



OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

Friday, April 3, 2020

Dear YCSD Families and Staff,

Over the last three weeks we have received many questions, comments and suggestions regarding the division’s Continuity of Learning plans during school closings. As we head into our designated spring break for the 2019-20 school calendar, I wanted to clarify a few points for our families and staff.

The division’s Continuity of Learning plan includes three phases and is based on evolving guidance and requirements from the Virginia Department of Education, the U.S. Department of Education, and the Office of Civil Rights. In fact, just this week a state-level Continuity of Learning Taskforce developed recommendations for schools for the remainder of the school year. In order to honor the work of this taskforce and make sure our strategies align, we are waiting for that guidance before sharing the details of the final phase of our plan.

One of the most critical factors already required is that divisions must provide equitable services when implementing distance learning for all students. Recognizing that many of our families do not have devices and/or internet access, and that the devices families do have may be needed for parents working from home, the adoption of a 100% online learning platform would not be equitable. Additionally, self-directed learning is not appropriate for all students. We also recognize the stress many of our families are under at this time, and we believe it would not be reasonable to expect our students, staff and families to try to replicate the classroom experience nor is this being advised by the VDOE.

Below is a brief overview of the three phases of the YCSD Continuity of Learning plan, which we continue to build and implement using the daily guidance from state and national agencies:

Phase 1: (March 16-27) Teachers launched Continuity of Learning plans that provided review work, assignments and activities based on previously taught content.

Phase 2: (March 30-April 10) Teachers are providing students with opportunities and activities to improve third quarter grades (work is due by April 8). Quarter 3 report cards will be finalized and posted on Aspen on April 17. A hard copy of the report card will be mailed home upon a request to the student’s school.

Phase 3: (Begins April 13) Student learning plans will look different during this phase and will vary by grade level and course enrollment. Our team has been developing these new learning plans over the last few weeks as the state task force has also been developing further guidance.

After spring break, the division will be providing teachers and staff with additional professional development to support students through both digital and non-digital remote learning experiences. Therefore, assignments and activities for the week after spring break will also be based on previously taught content and will be made available through a variety of methods beginning Monday, April 13. We will provide information on learning plans for the week of April 20 and beyond after spring break.

I also want to share that division staff are working closely with the College of William & Mary to identify alternate dates for commencement ceremonies for our 2020 graduates if we cannot hold graduation as scheduled. If the

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Mark J. Shafer
District 1

Brett Higginbotham
District 2

Laurel M. Garrelts
District 3

James E. Richardson
District 4

Sean P. Myatt
District 5

Kaplan Arena is not available later in the summer, we will explore other options for celebrating this important milestone in our students' lives.

As we have also received questions as to whether restoration work on the Grafton Complex has been affected by COVID-19, I am pleased to share that we remain on schedule with both the cleaning and electrical repairs. Unfortunately, while we were prepared to begin returning student belongings from the Complex, collection of student possessions from the Complex and other schools is on hold due to the Stay at Home measures in place. As soon as we are safely able to allow collection of these items, we will.

In closing, I cannot begin to express my appreciation for the continued support our YCSD families have shown through the Grafton fire and the school closings. To say these have been the most challenging times I have faced as a school leader would be an understatement, but I continue to be inspired by the grace, enthusiasm and innovation I see our teachers and staff demonstrating as they continue supporting students and families. I am proud to live and work in this generous and caring community of York County.

Please stay safe and remember do what is best for you and your family.

Sincerely,



Victor Shandor, Ed.D.
Division Superintendent

