As Maryland schools are mandated to remain closed through April 24, to mitigate the spread of coronavirus disease (COVID-19), Worcester County Public Schools has developed a plan for continuity of learning that encompasses both online learning and non-computer based learning.
ABOUT THIS GUIDE

This guide is designed to share with parents an overview of what they and their child can expect in a Continuity of Learning environment.

Please contact your child’s school or teacher with any questions specific to your child’s experience that are not answered here.

STUDENT GROUPS

High School Students
AP & Dual Enrollment START DATE: Monday, March 30, 2020
All Courses START DATE: Wednesday, April 1, 2020

As high school students already have a laptop provided by the school system and are familiar with the use of Schoology, our learning management system, the decision was made to begin Continuity of Learning at the high school level first.

Middle School Students
START DATE: Monday, April 6, 2020*

We know that learning takes on many different forms and can take place in many different settings. Over the course of this school closure, students will be invited to engage in learning experiences that will stretch their thinking and will encourage new ways of “doing” in each of their classes. Students will learn through a blended learning model, which includes asynchronous learning as well as the possibility of some synchronous, real-time interactive sessions with their teachers and classmates. The clear goal for these days is to be similar to the students’ experiences on typical days at school: to interact, to engage, to grow, and, ultimately, to learn.

Elementary School Students
START DATE: Monday, April 6, 2020*

As Elementary School students are still developing their independence, a teacher-parent partnership is necessary for students to engage in Continuity of Learning tasks and to access online resources. The designed learning tasks and activities will provide direction and support to families with the understanding that task completion depends on each individual families’ circumstances. We recognize that parents may have more than one child to guide, therefore we have framed the support for the learning experience within one day not exceeding 1-1.5 hours of computer time; time that will both inform and help prepare the student to engage in the learning tasks that the teacher has designed for that given day.

*Dependent on Board of Education modification of the 2019-2020 school system calendar.
STUDENTS SUPPORTING THEIR OWN LEARNING

_Students can support their own learning by…_

- Dedicating appropriate time to learning, comparable to a school day and/or as guided by your teacher/s.
- Checking appropriate online platforms for information on courses, assignments, resources daily.
- Attending, as much as possible, the regular synchronous engagements offered by each of your teacher/s.
- Identifying a comfortable and quiet space to study/learn.
- Engaging in all learning posted with academic honesty.
- Submitting all assignments in accordance with provided timeline and/or due dates.
- Ensuring your own social and emotional well-being by engaging in time for reflection, physical activity, conversation, and play.

PARENTS SUPPORTING THEIR STUDENT’S LEARNING

_Parents can support the learning of their child by…_

- Provide an environment conducive to learning (access to technology, safe and quiet space during daytime).
- Engage in conversations on posted materials and assignments.
- Monitor time spent engaging in online and offline learning, including variables like that of preferred learning times (morning, afternoon, evening).
- Encourage attendance, as much as possible, to the regular synchronous engagements offered by each of their child’s teacher/s.
- Support emotional balance by providing ample room and time for reflection, physical activity, conversation, and play.
The online platforms listed at right support both Continuity of Learning as well as collaboration between faculty, students, and their families to ensure a quality student learning experience when planning and delivering remotely.

Rest assured that throughout Continuity of Learning, support for parents will be available from your child's teacher as well as technical support, which is detailed at right.

COMMUNICATION
Worcester County Public Schools’ (WCPS) email system and Schoology are the communication tools used to contact and communicate with families of students in all grades.

ONLINE LEARNING - ELEMENTARY
Schoology is the online Continuity of Learning platform used in the Elementary School grade bands (PK3/4, K-3 and 3-5).

ONLINE LEARNING - SECONDARY
Schoology and the online content resources included in some classrooms are the online Continuity of Learning platforms and content resources used in the Middle School grade band (6-8) and the High School grade band (9-12).

VIDEO CONFERENCING
Zoom is a platform designed to allow real-time interaction with video and audio. Teachers may use this to connect with students during Continuity of Learning. Teachers will provide guidance and access information if they opt to use this tool.

TROUBLE?
CONTACT OUR HELPDESK
Parents, students and school staff can access the HELPDESK for technology-related questions and support, password and login assistance.

Visit our website, www.worcesterk12.org to request assistance, or call (302) 466-5329, (434) 535-1477, or (410) 635-1042 to reach a HELPDESK representative.
Continuity of Learning for all high school students will begin on Wednesday, April 1, with a blend of asynchronous (independent) learning using Schoology or printed packets and synchronous (whole class) engagements to support learning and the social-emotional well-being of students.

**STUDENT DISTANCE LEARNING PLAN**

*Special Note for Students Currently Taking Advanced Placement (AP) Courses:*

The College Board is working continuously to update their program for instruction and assessment of Advanced Placement Courses. To date, the College Board has announced a modification to the amount of content that will be assessed in each course. Course teachers will provide specific units which will be assessed. All Advanced Placement assessments will be online this year and completed at home to support social distancing efforts nationwide. Additional information can be accessed by visiting www.apcentral.collegeboard.org.

**CONTENT & TIMING**

Students will be provided with a clear daily learning target for each class to ensure they know what learning they need to accomplish each day. The daily learning target will ensure continuity of learning that is clearly connected to their learning in prior classes and the classes following.

For courses with multiple sections, students will have the same daily learning target and comparable learning experiences as students who have other teachers.

Total time for engagement in learning for each class, including reading, homework, and work towards long term assignments, should not exceed 75 minutes for non-college level classes and 90 minutes for college level classes (AP and DE).

**ASSESSMENT & PROGRESS MONITORING**

Teachers will use a variety of assessment tasks to inform instruction, improve learning, and report on student achievement.

Students must complete assigned non-graded assessments that provide a check for understanding. These may include but are not limited to: discussions, forms, polls, and reflections in Schoology.

Teachers will monitor student progress with ongoing and regular feedback. (Please note, late submissions of formative assessments may not always receive feedback or comparably thorough feedback)

Teachers will determine when summative assessments are administered based on the data collected from formative assessments.

Teachers will actively engage with the student, parents, counselor(s), learning specialist(s) and administration to support students who are not producing evidence of learning during a unit of study.

**We ask high school student parents for the following support:**

- Monitor Schoology updates and be sure to check in with your child daily about the distance learning tasks, activities and assessments they are working on.
- Designate a place where your child will work independently on his/her assigned tasks.
- Ask your child to provide a brief summary of the learning he/she is engaging in for each class to ensure their understanding of the content and of the process they are being asked to engage in to demonstrate his/her learning.
- Ask your child about their deadline calendar and support them, as needed, in submitting assignments according to the established deadlines.
- Remind your child to email his/her teachers if your child or you have questions or if you need extra help and support. *Our faculty will be on hand to help and support, during designated office hours.*
**STUDENT DISTANCE LEARNING PLAN**

*Continuity of Learning* for all elementary school students will begin on Monday, April 6, with a blend of asynchronous (independent) learning using Schoology or printed packets and synchronous engagements (whole class) to support learning and the social-emotional well-being of students.

As Middle School students are still developing their independence, a teacher-parent partnership is necessary for students to engage in Continuity of Learning tasks and, in some cases, to access online resources. The learning tasks and activities provide direction and support to families. We recognize that parents may have more than one child to guide, therefore we will encourage teachers to present learning experience which require minimal parent involvement.

**CONTENT & TIMING**

The Distance Learning Plan in Middle School will include engaging experiences for each scheduled class students have on their regular school schedule for that day.

The time allotments below outlines guidance on the specific amount of time activities and assignments may require each day or each week. Students may also have off-screen tasks that are designed to engage the middle school learner and attend to middle school needs.

- 60 min per day - Literacy: Reading and/or Writing
- 60 min per day - Mathematics
- 30 min per day - Science
- 30 min per day - Social Studies
- 90 min per week - Art, Music, Physical Education, Health, Media
- 30 min each Tuesday - Tech Tuesday
- 30 min each Wednesday - Wellness Wednesday

**ASSESSMENT & PROGRESS MONITORING**

Students will provide evidence of learning for each subject and lesson as a check for understanding.

Teachers will provide students with ongoing and regular feedback on their evidence of learning.

**We ask middle school student parents for the following support:**

- Provide an environment conducive to learning (access to technology, safe and quiet space during daytime).
- Engage in conversations on posted materials and assignments.
- Monitor time spent engaging in online and offline learning, including variables like that of preferred learning times (morning, afternoon, evening).
- Monitor updates on Schoology and lesson/activity deadlines provided by teachers.
- Support emotional balance by providing ample room and time for reflection, physical activity, conversation, and play.
- Email/Communicate with your child's classroom teacher, during designated office hours, if you or your child has questions and/or if your child needs extra help and support. These office hours will be posted on Schoology. *Our faculty will be present on-line to help and support.*
Continuity of Learning for all elementary school students will begin on Monday, April 6, with a blend of asynchronous (independent) learning using Schoology or printed packets and synchronous engagements (whole class) to support learning and the social-emotional well-being of students.

