendation...

Parent shares that her son has not left the house in a month. She is willing to pick up the work from school and print it out.

Parent ask what happens to students who do not have access to internet,

Mercedes shares that she was speaking to David about places with hot spots.

Mercedes opens up to anyone on the call who may have info about hot spots.

Parent shares that there is an article that she can share. She shares that she knows that Bear Library has a hot spot where people can pull up outside and stay in their cars. What David was talking about was through the school. It would be configured and set up through the school, we would just need access. We would encourage everyone to stay in their cars. Internet wise the hotspots are available to anyone, you just have to get to them.

Mercedes asks if we have anything on our website around hot spots.

Jen shares that yes, it is on our website as well as the portal. The information shows where you can find hot spots in New Castle County.

Mercedes shares that there is another question around availability of technology.

Mercedes repeats the process that was taken for identifying students' who were in need of devices. There was a digital device distribution for 3 hours on Sunday. We will not be doing another device distribution to keep our community safe. She has not heard that the state is doing anything yet. The ED of the DCN is working to find devices for parents across the state of Delaware. If anything comes up about a general distribution, she will get the information out as soon as possible.

Shirley shares that she sees that people are asking about how to use Zoom.

Shirley shares that if you Google Zoom, there are tutorials available for teachers, parents, and students. She did it for Admin and encourages teachers as well. She is not sure if it is in Spanish, but she can find out while on the call.

A parent asks if there is a type of Zoom room where students can chat with their students through out the day.

Mercedes says that there are multiple teachers on the call who could speak to this but would like Shirley to speak to it first.

Shirley shares that there are different types of modes of communication. The truth of the matter is that it is difficult. Some teams will have their Zooms together and some teachers will have them separately. Please remember that teachers are still learning as well. They are learning how to assign work to ensure that it is differentiated. Teachers still have to do PD, create videos and activities; they have to do calls to parents. Right now, this is a different platform so it can't look exactly like it does. I wish I could see my teachers everyday, but we can't because I have to do reports to the DOE. We have to meet the needs of our families...Right now the expectation is that there are 2 times a week of contact. Right now, they have to teach and also teach their kids.

Mercedes opens it up to anyone else.

Michael A. shares that the Specials are having Zoom meetings in both English and Spanish. The info went out on Class Dojo.

Shirley shares that this helps you to understand that your child does have different contacts with teachers.

Debbie shares that RTI will have it as well.

Shirley shares that your child does have contact with different staff which is similar to what they would have in school.

Parent says that there are programs that are new to parents like Imagine Learning and Dreambox.

Shirley shares that you may have heard your child speak of them at home, as they have since the beginning of the year. Those are programs that the students used at home. The curriculum that you are seeing is Maravillas and Wonders and Mis Matematicas. You didn't need that because students did that at school, you weren't expected to help students learn at home. Academia is one of the few schools in the state that has a digital platform for our curriculum. You may also have heard of Epic which some students may choose to use as a resource. You may be finding it difficult because it is not your job to teach kids. Your job is to give access. The students know how to access. But, they need help with the tech part because it may be different than what they had at home. This is why this week is for exploratory.

Parent question about assignments. Are assignments to be completed by the end of the week or are they just resources?

Shirley shares that Maravillas and Wonders and Mis Matematicas are required,

Shirley suggests doing 30 minutes of Maravillas and Wonders and then take a break. They are designed to be done in block of 30 minutes so that it is not cumbersome to parents. This is a requirement by the DOE .

Parents shares that it is helpful because it will help her set up her day for the kids.

Shirley wants to share. That we did win a national award for Imagine Learning. It brings tears to her eyes. We won it because our kids connected last week when no one was connecting. There is another completion for Imagine Learning Espanol and I really want you guys to use it because it sets us apart as a bilingual school and as a charter. I want to thank you all. With your support,...I thank you for all you are doing.

Mercedes thanks Shirley and says that in times like this we need to celebrate.

Shirley shares that this is for connection at home. You did it.Spread the word!

Mercedes shares a question around how to navigate Maravillas and Wonders on the website.

Mercedes shares that Jen will walk us through that. There will also be a FAQ sheet that will be available later. Mercedes asks how that will be communicated to parents?

Jen shares that it will be posted on the website as well as shared out through Dojo story.

Mercedes shares for parents to please be present for the demonstration so you do not need to take notes.The FAQ will be translated into Spanish which is the only thing that is the block.

Mercedes reads a parent comment around all of the new programs. Parents shares that the breakdown will help parents navigate.

Mercedes shares that there will be a PTO meeting tomorrow at noon. Lolita will share the link later. Lolita and her group have been working furiously to tend to the needs.

Mercedes asks if a Robo call will go out to parents for the PTO meeting.

Mayara confirms that she will share out the Robo call as soon as she gets more information.

Parents asks if there will be support for parents who do not speak Spanish to work through the school- work.

Mercedes says that Shirley can jump on. But, remember, our teachers can see where students are at when they are working. It is important to see where the child is at. This isn't homework that you should be doing, this is information for us. We need to be careful. You are walking a very fine line between facilitating and doing the work,

Parents says you recommend giving them the tablet and letting them work through it?

Shirley confirms that you are talking about Spanish.

Yes.

Shirley confirms that in Maravillas there is a video and then there are games that help them to learn to read. Our 1st graders cannot read in Spanish. The games can help them learn to read.

Parent confirms that it is normal for them not to be able ot read.

Shirley says that Imagine Espanol is personalized for their needs. Because your child is an English speaker, I can go in and have the instructions done in English and the lesson will be in Spanish. But that is only in Imagine Espanol.

Parents shares that she understands what Mercedes is staying, but he is used to reaching out to the teacher.

