



PRESS RELEASE

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT, RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS &
INFORMATION

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E-LEARNING SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS DISPLACED BY ADVERSE CIRCUMSTANCES

ST. GEORGE, GRENADA, MAR. 13, 2020: In instances where local circumstances make it impossible for students to attend routine classes, the Ministry of Education, Human Resource Development, Religious Affairs and Information remains committed to doing everything possible in support of learning opportunities for all students.

With the declaration of COVID-19 as a pandemic, this circular therefore informs of options which can be utilized to support learning for students of compulsory school age, who may be adversely affected by the situation as it evolves.

In this regard, all stakeholders are asked to note that the IT Unit has presented the social media platform WhatsApp as a viable delivery mechanism for bringing e-learning resources to our students. (**See attachment 1.**) While the use of WhatsApp is encouraged as the first option, it is not the only option available to schools.

In schools where other e-learning platforms are already being utilized or have been deployed, their usage should be embraced. Additionally, the use of safe websites and other online services is to be promoted. (**See other options as referenced in Attachments 2 and 3.**)

The information given must not be considered as restrictive, but must be embraced in the context of safe and meaningful alternatives to face-to-face learning encounters for our students.

This Ministry is about to enter into its final phase for the piloting of e-books in schools. The supporting broadband internet service connection in all public schools is also near completion. Both activities are in keeping with the overall IT agenda.

Thank you for all attention due in this regard.

Attachment 1:

WhatsApp

The rationale for WhatsApp:

1. WhatsApp is considered the simplest and easiest technology option for deployment of information in the shortest period of time with the least amount of resources (financial or otherwise).
2. It is already widely used by the Grenadian population and is therefore familiar to most parents and students.
3. It does not require any major amount of training for teachers, students or parents.
4. While some homes may not have laptops or desktop computers to access other e-learning platforms, smartphones are commonplace and readily available.
5. Mobile data can afford Internet access to students in homes which are without Wi-Fi or cable.
6. Several schools/teachers already have WhatsApp groups with either their students or the parents of their students.
7. If the student does not have a smartphone, the phone of their parent/guardian can suffice.

How WhatsApp can be leveraged:

For teachers:

1. Notes and assignments can be shared in the WhatsApp group either as pictures or files. These can also be emailed to persons wanting that option.
2. Supplementary content such as YouTube videos and other online resources can be shared.
3. Voice notes and videos can be created and shared via the platform to explain certain aspects of the lesson/assignment for the students.
4. Returned assignments will be assessed, grades recorded, and feedback provided via private chat or email.
5. Teachers can collaborate with peers and share resources.
6. Links to content stored in the cloud (Dropbox and OneDrive etc.) can be shared with students and even among teachers.

For students:

1. Notes received can either be printed or copied in their notebooks.
2. Assignments can be typed or written and sent via private message (outside of the group chat) to the teacher as document files or pictures. Assignments can also be emailed.
3. Clarification can be sought through the group chat or private chat.
4. Videos and audio files sent by the teacher can be played back as many times as the student desires and kept for reference purposes unlike what happens while they're sitting in a physical classroom.

Attachment 2:

Websites and Online Services

- MStar-LSP
- Edmodo
- YouTube
- Moodle
- [Notesmaster](#)
- [IXL](#)
- [Khan Academy](#)
- [Mathlearningcenter](#)
- [Aplusmath](#)
- [Edhelper](#)
- [FAS-PASS Maths](#)
- [Starfall](#)
- [Ministry of Education, Guyana](#)
- [interactive.ck12.org](#)
- [phet.colorado.edu/](#)
- <https://www.ixl.com>
- [www.openculture.com](#)
- Kids maths TV
- Prodigy
- Maths TV
- Khan Academy
- Maths is fun

Attachment 3:

Specially selected sites for Language Arts.

- <https://www.learningreviews.com/language-arts-websites-apps-for-kids>
These 250 free language arts websites have games and lessons for elementary, middle, and high school students. Kids can use the online interactives and apps to learn to read fluently, improve their reading comprehension and grammar, and learn to write anything from essays to poetry.
- <https://www.digitallibrary.io/>
Free reading resources
- <http://readtheory.org/>
Interactive online reading activities for all levels
- <https://www.starfall.com/h/>
Emphasizes phonetic awareness, systematic sequential phonics, and common sight words in conjunction with audiovisual interactivity.
- <http://www.openculture.com/freeaudiobooks>
1,000 free audio books
- <https://www.ixl.com/ela/>
Reading Comprehension and writing strategies
- <https://www.storylineonline.net/>
- <https://www.ego4u.com/>