Let’s Give It Up for Our Educators! COVID-19 Feature

Here we are. We are nearing the end of another academic year. When this year began in the fall of 2019, who would have imagined that this school year would bring unprecedented disruption and change to teaching and learning? Now nearly three months into the COVID-19 pandemic, we are navigating the virtual world and have made a rapid shift to education that looks very different from how the year began. As we enter this final weeks of the 2019-20 academic school year, here is an opportunity to take a step back and reflect on the incredible job we’ve done as educators to shift to virtual instruction. This guide curates the tips, strategies and resources from educators in the field and leading education experts to support educators in finishing out this academic year strong.

Be Good to You: Educator Self-Care During COVID-19

Teaching is a rewarding yet demanding profession. As educators we experience incredible highs and successes as we watch our students persevere through challenges, grasp difficult concepts and produce brilliant masterpieces. Yet along with these victories, educators, even the most seasoned of educators, experience moments of stress, frustration and feelings of overwhelm, which unaddressed, can lead to exhaustion and burnout (Psychology Today). This occurs even in the most normal of times. Place a pandemic that has upended life as we know it on top of this, and the risk of burnout becomes even greater. As educators, we have spent the past few months rapidly adjusting to online education, ensuring that instruction and learning continue, and that our students are okay. However, it is critical that we also take a step back, tune into ourselves and ensure that we are okay. Educator

*This guide is a compilation of various resources Ramapo has received from our partner/fellow NPOs in NYC.*
**Finishing Strong: Getting All Students to the Virtual Finish Line**

Just a few short months ago, brick and mortar classrooms suddenly became nonexistent. Virtual classrooms and online learning became the new normal and will be this way at least through the end of this school year. As school districts across the country transitioned to online instruction, long-standing disparities in education became even more apparent. Some students were able to make the transition easier than others. As educators, we continue to be concerned about our most vulnerable students, those students who we struggle to connect with and support even in the best of circumstances. These are the students who are most at risk of falling behind and becoming even further disengaged during this period of distance learning. Now as we finish out this school year, virtually, supporting these students has taken on a heightened importance. Here is some information on the equity issues that school districts across the country are tackling and also some helpful strategies to connect with those students who are most at risk of falling through the cracks during this time.

**Ensuring equity during distance learning**

- Equity advocates and district leaders across the country are reflecting on these questions about supporting marginalized students.
- Here are other informative posts and blogs about education equity during this period of COVID-19.
- The Education Trust has also put together resources on how other districts are responding to COVID-19. Click here for more information.
- In this profound moment in our history, engaging young people in conversations about race and racial equity are critical to developing socially conscious learners. Click here for comprehensive resources from Chicago Public Schools to help you get started.

**Strategies for supporting our most vulnerable students**

- **Multilingual learners:**
  - Educational Equity & Coronavirus: Focus on Multilingual Learners
  - Talking Points: Reach all Students
  - Coronavirus: ELL and Multilingual Resources for Schools
  - ELSF | Resource: Using Multilingual Resources to Support English Learners’ Remote Learning
- **Students with diverse learning needs:**
  - Educational Equity & Coronavirus: Students with Disabilities
  - Supporting Students With Learning Disabilities During School Closures
  - National Center for Special Education in Charter Schools
- **Students experiencing homelessness:**
  - Educational Equity & Coronavirus: Students Experiencing Homelessness
  - Resources for engaging homeless youth during this time.
  - Keeping in Touch with Students and Families Experiencing Homelessness During School Closures
- **Supporting undocumented students and families:**
  - Supporting Marginalized Students and Families

**Education in a Virtual World: Supporting and Engaging Our Students Until the End**

Social emotional learning (SEL) is as important now as it has been before. The following resources provide strategies, tips, and tools to foster social emotional development in a virtual format.

- SEL Providers Council is providing free resources and curriculum to support social emotional e-learning.
- Education Week: “SEL Learning When Students Aren’t in School”
- Sanford Harmony offers great resources for social emotional learning especially geared towards this period of virtual learning and programming. Anyone can create a free account. Click here to get started.

As the COVID-19 pandemic unfolded, how the school year would end was very uncertain. We didn't know if schools would reopen at some point before the end of the school year or if schools would remain closed. We now know and have accepted the reality that the school year will end virtually. As educators across the region wrap up the school year, many are wondering how to keep students learning and engaged through the very end. Here are some
resources, tips and strategies from educators in the field about how to finish the year strong in a virtual format.

- Remote Learning Ideas: How to Start a Podcast
- We are Teachers online learning resources
- Click here to hear from other educators across the region about how they are keeping their students engaged during this period of remote learning.
- Learn about other innovative ways to approach teaching and learning during this time
- Consult Learning Keeps Going for free resources, tips and strategies to keep students engaged through the very end.
- And to close out the year in a special way, learn how to provide meaningful capstone learning experiences for all grade levels.

For special ways to celebrate students who are graduating, click here.

Family Outreach

- NYC DOE resources just for families:
  - NYC DOE Helpful Links for COVID-19
  - NYC DOE Students Learn at Home
- SCHUYLER Center Insider Family resources provides a one-stop shop for the resources that families need most during this time.
- Learn helpful tips to best connect with parents/caregivers during this time.
- Child Mind Institute has also put together comprehensive resources in English and Spanish for families to lean on during this time.

Educator Advocacy

- Click here to learn how to best advocate for students and families during COVID-19.
- Learn more about the K-12 Emergency Relief Fund and other important educational policies to be aware of and take action on during this time.