



**“Everything you can imagine is real.”
- Pablo Picasso**

Focusing on Student Well-Being in Times of Crises by Cathleen Beachboard

District Highlights Thought one:

Feedback. Feedback can be hard. We also know that feedback is one of the most powerful tools a teacher has when working with students. This week we got a lot of feedback from families about how distance learning is going. I think one of the hardest parts about distance learning is that

teachers can not be with students to see how they are really doing with the tasks we are sending home. Feedback can be hard for students and adults alike. I remember a time in grad school when I worked really hard on an assignment only to get it back from my instructor with essentially a note to start over. It was crushing. But I got through it. When it was all said and done, I had a much stronger piece to show for it. I learned a lot in the process as well. The survey contained some constructive feedback. We asked for that feedback. Yet I know many of us felt a little (or a lot) crushed by those wanting us to do things differently. I think this was in part because of how hard we are working. This was a natural reaction. Well, in the wise words to Taylor Swift, it is time to *shake it off* and use the feedback to tinker and tweak. It is important to remember that the feedback was overwhelmingly positive. Of course there are things we can improve. We will work through this together. It would be crazy to think that we could do distance learning perfectly the first time we tried it. When it is all said and done, we will emerge stronger.

Thought two: Gratitude. The survey was filled with it. Most responses contained a message of thanks to our team. *Know that and feel that.* Families know how hard we are all working. I am so proud of our team. Recently, we have had special days: Administrative Professionals Day; School Lunch Hero Day; and School Principal Day. Next week is Teacher and Staff Appreciation Week. We are at a time when it feels like

**WHAT TO DO DURING A CLASSROOM ZOOM MEETING
ACCORDING TO KIDS**

- Start talking about your cat and don't stop.
- Put your eyeball up to the camera, then make silly faces.
- If the teacher is on mute, point that out! Loudly!
- Hold random items up for everyone to appreciate.
- Give a tour of your entire house.
- Don't concern yourself with "staying on topic."
- Got a pet? Show it off!
- Ask the same question at least three times.
- If needed, pick your nose.

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A new day is an opportunity to make a new connection!

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words are not enough to express our gratitude for all of your hard work. At the same time we can't come together to celebrate. I know that when we are back together we will find a way to celebrate. For now, I again offer my thanks.

Two weeks ago Don started a Coffee Hour for paraprofessionals and this week I started an Afternoon Tea for certified staff. We hope you will find these as ways to stay informed on how we are moving forward as a district. I have really enjoyed them and it has been a good way to stay connected. We welcome questions and discussion!

Stephanie and I will continue to join as many grade level team meetings as we can. We want to continue to be a resource and help with vertical alignment as you make decisions as a grade level. Many of you have expressed that it is helpful to be able to ask us questions in these smaller settings as well. Before we closed, I had the opportunity to begin meeting with the UA team in smaller groups. Since then, I had to cancel many of my planned meetings. I learned so much from the Art and PE teachers and I am excited to begin scheduling times with other small teams in the upcoming weeks.



Finally, I shared the picture above on twitter last week with the caption that while zoom is great I really miss our face to face meetings. I can't wait to see you all in person again. I hope you all had the opportunity to be away from screens this weekend and enjoy time outside. It was beautiful. Our gardens are all turned over with fresh compost and mulch. We have been harvesting tulips by the dozens. I can smell the lilacs by our vegetable garden beds while I water the seedlings. Hopefully this weather trend will continue. It sure makes a difference!



Professional Development Corner! Another week, another TED Radio Hour! This really is my “go to” Podcast... More than ever, we need to make time for joy. Gardening and Podcasts add to my joy! [This hour, Manoush and TED's Head Curator Helen Walters explore talks that surprise, inspire, and delight.](#) Check out the [#BrightFuture archives](#) (scroll down) for other podcast and book recommendations.

Do you have a resource, quote, or article to share? District committees can also communicate news via this newsletter. Just email me at tbaird@hebron.k12.ct.us. Have a great week!