

March 13, 2020

How to Support Distance Learning

Powhatan County Public Schools intends to provide continuous teaching and learning during this extended school closure. This plan was developed in collaboration with other school divisions. Our goal is to maintain student engagement with the content while providing review and enrichment. We intend to maintain the instructional experience as much as possible for the completion of coursework within the normal school calendar.

In order to do this, we are creating lessons and activities that students can use in a distance learning model. Initial lessons will be ready for students as early as today, with additional communication throughout the next two weeks, as needed. You may receive school-specific information in the coming days.

During the school closure, students will receive online materials and/or a packet of activities that they will be expected to complete. Please review this work with your child and help support him/her as they work on these assignments. In order to resume with regular instruction, students are expected to bring their finished work to school upon their return to be assessed.

In an effort to support students and families while learning at home, we have outlined a plan below.

Elementary - Students in grades pre-kindergarten through 5th grade

- Activity packets are being sent home with students and are also [available online](#). These packets include a variety of assignments highlighted below:
 - Performance Tasks
 - Core Content Choice Board of Activities
 - Math Connections
 - Reading Connections
 - CLEVER Connections (optional online at home access)
- Teachers may also provide additional activities as needed.
- Parents/Guardians of students in grades 2-5 will have the opportunity to check out Chromebooks on March 16th and 17th from 8:00 a.m.- 4:00 p.m. to support at-home learning.

Secondary - Students in grades 6-12

Teacher-assigned online activities [using Schoology](#) will be developed to allow students to maintain pacing toward course completion. Paper copies will be available in the main office on Tuesday, March 17, after 12:00 p.m.

Division and School Support During Distance Learning

- Paper copies of materials will be available at school as needed.
- Internet access will be made available at PCPS schools for those families who may need it. A schedule will be distributed.

Teacher and Staff Support During Distance Learning

- Teachers will set clear expectations for materials to be completed during distance learning.
- Teachers will establish guidelines for parents and students to access teachers via email, phone, or digital platforms.
- Teachers will continue to check school email and Seesaw/Schoology messages to respond to inquiries in a timely manner.
- Teachers will exercise flexibility regarding work submission, assessment, and grading of students with the goal of completing coursework within the normal school calendar.
- When appropriate, teachers will differentiate assignments. If your child has special requirements or receives special education through an individualized educational plan (IEP), every effort will be made to adjust instruction appropriately.

Recommended Family Support During Distance Learning

- Setting a daily structured schedule with your student for completion of assignments is highly recommended. Add in breaks between tasks. Schedule suggestions:
 - Elementary students can work in 20-30 minute blocks. Secondary students can work 40-60 minute blocks.
 - Students should spend approximately 2-3 hours per day completing activities in addition to independent reading.
- Create a learning space for students to work in that is free from as many distractions as possible.
- Review activity expectations and help him or her set goals to stay on track for the day. Posting these goals as a checklist will allow for timely completion of activities.
- Completion of activities will allow teachers to assess student progress toward learning objectives.
- Ask students questions about the topics or activities they completed.
- Parents and students should continue to reach out to teachers and/or case managers with any questions or concerns.
- [Parent Resource Tips](#) with more details to support students during distance learning.

Student Responsibilities During Distance Learning

- Students will participate in instruction during this closure via these alternative assignments. These assignments are required.
- Students will need to spend time daily engaged in the lessons that have been provided by their teachers. (Suggested Times: 2-3 hours per day)
- Secondary students will need to check the Schoology calendar, course updates, and Schoology messages daily.
- Students are encouraged, with parent support if needed, to reach out to teachers for help.

Talking with Your Children About the Coronavirus:

Children may experience anxiety or confusion when hearing reports about this health issue. It is important to provide them with accurate information that is developmentally appropriate. Here are some resources to consider when talking with your child:

- Child Mind Institute - [Talking to Kids About the Coronavirus](#)
- National Association of School Psychologists - [Talking to Children About COVID-19 \(Coronavirus\) A Parent Resource](#)