



Michelle Dutrow
Superintendent
516 Allport Cutoff
Morrisdale PA, 16858
Phone - 814.345.5615 x 4000
Fax - 814.345.5220
www.westbranch.org

Michelle Dutrow, Superintendent

September 16, 2020

Greetings WB Cyber Families (Grades 2-5)

This communication is being sent to you today regarding our WB Cyber CIOLA platform and the ongoing issues you have experienced. As you are aware, we are using the CIOLA vendor to purchase courses for your child, namely English/Language Arts (Reading & Writing), Science and Social Studies. Our intent today is to apologize for the ongoing issues and share our plan for moving forward.

Specifically, there are three major issues that we continue to experience as of this week with this vendor: 1) no teacher of record assigned to many of your child's course, 2) no printed materials provided to you as needed for course completion, and 3) no supply kits provided to you as needed for course completion. We were willing to give this vendor a few weeks to rectify their issues but to date the issues persist. This is unacceptable to the District as it does not meet the contract we entered into with this vendor. More importantly, it is grossly unfair to you as a parent/guardian as you attempt to navigate this new educational model with your child/children.

Effective with the close of business today, we are dropping the CIOLA courses and you should not complete any further assignments in this system. Please be advised that we are continuing to use the CIOLA courses for students in grades 6 – 12 as teachers have been assigned to all students. Over the course of the next four (4) school days, you should concentrate on completing any Math and Physical Education assignments. Your child will not be penalized for not meeting the attendance requirement for the other course work.

The District is moving to another vendor for the three courses: 1) English/Language Arts (Reading & Writing), 2) Science, and 3) Social Studies. This new vendor (Educere) has teachers ready to assign and offers a few new features not available in the CIOLA platform. Our goal is to start the courses on Wednesday, September 23, 2020. While we understand it is not ideal to "start over", we do feel that this product will provide a better experience for both you and your child/children. There will be ample time to complete the courses as designed by the end of the semester.

To get you ready for this transition, Educere has volunteered to provide an Online Orientation to introduce you to this new system and answer your early questions. A link to the Orientation will be emailed to you ahead of next week's sessions and you may access the meeting via your device. Mrs. Porter (WB Cyber Coordinator) and Mrs. Sue Folmar (WB Cyber Advisor) will attend an Orientation as well. The schedule for the Orientation is as follows and you may choose the time that best suits your schedule:

Tuesday, September 22, 2020 @ 1:00 p.m.

Tuesday, September 22, 2020 @ 6:00 p.m.

While we believe that you will find this new product to be user friendly and the access to teachers ready to roll, I nonetheless need to remind you that this is a cyber program. As such, you as the parent/guardian have a role to play in your child's educational program. In the absence of your child being in the classroom, the time with our teachers is replaced with print materials and videos. Additionally, the District is required to provide your child/children with a program that closely meets the instructional minutes (teacher teaching and students

working) for the in-person model here in our buildings. This is a requirement by the Department of Education (PDE), and the District was required to submit our instructional minutes to PDE for approval.

As we register your child for these new courses, you will once again receive an email with your login information and other details about the courses. Your next steps will be covered during the Orientation on Tuesday. You do not need to do anything before the Orientation, and we will work with you to get started after that session.

Again, we apologize for this inconvenience. COVID-19 has presented public education with many obstacles and the Elementary Cyber program is one such obstacle. It is very new to us and we are experiencing growing pains. We hope this transition will improve your child's educational experience.

Michelle Dutrow
Superintendent