



EAST LYME PUBLIC SCHOOLS

P.O. Box 220 • East Lyme, Connecticut 06333 • (860) 739-3966 • Fax (860) 739-1215

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August 20, 2020

Dear East Lyme Parents and Guardians,

East Lyme Public Schools sees the opportunity that we have ahead of us as truly embracing a blended learning environment for your child. As we considered our shift towards blended learning, it was important for us to focus on our key stakeholders: students and teachers. Catlin Tucker, author of *Blended Learning in Action*, explains how both students and teachers benefit from blended learning instruction: “Blended learning allows for more communication and collaboration both synchronously and asynchronously, creates more opportunities for students to drive their own learning, provides teachers with more time to work one on one or in small groups to differentiate and personalize learning while providing more timely feedback”.

We are focused on four key benefits for your child in the coming school year:

1. **Increased Communication:** Purposefully designed blended learning classes can improve communication between teachers and students, as well as foster student to student collaboration.
2. **Personalized Instruction:** When students spend time on personalized skill instruction online, teachers are able to use face to face time to further personalize instruction with engaging learning opportunities.
3. **Student-Driven Learning:** Technology helps to expand and enhance student choices for educational resources and learning materials. The pathways for how a student learns, where and when a student learns and how they demonstrate mastery can be flexible with the support of technology.
4. **Improved Self-Management Skills:** Goal setting and individual learning plans helps students to become more invested in their learning and to see both the rewards of meeting goals and consequences of failing to meet them.

A key part of students benefiting from our blended learning instructional model are individual technology devices. East Lyme Public Schools will be providing every student with a device for the 20-21 school year. Though we ordered all devices in June, due to the pandemic, we are experiencing delays with the arrival of student devices. They are projected to arrive by the end of this month. *With that being said, each K-6 individual student would benefit from having access to a device at home starting the first week of school. Each grade 7-12 student would benefit from having access to a device that they can bring to and from school.* If your student currently does not have a device available for their individual use for the next several weeks, please complete the [Device Request Form](#) by Tuesday, August 25, 2020 at noon so that we can supply you with one. (NOTE: Virtual Viking families that have already emailed me do not need to complete the survey as your requests have been recorded. An email confirmation will be sent to you within the coming day).

East Lyme Public Schools will inspire, engage and educate each student to become a contributing citizen and a responsible, independent, and critical thinker.



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For those families that submit a request for technology, please note the following technology pick-up dates and times.

Virtual Viking Families and Cohort B Families Technology Pick-Up Process:

Location: East Lyme Middle School
Thursday, August 27 from 10:00 – 2:00
Friday, August 28 from 10:00 – 2:00

If you have any question regarding the pick-up process on August 27 & 28, please email helpdesk@elpsk12.org.

Cohort A Families Technology Pick Up Process:

Devices will be sent home with your child the first day of school.

First, let me say thank you for being partners and understanding our current landscape. Secondly, this is a time where we are able to provide opportunities for students to learn using technology which opens a world of new possibilities and helps prepare them to be 21st century citizens. Lastly, blended learning is not just giving a student a computer, it is leveraging those technological tools to transform instructional design to shift towards personalization.

Sincerely,

Amy Drowne
Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment