Options for Internet Service During the Coronavirus Pandemic

As Polk County Public Schools transitions to distance learning, we know our families may have questions about obtaining internet access. To help, we've compiled information about local internet service providers and offers, as well as free public Wi-Fi hot spots. Please use this information to make the best decision for your family.
If you choose to use a public WiFi hotspot, please be mindful of social distancing. Do not socialize. Remain in your car or at least six feet from others.
If you have additional questions about distance learning, please contact your teacher or school.

Comcast – Internet Essentials
An Internet Essentials package is available that includes two months of free in-home internet. The cost is $9.95 per month. https://www.internetessentials.com

Xfiniti WiFi
Xfinity offers numerous free WiFi hotspots throughout our community. Please visit https://wifi.xfinity.com/. You will need to enter your address and ZIP code to see a list of nearby free WiFi hotspots.

Spectrum
Spectrum is offering free in-home internet access for 60 days to K-12 and college students who do not already have a current subscription. To enroll, call 1-844-488-8395. Installation fees are being waived for new-student households.

Spectrum WiFi
Spectrum also offers a number of free Wifi hotspots. Find one near you by entering your address at https://www.spectrum.com/free-wifi-hotspots/florida/polk-county.

Public WiFi Safety

Public WiFi networks are great, but **they aren't always safe**. Sharing a network with other people means that your personal information is in danger of being seen or accessed. Protect yourself by taking the following precautions:

- **Don't enter sensitive information**. Do your banking and online shopping at home to avoid exposing yourself to identity theft or credit card fraud.
- **Use 'https' (secure) websites as much as possible**. While the most frequently visited websites, such as Facebook and email providers, will automatically convert the URL to a secure connection, keep an eye on the URL to make sure. Chrome users can also install an extension that will encrypt your data to make your browsing safer.
- **Forget the network**. Unless you specify otherwise, your computer or device will likely remember the WiFi network and reconnect to it whenever you are in range. Doing this can leave your information exposed while you're not browsing. Avoid this by unchecking "Connect Automatically" in your network settings.
- **Enable two-factor authentication on frequently visited sites**. By adding an extra layer of protection (i.e. entering your phone number or selecting an accompanying icon) to any password-protected website, you are effectively reducing the likelihood of a hack.