



## **Remote Learning Frequently Asked Questions**

### **What is remote learning?**

- By remote learning, we mean that students and teachers will not be in the same place as schools will remain closed and our primary method of providing learning opportunities for students will be online. Paper packets of work will be provided, upon request, to students who are unable to access online learning.
- Remote learning will begin on March 30, 2020 and continue until further direction is provided to the district by the Governor's office.

### **How will remote learning impact the school calendar and end of year?**

- Each day of remote learning counts as a full instructional day.
- April 9 and 13 will be converted from vacation days to student remote learning days in order to make up some of the instructional time/days lost.
- The third marking period will end on Thursday, April 9, 2020.
- The fourth marking period will begin on Monday, April 13, 2020.
- The determination on extending the school year will be communicated once we know the length of the school closure.

### **How is attendance taken on remote learning days?**

- There will be an online form students/guardian must submit each day to account for daily attendance. Students must submit this form no later than 6:00 p.m. every school day. The link to the form is: <https://forms.gle/FaX3mJZVtQMjsVPu9>
- If you are unable to complete the online form, please text or email your student's name(s), grade(s) and building(s) to [attendance@westasd.org](mailto:attendance@westasd.org)
- A child who does not complete the online attendance form will be marked absent for the day.

### **How can I contact my child's teachers?**

- All teachers and professional staff members will be available via email each school day Monday – Friday from 8:00 am-3:00 pm to support students. This includes related arts teachers, elective teachers, special education teachers, reading specialists, school counselors, nurses, and speech therapists. If you send an email after 3:00 pm, please anticipate a response on the next remote learning day.

### **What will be expected of my child each day?**

- Elementary students will follow a Learning Plan template and complete daily assignments in the four core subject areas of English Language Arts, math, science and social studies. In addition, they will select one activity to complete per day from the related arts menu.
- Middle School and High School students are expected to log on to Skyward to access their assignment information. Students will receive a Weekly Learning Plan for each individual course represented on their schedule. Students are expected to complete all assignments by 9:30 am on the following Monday unless otherwise noted by the teacher.

**How will assignments be communicated?**

- Assignments will be posted by 8:30 am on Monday each week starting on March 30, 2020.
- Teachers in grades 6-12 will post Weekly Learning Plans in Skyward and teachers in K-5 will use Skyward or other established communication methods for your child's classroom.

**When and how are assignments due?**

- Each week's assignments should be submitted to the teacher upon completion and are due no later than the following Monday by 9:30 am unless otherwise noted by the teacher.
- Guidelines for how to submit assignments will be communicated in each teacher's Learning Plan. Possible examples may include submission by email, uploading to Google classrooms, sending photos, and maintaining logs.

**What should I expect in terms of quantity of assignments per day?**

- Students will receive assignments for each course that is part of their academic schedule.
- The recommended time ranges for students to work on assignments each day are as follows:
  - Elementary School: 2.5-3 hours per day total
  - Middle School: 25-35 minutes per day/per course
  - High School: 30-40 minutes per day/per course

**How will remote learning impact student grades?**

- The first three days of instruction will be used as an adjustment to the remote learning format. Starting April 2 assignments will be generously graded and make-up work may be submitted to improve student grades for the third marking period, which will end on Thursday, April 9, 2020.
- Every effort will be made to advantage students in completing and grading of assignments and work tied to the third marking period. These are extraordinary times and our students deserve extraordinary support in ensuring their third marking period grades accurately reflect their learning efforts.
- The fourth marking period will begin on Monday, April 13, 2020. Grading procedures for the fourth marking period will be determined based on the length of the school closure. If school resumes, typical grading procedures will apply. If the school closure is extended, grading procedures will be determined in conjunction with teachers at each grade level.
- Please be mindful that a remote learning environment may require a different approach. The intent of remote learning is **not** to see how much we can assign to students, but rather how meaningful assignments can be to meet learning objectives of the course/grade level.

**How will student learning being assessed?**

- The purpose of assessment is to gather information about student learning. Teachers will continue to administer assessments during the remote learning period.
- Efforts should be made to allow students to take exams independently to produce an accurate reflection of each student's ability.

**If my child is struggling and I cannot provide support, what should I do?**

- If your child is struggling and you are unable to provide support, please contact your child's teacher to arrange support. We do not want students working to the point of frustration and your child's teacher will be available to work with your child remotely.

**What happens if a student does not complete remote learning assignments?**

- Students are expected to be on pace with their courses and assignments. Students may lose full or partial credit for assignments that are not completed. This loss of points could negatively impact a student's grade, which may be reflected on a student's report card.
- It would be in the best interest of the student to complete all assignments each week.
- Families experiencing extenuating circumstances that prevent a student from completing assignments should contact the teacher by email.
- Every effort will be made by West Allegheny staff to support students in having a successful remote learning experience from home.

**What if we need technical support?**

- In many cases, technology questions can be addressed by your child's teacher.
- The West Allegheny Technology Department is available at [wahelpdesk@westasd.org](mailto:wahelpdesk@westasd.org) to support program password retrieval or additional technology issues. When sending an email, please include a call back number.

**How can my child access a counselor on a remote learning day?**

- Counselors will be available during the school day, 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. via email for support. They will continue with any appointments previously made.
- The counselors will contact those students who are scheduled to meet with them via email to establish the best method of communication.
- They will also provide all students recommended learning opportunities that will satisfy Career Education and Work standard requirements.
- Counselors will also be responsible for monitoring your child's attendance. Please make certain s/he completes the daily attendance form.

