CONTINUITY OF LEARNING PLAN

Cecil County Public Schools

Serving Learners, Families, and the Community

CECIL COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Cecil County Public Schools' Continuity of Learning Plan is designed to support the educational process while schools are closed. We acknowledge there is no replacement for face to face teaching, but in the event we are not able to offer typical instruction at school, we believe a level of instruction can still take place in a distance learning format. Knowing some families do not have online access, lessons will be created in a packet format that will be available for pick up at their home school at a designated time.

Distance Learning Platforms Supporting Continuity of Learning

The following Online Platforms will support Distance Learning and faculty/student/family collaboration to ensure a quality learning experience when planning and delivering instruction remotely:

- Lessons and learning opportunities are posted on CCPS Blackboard Learn on the "At Home Connection" page. ccps.blackboard.com

- CCPS email and Blackboard Communicate are the communication tools used to contact and communicate with CCPS families, PreK - 12.

- Current student email is open for grades 8 - 12. Email will be expanded for grades 3 - 7 during the time when distance learning is required. Students in grades 3 - 8 are limited to emailing within the CCPS system.

- Google Classroom and Blackboard Learn are the primary online distance learning platforms.

- Blackboard Collaborate is a web conferencing tool that will allow staff to communicate with other staff and students in a synchronous (real time) format.

Needs Assessment

In order to determine the ability to deliver a Distance Learning Platform for the continuity of learning, CCPS completed a needs assessment for teachers and students.

TEACHERS - Home Internet Access

Teachers	1192 responses
With access	1169
Without access	23

CCPS will attempt to provide access via a mobile hotspot to teachers without internet access as long as there is reception in their residential area.

TEACHERS - Professional development assessment to determine the capacity to deliver instruction through online format. Training will be available to teachers to increase their capacity in the different online instructional platforms.

	Teach other teachers	Do not need help	Need some help	Need more help	Not able at all
Blackboard Learn	4.7%	6.3%	52.7%	29.9%	6.3%
Google Classroom	4.4%	12.9%	43.7%	30.9%	8.1%
Google Drive	16.2%	35%	31.6%	14.8%	2.2%
Google Form Assessment	14.3%	24.7%	37%	20.1%	3.8%
Blackboard Communicate	7.3%	19.1%	37.6%	30%	5.9%
Screencast Demonstrations	2.3%	5.4%	30.8%	48.2%	13.3%

STUDENTS - Home Internet Access (surveyed students in grades 3 - 12)

Student with access	9254
Students without access	709

Non-traditional access to the internet can be accessed through smartphone hotspots, internet service suppliers who use hotspots for mobile devices, such as Xfinity, and Armstrong hotspots.

STUDENTS - Device Needs Assessment - Completed March 13, 2020

Need device	2253
Don't need device; have internet access	7001
Devices loaned	1744

Local schools will continue to reach out to families to assess access needs and provide devices when appropriate.

TIMELINE

March 12, 2020	The Maryland State Superintendent of Schools announced closure of schools between March 16 - 27.
March 13, 2020	Local schools surveyed students for technology home access. Chromebooks were loaned to students who stated they needed a device at home. Teachers distributed learning opportunity packets to students without internet access.
March 13 - 27, 2020	Content Coordinators prepared learning opportunities and posted on the "At Home Connection" page on CCPS Blackboard site (ccps.blackboard.com). This is a public site that is open to students and parents.
March 25, 2020	The Maryland State Superintendent of Schools announced closure of schools between March 30 - April 24.
March 30 - April 10, 2020	Content Coordinators prepared lessons to cover 2 weeks for all grade levels and posted the lessons on the "Home Connection" page on the CCPS Blackboard site. Parents and students can access the corresponding grade and subject lessons online, and packets are provided for parent/student pick-up at each school.
March 30 - April 3, 2020	Professional Development for teachers for Distance Learning Platforms
March 30, 2020	During school closure, packets and Chromebooks available for pickup at schools on Tuesday and Thursdays from 9 am – Noon. Parents should call the school for more information.
April 6 – May 15, 2020	Teachers support students with lessons created by content coordinators.
April 9 – 13, 2020	Spring Holidays - Students and staff not working
April 14 – 17, 2020	"Catch-up week" - students should work to complete previous lessons. No new lessons provided during this week.
April 17, 2020	The Maryland State Superintendent of Schools announce the continued closure of schools until May 15, 2020.
April 20 until return date	Content Coordinators prepare lessons to cover 2 weeks at a time for all grade levels and posted the lessons on the "Home Connection" page on the CCPS Blackboard site. Parents and students can access the corresponding grade and subject lessons online, and packets are provided for parent/student pick-up at each school on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9 am – Noon. Parents should call the school for more information.

School Calendar

On Tuesday, April 14, the Maryland State Board of Education voted to waive the requirement that schools hold 180 days of instruction. CCPS will be updating the school calendar in the coming weeks based on the State Board's decision to waive five of the ten emergency closure days from March 16 to March 27. This means we will only need to make up five days to meet the new minimum number of instructional days (175 days).

The Cecil County Board of Education took the first steps in this by amending the CCPS school calendar to make April 27 and April 28 instructional days. These days were originally scheduled to be Professional Development followed by Election Day. This will allow us to "make up" two of the five days required by the state. We are working on a plan for the remaining three days pending additional decisions at the state level.

What to Expect: Next Phase of Online Learning in CCPS

On Monday, April 20, we began the next phase of our online learning plan. We continue to focus on providing instruction and meeting learning objectives; leveraging the tools and resources that students have access to, and providing the academic and social-emotional support students need. The main focus of these lessons is continuing learning while at home with teachers providing feedback. Our online learning model includes a blend of approaches to learning activities; independent, self-paced work; virtual office hours to check for understanding; and the electronic submission of assignments. Assignments are available on the At Home Connection.

At the elementary level:
- The lessons for ELA, math, science, and social studies are designed to be completed in approximately 25 minute segments twice a week.
- Elementary Specials -- art, music, PE, IA, and Informational Literacy/Computer Science -- are designed to provide approximately 25 minutes of activities per week. These are enrichment activities that do not need to be submitted to the teacher.
- The lessons do not have to be done on a specific day or time. While students should follow the lessons for each content area in order, they can work on different content areas in the order that best suits them.
- Printed packets are available and can be requested by contacting the school. However, packets are only generated for families who are not able to access instruction online.

At the secondary level:

- The main focus of these lessons is continuing learning while at home. Teachers will provide feedback on the work being completed; it will be graded on a Pass/Incomplete basis.
- The lessons for each content area are intended to take 40 minutes two times a week.
- The lessons do not have to be done on a specific day or time. While students should follow the lessons for each content area in order, they can work on different content areas in the order that best suits them.
- Packets will be available at the school at designated times for anyone without online access. Please contact your school to make an appointment for a pickup time.

Students can submit their assignments via the platform their teachers use or by email. Although teachers will introduce new content and assignments for students to complete, it is important to remember that the work students complete and the feedback teachers provide during this time is not meant to replace the day-to-day instruction that students would have received at school.

Our goal is to maintain key aspects of the classroom experience: engaging with content, collaborating with peers, receiving support from staff, and moving forward in the learning process through assignments and feedback. The learning experiences are meant to maintain a continuity of learning; facilitate and track progress; and encourage students to challenge themselves and grow in their knowledge. The scheduled office hours are an important time to connect with teachers, engage in additional learning, and receive support as needed.

Grading and Reporting Framework

Third Marking Period Grades
Grades for the third marking period will be reported using the traditional grading system. CCPS is currently exploring options for the delivery of the 3rd marking period report cards. More information will be provided soon.

Fourth Marking Period Grades
Over the past several weeks, CCPS has explored grading and reporting options for the 4th marking period. This is a complex decision that requires thoughtful planning and collaboration. The work has included reviewing the approaches of other public school districts and soliciting feedback from various stakeholders. We have determined that a traditional grading system based on percentages and letter grades will not serve the best interests of all students during this period of online learning. We want to ensure that our grading system has a positive impact and can only help our students' academic standing.

As is the case with any grading policy, there is no perfect grading system, which is amplified even more now during a very stressful time for families. However, we believe the following strategies will let us know if students are learning, without penalizing them for the impact the pandemic may be having on their families. We are currently working with stakeholders to ensure a smooth transition to this system and ensure that teachers and students understand the criteria for success. We understand that there will be many questions about implications of this grading approach, and those questions will be answered as we continue to move forward.

Letter grades will not be assigned for the 4th marking period. A reporting system using "Pass/Incomplete" is being developed. We believe that this grading approach will ensure fairness and equity for all students while also engaging students in the curriculum, providing meaningful feedback, and tracking their progress.

Elementary Students
The emphasis will be on engaging students in learning experiences and connecting with and engaging as many students as possible. To ensure students are progressing and meeting learning objectives, we will:

- Provide students with the opportunity to engage in a variety of learning experiences.
- Provide constructive feedback to students and their parents/guardians.
- Provide teachers with information so that when students return to school, they will know which skills to work on, and how to engage them in learning at the next grade level.
- Here is the latest Modified Grading Regulation for Elementary.

Secondary Students:
We believe that traditional grading practices will not best serve all students and a more universal approach is needed. More information about implementation of this system, including how the final semester grade will be reported on transcripts, will be provided in the coming weeks. Here is the latest Modified Grading Regulation for Secondary Schools. A grading calculator has been created to help students/parents/teachers understand how the Modified Grading Regulation will affect the final grade for a course.
- Grading calculator (Excel)
- Grading calculator (Google Sheets)

Student Attendance and Accountability

Although daily student attendance will not be taken in traditional ways, teachers and school administrators will monitor student engagement and participation. This will be tracked in a number of ways, including:

- Assignment completion
- Students attending live sessions or virtual "office hours"
- Email or phone calls with students/parents/guardians
- Requests for paper packets for students who do not have the ability to engage online

We want to stress that student engagement and participation in remote learning is critical. If your child(ren) is having trouble engaging in online learning, please contact their counselor or a school administrator as soon as possible. You can also submit a question or concern here.

CCPS Support Request Form

The Office of Student Services has developed a form for students and families to request additional support or resources for topics such as Academic Support, College/Career Guidance, Personal/Social Support, Mental Health Resources, Family Support Resources, Community Resource Support. The form can be located HERE or on www.ccps.org.

Online Safety

In an effort to safeguard our students while they are using the internet at home and working on school work through their CCPS accounts, we have begun to implement the Bark for Schools (https://www.bark.us/) internet filtering and account monitoring. There is no substitute for parent involvement, but in these unprecedented times, we believe it is important to support families by providing an additional layer of protection. Bark for Schools allows us to protect our students from inappropriate internet content and monitors student activity in their GMail and GDrive to ensure they are safe and appropriate online.

When students log in, they will see a new extension that looks like a little dog. That means the Bark extension is active. Bark only works on a CCPS account and does not impact personal non-CCPS accounts. If your child uses your computer at home, be sure they set up a separate profile in Chrome so Bark can protect him/her. Watch this video to see how: https://vimeo.com/276250403/d37a0673e4

Resources

Elementary Lessons Template

Middle School Lessons Template

High School Lessons Template

Online Resources

Modified Grading Regulations – Secondary

Modified Grading Regulations – Elementary

Central Office Roles

Education Leadership Team
- Develop and communicate plans for continuity of learning with all stakeholders
- Monitor continuity of learning initiatives and communicate with local school administration