We ask elementary school student parents for the following support:

- Provide an environment conducive to learning (access to technology, safe and quiet space during daytime).
- Engage in conversations on posted materials and assignments.
- Monitor time spent engaging in online and offline learning, including variables like that of preferred learning times (morning, afternoon, evening).
- Encourage attendance, as much as possible, to the regular synchronous engagements offered by each of their child’s teacher/s.
- Support emotional balance by providing ample room and time for reflection, physical activity, conversation, and play.
- Email/Communicate with your child's classroom teacher, during designated office hours, if you or your child has questions and/or if your child needs extra help and support. These office hours will be posted on Schoology. Our faculty will be present on-line to help and support.

Education is always a partnership. Over the course of this Continuity of Learning time period, our faculty will partner with parents to engage students in experiences that stretch their understanding and expand how they approach new learning. Teachers will continue to carry forward their instrumental role in guiding, supporting, and challenging students to take on new responsibilities and to become excited about new learning. Our families will have options and sources for flexibility that will give them choice and ownership as the Continuity of Learning experiences progress. Teachers will communicate with parents through Schoology and WCPS e-mail and/or other approved/utilized forms of communication.

**CONTENT & TIMING**

- The first week of Distance Learning will focus on skill review and practice, along with developing new online learning routines.
- All learning tasks for April 6, 2020 will be posted on April 6 at 8:00 a.m. and additional tasks added throughout the week.
- Once learning tasks are posted, teachers will post on Schoology that new learning tasks/activities are available and will include/reference the corresponding Continuity of Learning Plan for their grade level as outlined below.
- Weekly optional synchronous Schoology ‘Conferencing’/Zoom sessions will be communicated through email with the login code for the session.

**ASSESSMENT & PROGRESS MONITORING**

Teachers will monitor student progress through the activities that students engage in on Schoology and other digital platforms.

- Teachers will provide daily, specific and constructive feedback for each student.
- Teachers will adjust lessons as needed to meet the learning needs of their students.
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
LEARNING TIMEFRAME

PRE-KINDERGARTEN (3)

The described learning is designed to take approximately 40 minutes each day. It is important to interact and observe your child as he/she engages in the activity. We always encourage you to explore familiar experiences and activities like reading for pleasure and play to extend and enhance your child’s learning.

- 15 min per day - Literacy: Reading and/or Writing
- 15 min per day - Mathematics Activities
- 30 min per week - Art, Music, Physical Education, Health, Media
- 30 min each Wednesday - Wellness Wednesday

PRE-KINDERGARTEN (4)

Students are encouraged to engage in Distance Learning activities which should take place within approximately one hour each day (including time to complete assignments), with the understanding that activities that take place throughout the day are extensions of this hour (e.g., reading aloud, pretend play, investigations, writing, drawing).

- 20 min per day - Literacy: Reading and/or Writing
- 20 min per day - Mathematics Activities
- 50 min per week - Art, Music, Physical Education, Health, Media
- 20 min each Wednesday - Wellness Wednesday

KINDERGARTEN - SECOND GRADE

The described learning is designed to take approximately one and a half hours each day (including time to complete assignments). It is important to observe your child as he/she engages in the task and to use this observation to help guide your support. We always encourage you to explore familiar experiences and activities like that of reading for pleasure, journal writing, and play to extend and enhance your child’s learning.

- 35 min per day - Literacy: Reading and/or Writing
- Students should also read for at least 30 minutes each day (2 steps)
- 35 min per day - Mathematics Activities
- 60 min per week - Science
- 60 min per week - Social Studies
- 60 min per week - Art, Music, Physical Education, Health, Media
- 20 min each Wednesday - Wellness Wednesday

THIRD - FIFTH GRADE

The described learning is designed to take approximately one and a half to two hours each day (including time to complete assignments). Over the course of this timeframe, students will engage with varying degrees of independence. Encourage your child to seek support while allowing your child to accept responsibility and take on challenges with increasing independence.

- 35 min per day - Literacy: Reading and/or Writing
- Students should also read for at least 30 minutes each day (2 steps)
- 35 min per day - Mathematics Activities
- 60 min per week - Science
- 60 min per week - Social Studies
- 60 min per week - Art, Music, Physical Education, Health, Media
- 20 min each Wednesday - Wellness Wednesday
Note: Content adapted from the WCPS Continuity of Learning Plan, which contains content highly borrowed from Washington County Public Schools Distance Learning Plan. They cited Shanghai American School Distance Learning Plan as shared by Samuel J. Richards via LinkedIn on March 10, 2020.