**Will the school nurse be available on remote learning days?**

- Yes, school nurses will be available by email Monday-Friday from 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. When you email them, please leave a call back number.

**Will my child be required to take state assessments this school year?**

- No, the Pennsylvania Department of Education has cancelled statewide assessments for the 2019-2020 school year. Cancelled assessments include the PSSA, PASA, and Keystone Exams.
- In addition, standardized testing for students in Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs for the school year have been cancelled. This includes the National Occupational Competency Testing Institute (NOCTI) exam.

**Will my child be required to take Advanced Placement exams this year?**

- Yes, as of March 20, College Board has released preliminary information regarding at-home, online, 45-minute free response exams. College Board expects to release specific exam dates by April 3.
- The district will continue to pay for all AP exams.
- Students will be able to take these streamlined exams on any device they have access to: computer, tablet, or smartphone. Students will also be able to submit photos of handwritten work as an option.
- College Board has also eliminated presentations related to AP Research and Seminar as well as extending digital portfolio due dates for AP Art and Design: Drawing, AP Computer Science Principles, AP Research, and AP Seminar to May 26 at 11:59 p.m.

- AP teachers will contact students to set check points appropriate for each course and provide course assignments to support success on the AP exam.
- Students with approved SSD testing accommodations such as extended time will be able to use them on exams. Details will be shared closer to the exams.
- For additional information, visit the most current update from College Board at <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/about-ap/news-changes/coronavirus-update>

#### **How will remote learning impact Early College in High School programming?**

- We are pleased to share that even with the disruption caused by the school closure, students enrolled in CCAC courses as part of the Early College in High School Academy will continue to receive college credit so long as assignments provided are completed and submitted.
- According to the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education, 1 credit hour is equivalent to 700 minutes of instruction plus the time needed for a final exam. We have one course where students earn 9 credit hours for the course. For this course, our students must receive 6,300 minutes of instruction (plus the time needed for a final exam which is estimated to be approximately one class period). We had built into the school year 171 days for this course, which is 7182 minutes of instruction. This gave us a buffer of 837 minutes or 20 days. For all of our other courses, students earn between 3 and 7 credits, which allows for an even greater buffer.

#### **What if my child attends Parkway West Career and Technical Center?**

- Parkway West CTC will launch remote learning on March 30, 2020. They will be in communication with all students via the Schoology Learning Management System.
- Students will be provided appropriate work for their program and timelines and expectations will vary based on assignment and students working at their own pace to demonstrate competency.
- For programs with specific hour requirements, questions about meeting the requirements should be directed to your child's instructor and/or Parkway West CTC.
- Students can expect further information from Parkway West CTC directly.

#### **My child has a 504 or an IEP, will assignments be modified appropriately?**

- Students receiving special education services will continue to receive services with their case manager or school counselor communicating with students consistently during the remote learning period to provide support.
- Assignments will be designed for students receiving 504 or special education services utilizing their program modifications, specially designed instruction and supplementary aids and services identified in their plans to the greatest extent possible.
- A child's case manager or school counselor will be communicating with students consistently during the remote learning period to provide support.
- Upon return from an extended period of remote learning, teachers of students receiving special education services will meet with their students to review work submitted and check for progress toward their IEP goals. IEP teams will be convened once school resumes to review student IEPs and revise as necessary.
- Any related services (Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Speech, etc.) that are interrupted by an extended school closure period may be rescheduled upon school resuming according to the frequency requirements of their plans.

**If my child receives Life Skills and/or Autistic Support services, what should I expect?**

- Your child's life skills/autistic support teacher will contact you to create a home routine as well as to discuss expectations based upon your child's individual needs. Your child's teacher will collaborate with the teachers who are on your child's team in an effort to appropriately develop and distribute lessons and assignments that are closely aligned to your child's IEP goals and objectives.

**If my child receives speech and language services, what should I expect?**

- Your child's speech and language therapist will contact you to review your child's speech and language goals and to determine a plan for remote implementation that may include virtual sessions, phone calls and student practice sessions.

**If my child receives gifted services, what should I expect?**

- Your child's gifted education teacher will contact you to review your child's GIEP goals and to discuss and determine focus areas for enrichment that will be provided during the school closure.

**If my child receives English as a Second Language services, what should I expect?**

- Your child's ESL teacher will contact you to discuss activities and options to support your child during the school closure. Your child's ESL teacher will collaborate with your child's team to determine appropriate ESL programming.

**Will my child continue to receive school-based therapy?**

- If your child received services from a Family Link therapist, these sessions will continue. Students who were participating in brick and mortar sessions with the therapists will have opportunities for virtual therapy. Family Links therapists will contact families to facilitate the continuity of such services.

**How will my grade 4-8 grade child continue band lessons?**

- Parents with children in band will be contacted by the instructors to establish the method that will be used for lessons and suggested practice during the school closure.
- Band instruments will **not** be required to complete any of Mr. Fox's or Mr. Groba's remote learning activities.
- If your child left his/her instrument at school, and they wish to practice at home during this time, please email your child's principal to arrange pick-up.

**How does this affect my child if they are enrolled in a West Allegheny Virtual Academy (WAVA) or West Allegheny Learning Center (WALC) course?**

- The remote learning plan does not change how WAVA/WALC courses are accessed by students.
- WAVA teachers can be contacted via school email on school days between 8:00 am and 3:00 pm.
- The start and end dates of marking periods will follow the school district's established dates.

**Please email your child's teacher or school principal with any additional questions.**