Content Coordinators
- Create new learning opportunities and a lesson template for content delivery in 2-week intervals
- Provide training to support teachers with distance learning platforms
- Provide curricula resources for teachers
- Support school leadership teams and teachers with the planning and implementation of continuity of learning process
- Establish office hours to support teachers

School-Based Roles and Responsibilities to Support Continuity of Learning

School Leadership Team
- Communicate with families throughout this period
- Communicate plans for continuity of learning with staff
- Support and monitor Continuity of Learning Plan
- Participate in professional development of Distance Learning Platforms to support their staff
- Copy and make lessons available to students who do not have online access

Content/Classroom Teachers
- Participate in professional development to support delivery of instruction through online platforms
- Under the direction of content coordinators, teachers are to provide support to students with the lessons and activities that content coordinators have created for the 2-week time block
- Monitor student progress and provide feedback
- Respond to student and parent communication through online platforms in a timely fashion
- **Guidelines for Teachers**

English Language Learners
- First priority of EL teachers will be to ensure their students have access to materials and/or technology
- Next priority is to reach out to teachers who have EL students to provide support and assist with modifying work and delivering instruction

High School AP Teachers
In addition to items listed for content/classroom teachers
- Deliver instruction that supports review of content that will be on the AP tests
- Support students in preparing for the online version of the test

Instructional Coaches
- Work with content coordinators to support teachers
- Work with content coordinators to continue to populate lesson plans, resources, and instructional materials
- Provide training for teachers in online platforms to support instruction

Media Specialists
- Support Instructional Coordinators in accessing resources
- Provide teacher support with online platforms and Google

School Counselors
- School counselors will contact students on their caseload during the week of March 30 to identify students who require specific support
- Develop plans that respond to specific student needs
- Schedule phone calls/Blackboard Collaborate meetings with families that need specialized support
- Continue to accomplish your regular duties for this time of year to the best of your ability
- As much as possible, high school counselors should work with students to complete scheduling

Special Education Case Managers
- Special educators should contact the students on their caseload during the first week to communicate the learning plan and how they will support the students' access to general education content

Special Education Related Service Providers
- To be determined

Student Services Resource Teachers
- Support families in transition (homeless)
- Provide contact support for students on home and hospital instruction
- Provide support to counselors

Paraprofessionals
- Will participate in Maryland Mental Health Modules and Trauma training to better support students once they return from the school closure.

<div style="background-color:#92d050; text-align:center;">

Student and Parent Roles and Responsibilities to Support Continuity of Learning

</div>

Students Support Their Own Learning
- Dedicate appropriate time to learning, comparable to the school day, or as guided by your teachers.
- Check online platforms for information and assignments daily. Most lessons will be asynchronous, meaning you are not in real time with your teacher.
- Attend as much as possible synchronous (real time) engagements offered by your teachers.
- Identify a comfortable and quiet place to study/learn.
- Submit all assignments in accordance with the directions provided by the teacher.
- Engage in all learning with academic honesty.
- Ensure your own social and emotional well-being by engaging in time for reflection, physical activity, conversation, and play. Make sure you practice appropriate social distancing when around others.

Parents Support the Learning of their Students

● Provide an environment conducive to learning (access to technology; safe and quiet space during daytime)
● Engage in conversations on posted material and assignments.
● Monitor time spent in online and offline learning.
● Encourage attendance in synchronous engagements offered by your child's teachers.
● Support emotional balance by providing ample room and time for reflection, physical activity, conversation, and play.

CECIL COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Dr. Jeffrey A. Lawson, Superintendent

Mr. William H. Malesh, Board of Education President
Ms. Diana B. Hawley, Board of Education Vice President
Mr. James K. Fazzino, Board Member
Ms. Christie L. Stephens, Board Member
Miss Kelsey M. Meis, Student Member of the Board

March 26, 2020

Updated May 8, 2020