Shirley shares that yes, that is where Imagine Espanol will help teach your child Spanish. Remember, the teacher is the heartbeat of education. They connect the curriculum to the child, but when it pumps too hard it can fail. The teachers are learning and that is why we appreciate you as parents.

Wilma shares that as a parent she reached out to the teacher because she was lost in trying to navigate. The teacher shared that this week is for exploration. There is no work that is assigned to the students. Sp when I went in there, I was able to see and just explore. Beginning next week when you go in, you will see the exact assignment that is for your child. As a parent, I was relieved. Beginning next week, the teachers will write specifically what the students will work on daily. As a parents, I was in the same..this week is to explore..next week you will go to what the teacher assigned.

Mercedes shared that it was super helpful.

Parent shares that her niece already has work assigned.

Shirley shares that yes, some teachers decided to assign because the teachers are learning how to assign. They were using the PowerPoints and paper in the classroom. So they are learning too. 3rd grade decided that this week is exploration, but next week will be the same thing but it will be a requirement.

Mercedes shares that this is helpful, but she is conscious of the time and wants to make sure that Jen has an opportunity to navigate through the portal.

Jen Jones shares her screen and begins to navigate and narrate.

Shirley asks for Jen to go back to show where you access the link on the website.

Mayara reiterates that it was also shared out through Dojo as well as the website.

Jen shares the website and points out where to access it.

Jen shares that the Homepage has buttons to get to all the individual pages as well as general information. It also has staff emails if you need to contact anyone. There is also the number for the school hotline in case you need it. There are also the buttons for the grade level. You will be able to find the activities for your student. Some are set up for both teachers and some are set up for individual teachers, you just have to check. Once you click on the assignment..you will need the password. Teacher sent out passwords previously. Once you click on the password, it will take you to the assignments. This week it is open so kids can explore, next week you will have exact assignments. This is the same way you would log in for Maravillas, Wonders, and Mis Matematicas. It is also the same way for Imagine Learning

and Imagine Espanol. For some of the upper grades who have completed Imagine Learning they would do imagine Reading. Again, teachers have the log in information and it was already sent. It has not changed from what they were using in the school during the school year. If you have questions, your teacher can help you.

Shirley reiterates that you must log in as a student. As a student when they log in, they will only see their 3 programs. If they are not required to do it, it will not pop up on their screen.

Parents asks that the Imagine Learning is just link to the other sites.

Shirley shares that it will take you to the log in. When you log in, your child's programs will pop up.

Parent shares that when she logs in, she sees all the teachers.

Parent says these are two different questions. When you click where Jen showed us, it will show all the programs.

Jen shares that she will look into that so that when you click on it, it will take you directly to your child's page.

Shirley shares an example of what a 3rd grader would have. If you have a 4th or 5th grader who have finished Imagine Learning will have access to a harder curriculum. Not everyone has that. It has to be assigned by me.

Jen shares that if you are having an issue, email her your child's name and teacher. She can fix it so that you go directly to your teacher's page but she needs to know which teacher.

Parent shares that her child is not showing in the class roster. The teacher does know, but she wants to know if there is any update.

Jen shares that it is a Kinder student.

Shirley asks what class the student is in.

Parent confirms Gonzalez and Quinones.

Shirley shares that one of the teachers accidentally doubled the class so they were able to put it in, but they are working on it right now. After this, you should be able to contact them as it should be fixed.

Jen resumes navigating the website. She has shared that anybody with the link can access without needing additional access. Science and Social Studies are set as doing a virtual field trip. Some teachers have a question to ask to make sure that the student has done it, but right now you can just click and explore. There is also a keep in touch feature. There is also information for Zoom calls. For the actual link , you have to go through Class Dojo as we wanted to make sure the links weren't available to the general public.

Mayara shares that we want to protect your students. We did not disclose on the website. But, the link will be shared through your teacher the day before and the day of.

Jen shares that we are constantly checking and adding things so that you have added resources as we continue. Every grade level is set up the same way so that it is easier to move through the portals. We also added a parent resource page with different activities. It may be food resources, related to Internet service providers, things that are happening...resources for where to go if your are struggling with something..all of that is available through here. We also have our Student Services pages, which are things that will help students at this time. If you go through, there are different ways to help kids deal with this situation, which is what you will find on this page. That is for the most part what we have on the portal. Our SPED page and our RTI pages are bieng built out .

Mayara shares that the distant platform is not individualized for the student. You have to look for your child's teacher to be able to sign in. The name of the child's teacher is listed. You have to look for the teacher,.

Mercedes shares that not every child has their own site.

Mercedes shares that she is aware of the time.

Mercedes asks Lolita if she can jump on to let us know the agenda items for the PTO

Lolita shares that first it will be to connect with other parents just even if it only for a few moments to vent about how hard this is. School wise we are planning for our virtual teacher appreciation. We also want to see if there is a way for parents to come together, or even friends who can't connect with one antoher..we would like parents to connect so that maybe they can set up provate Zoom calls.

Mercedes shares that it will be about how we can further connect the community and planning to make sure certain things happens even though we are far apart.

Lolita confirms that it will be at 6pm tomorrow

Mercedes shares that Mayara will put out a Robo call.

Mercedes asks for anything that will take up our minute.

Mercedes shares that's he is thinking of making it an hour as we get deeper into this.

Parents shares that yes, an hour would make us not feel so rushed.

Shirley would like to clarify why it doesn't t take you to a private. It is because it is AAACS's curriculum, it is not a web program that you can purchase on your won. Imagine Learning and Dream box are web based which is why you can connect in that way. We purchased that to help meet students' needs. The curriculum is what is required by the DOE.

Mercedes shares that we are coming to a close with a thank you for the support long term. You guys are super heroes.

Parents thank for all teachers are doing.

Meeting closes at 1:01 p.m.