Frequently Asked Questions

**Can my child and I still communicate with my child’s teacher?**

Absolutely. We highly encourage our teachers to stay connected with their students to ensure the special relationships they share are maintained during the closure. Teachers will continue to:

* encourage student use of the Learning Guides and promote their availability online and at School District meal distribution sites
* post/share additional online learning resources with students and families that are self-guided
* be available via email, phone, or other platforms (Google classroom, Infinite Campus, Class Dojo) to voluntarily answer student and family questions and support their learning
* ensure students have access to the Student Portal, Google Classroom, email, and selected online programs, interventions and curriculum supplements

**How will the District provide educational support for students while schools are closed?**

We cannot replace the personalized instruction that our teachers offer in the classroom. Teaching is an art and a science. It takes years of college study, mentoring, collegiality, and professional development to perfect instructional practice. While in-classroom instruction cannot be replaced, we are fully committed to ensuring every student has an opportunity to engage in learning while schools are closed.

The District is currently making decisions and planning based on guidance from the state and federal governments.  That guidance sometimes changes from day to day. Based on the most recent guidance of the Pennsylvania Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Education, the District is not providing mandatory, formal, graded instruction due to equity and technology considerations. Our students have differing levels of instructional needs, access to the internet and technology, and family responsibilities while schools are closed. This guidance could certainly change as the COVID-19 situation evolves.

However, the School District is still providing optional educational supports for all students while schools are closed. We are focused on trying to provide educational support that as many families and children can access and benefit from as possible. Right now, we have made math, English Language Arts, science and social studies [Learning Guides](https://www.philasd.org/curriculum/home/supplemental-resources/) (LGs) available for every grade level. The guides are aligned to areas that were already taught to students during this school year, and parents and students can select the ones that work best for them. In addition, on April 20, the District will launch a Digital Learning Plan for all students which will provide a free Chromebook for every K-12 student who needs one for learning at home and digital learning resources to help students retain, learn and apply skills and strategies with the support of a teacher.

Students may also sign in or create accounts to use Khan Academy, Naviance, and other resources, such as:

SAT: <https://www.collegeboard.org/>  
AP: <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/about-ap/news-changes/coronavirus-update>

**What is the District’s Digital Learning Plan?**

While there is a lot that still needs to be finalized, the Digital Learning Plan includes:

* a free loaner Chromebook for every K-12 student who needs one for learning at home
* free or low cost internet to families that need it (details are in the works, but families can visit  [www.xfinity.com/wifi](http://www.xfinity.com/wifi) for a current list of free WiFi hotspots)
* digital learning resources to help students retain, learn and apply skills and strategies with the support of a teacher
* free online tutorials for families for platforms such as Google Classroom
* professional development for teachers who will be using digital learning tools to provide review, enrichment activities and planned instruction for students until schools reopen

**\*\*\*The Digital Learning Plan for Bodine will be communicate to families as soon as the details are finalized.** **Check the BODINE website for further updates as they become available.**

**What are the options for internet access?**

In addition to providing Chromebooks, the District continues to work with the City to create a comprehensive list of low-cost Internet options or access to free WiFi mobile hotspots across the City. The list will be available on this page and the City of Philadelphia’s website soon.

For those families who reside in areas of the city where Xfinity WiFi is available, Comcast is making Xfinity WiFi free for everyone – including non-Xfinity Internet subscribers. For a map of Xfinity WiFi hotspots, visit [www.xfinity.com/wifi](http://www.xfinity.com/wifi).

**Will the School District be required to make up missed days as a result of the closure?**

No. The Pennsylvania Department of Education has decided it will not penalize districts that do not meet the required minimum number of instructional days or hours this school year due to COVID-19 response efforts. As the situation evolves, we will share any updates we have on what our calendar will look like for the remainder of the year.

**Will graduations and proms take place?**

We realize importance of milestone ceremonies for students & families. So far, there is no formal decision on graduation ceremonies or proms. We are working closely with the Philadelphia Department of Public Health to continually monitor the COVID-19 situation and determine any additional steps we should take as graduation time draws closer. In the meantime, we are actively looking at what other districts and universities that have cancelled graduations are doing to support graduating students and their families, and exploring options in the event cancellation becomes necessary for our School District.

**What supports can we expect from our school and our teachers in order to stay on track academically? How can parents get a view into what their children are supposed to be doing?**

No remote learning plan can replace the quality of teaching and learning that occurs in a classroom. As we transition to a remote learning plan for the weeks of April 20 and April 27, our teachers will be guided by learning plans with an overview for each grade as well as specific content expectations for new learning. These learning plans will be posted on the District’s website. Some paper copies of the learning guides will continue to be available but we expect that most student learning will occur online at this time. The learning plans will extend through the school closure period as needed.

**How is the District grading the 3rd marking period?**

We are shifting from 4 marking periods to 3, with the 3rd period open through the end of the School Year. This will provide students with provide students with more time to gain the content, skills and credit they may have otherwise received in a traditional school year. More detailed information about grading will be shared after Spring Break.

**Will the SAT and ACT test that were scheduled for spring 2020 still occur?**

No. SAT and ACT test dates and makeup exam dates are changing rapidly, so be sure to visit <https://pages.collegeboard.org/natural-disasters> and <https://www.act.org/> to find the latest information.

**Will PSSA tests and Keystone exams that were scheduled for the spring 2020 still occur?**

No. On March 19, 2020, the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) cancelled all PSSA, Keystone and Pennsylvania Alternate System of Assessment (PASA) testing for this school year as a result of COVID-19. You can find the latest information about the effects of cancelling testing on accounting and school reporting at [www.education.pa.gov](http://www.education.pa.gov).

**What if I have additional questions about the Learning Guides or the closure overall?**

Hotlines in multiple languages operate Monday through Thursday mornings from 9:30AM – 11:30AM  to answer general questions in the native languages of many of our families.

* 215-400-5300 – English
* 215-400-8489 – Spanish
* 215-400-8480 – Albanian
* 215-400-8481 – Arabic
* 215-400-8482 – Chinese
* 215-400-8483 – French
* 215-400-8484 – Khmer
* 215-400-8474 – Portuguese
* 215-400-8485 – Russian
* 215-400-8486 – Vietnamese

You can also email your questions to [covid19info@philasd.org](mailto:covid19info@philasd.org).