



Prince George County Public Schools

A Commitment To Quality Education

March 25, 2020

Dear Prince George Families, Faculty, and Staff:

With the extended closure of schools through the end of the 2019-20 school year, division and school staff have been working to develop plans to ensure that students receive instruction that will prepare them for the next steps in their future academic pursuits and/or entry into the workforce. The plans we have developed are in alignment with guidance from the Virginia Department of Education, and there are a few areas where we are awaiting additional information. However, we wanted to send you the plans we have as of now so you can begin planning for the next several weeks.

It is important for all students and families to know that our buildings are closed but our schools are still in session. Our teachers and instructional staff will be creating and providing new content – content that was not covered prior to March 13th – and we will be working to ensure all students have the supports they need to successfully complete assignments.

Please find plans below that are specific to the grade level and course enrollment of students.

Seniors (Class of 2020)

We know the closure of schools is very disappointing to our seniors and their families. The staff of PGHS, PGEC, and the entire PGCPs' family understand and share that disappointment. While the information below is focused on instructional requirements, please know that we will continue to plan for ways to celebrate **together** the Class of 2020. We have not given up on a graduation ceremony, we just do not know if bans for large gatherings will be lifted by June. We also have a team looking at ways to celebrate other milestones for our seniors – even if we have to celebrate digitally. More information will be provided as details are finalized.

Prince George County seniors will be required to finish currently enrolled courses to meet graduation requirements. Staff will be reviewing the academic history of each of our students. Seniors will be contacted by a staff member from PGHS or PGEC and will be advised if they need to finish course content only or if they need a waiver for one or more graduation requirements, as identified by the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE).

The following graduation requirements that may be waived based on authority granted to the Superintendent of Public Instruction include:

- Students currently enrolled in a course for which they need a standard or verified credit in order to graduate;
- Students who have successfully completed a course required for graduation, but have not earned the associated verified credit;
- Students who have not completed the student-selected test;
- Students who are currently enrolled in or have previously completed a course leading to a CTE credential necessary for a Standard Diploma but have not yet earned the credential;
- Students who have not completed a United States and Virginia history course*;
- Students who have not completed a fine or performing arts or career and technical education course*;
- Students in the second of sequential courses*;
- Students who have not completed an economics and personal finance course*.

*Some credit-based graduation requirements are still provided for in the *Code of Virginia*. While these cannot be waived outright, these can be addressed by providing new instruction and pursuing alternate pathways to the 140-clock-hour requirement based on revised Board of Education guidelines. These revised guidelines will be provided to school divisions in the coming days.

The following graduation requirements will require action by the General Assembly in order to be waived:

- Students who have not completed training in emergency first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, and the use of automated external defibrillators, including hands-on practice of the skills necessary to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation; and
- Students who have not completed a virtual course.

Students enrolled in cosmetology or master barber courses will be eligible to take the licensure examination if their instructor submits a Training Verification form certifying the student completed the VDOE-required training, regardless of the hour amount.

For students who require additional assistance to meet non-waived graduation requirements, we will work to develop an academic plan to help those students graduate.

Dual Enrollment

Dual Enrollment is a partnership between the school division and local community colleges. We are participating in planning meetings with the community colleges and will share additional information as soon as it is available.

Students Enrolled in High School Credit-Bearing Courses Graduating in 2021 or After

In order for our school division to award a standard credit for high school credit-bearing courses, we must ensure that students have completed a majority of required standards that are essential for success in subsequent coursework. This process must be based on revised guidelines provided by the Board of Education (to be provided by the VDOE soon) on the alternatives to the 140-clock-hour requirement.

PGCPS' teachers and staff will be identifying content that had not been taught prior to the closure on March 13th and will develop learning modules to focus on content essential to success in future courses. These learning modules will be delivered virtually, through electronic assignments and through paper packets that will be submitted to teachers digitally.

For students with disabilities and English Learners, additional supports will be provided by school staff members in an effort to meet instructional needs and continue student growth.

For students taking high school credit-bearing courses, PGCPS has ordered additional Chromebooks and internet hot spots to provide access for students without computers and/or internet. Additionally, wi-fi access will open to students in the PGHS and NB Clements parking lots by Friday, March 27th. The application process for this digital equipment will be provided to families in the next several days.

Once students successfully complete their current high school credit-bearing courses, they will receive locally awarded verified credits and will not be required to take the related end-of-course Standards of Learning (SOL) test. This waiver is only available for the 2019-20 school year.

Pre-Kindergarten Through Eighth Grade Students in Non-Credit-Bearing Courses

According to the Virginia Department of Education, for students in grades Pre-Kindergarten to eighth grade, school divisions must ensure that students are equitably prepared for success in future courses/grade levels.

As a school division, we will focus our efforts on:

- identifying the specific content in core content areas – language arts (reading, writing), math, science and social studies – that had not been taught as of March 13th;
- developing an equitable plan to incorporate the missing content in core content areas into the learning materials for all students.

We also have been directed by VDOE to provide instruction addressing missing content in non-core content areas (art, music, P.E.) as much as possible.

Our schools will be identifying content that had not been taught prior to the closure on March 13th and will develop learning modules to focus on the content essential to success in future classes. These learning modules will be delivered virtually, through electronic assignments and through paper packets that are submitted digitally.

For students with disabilities and English learners, additional supports will be provided by school staff members in an effort to meet instructional needs and continue student growth.

Grading and Grade Point Average Calculations

PGCPS is currently reviewing Virginia Department of Education guidance regarding grading and grade point average calculations and will make a local decision soon that is in the best interest of our students and that provides the best opportunity for our students to be successful in subsequent grade levels and courses.

We still have a great deal of work to complete as we begin to provide students with updated coursework and requirements. I can assure you that our instructional leaders, teachers, and staff will be working diligently to develop materials and then distribute them to students.

We will continue to communicate with families via our telephone notification system, email, social media, and division and school websites. With the exception of Spring Break, teachers will maintain office hours through the end of the school year and will be available to students and families to provide instructional support and answer questions.

We all wish we were back in school and that our country was not facing this health crisis. As we adjust to our new normal, we are doing the best that we can to keep our spirits up and to keep our students moving forward in their academic careers. We greatly appreciate our students, our families, our faculty, and our staff... and everything each of you is doing to embrace today and help everyone look forward to a brighter future. We are all in this together.

Thank you, and please look for additional information soon from your child's school, teachers, and me.

Please stay safe and take care of each other.

Lisa Pennycuff, Ed.D.
Superintendent