



**WASHINGTON
TOWNSHIP**
SCHOOL DISTRICT

**Frequently Asked Questions and Answers
About Instruction and Wellness
March 24, 2020**

Please be advised that this is subject to change as needed

1. How long should we anticipate our District being closed?

Based on information shared and communicated by local, state and government officials, there is the District will be closed longer than first anticipated. The District will be closed until April 20, 2020. Home instruction will continue until April 9, 2020. April 10th – 19th the District will be closed (no home instruction programs or assignments) for Spring Break. Breakfast / lunches will not be available to families during Spring Break.

2. What are student/staff expectations should the District be closed beyond the Spring Recess?

Students are expected to partner with staff should they have any difficulty with assignments. Staff will continue to develop, create and deliver lessons and assessments that meet N.J. Department of Education requirements.

3. As a parent/guardian, how can I assist or what is my role in the instructional process during this closure?

Parents are valuable and the most important resource of all during this timeframe. The District asks that parents/guardians continue to monitor their child's progress and work. Never hesitate to contact your child's teacher(s), if he/she exhibits any instructional, emotional or processing concerns.

4. What are the time expectations per class for my student?

Expectations differ from grade level to grade level. Coursework should be tailored to your student and their educational abilities. Students should expect to spend an extended period of time working on assignments, reading and conferencing/messaging staff members, as home instruction days count as normal school days. If your child is struggling to complete assignments or could utilize enrichment activities, please contact your child's teacher.

In general, students in grades K-5 will have an English Language Arts and Mathematics assignment daily. Science, Social Studies, and Health lessons/assignments will be presented and assigned a few times per week. Special Area subjects will post lessons/assignments for the week. Students in 6th grade will receive daily lessons/assignments from content area teachers.

Special Education Teachers & Basic Skills Teachers will prepare specific assignments/lessons for their students.

Occupational Therapists, Physical Therapist, Speech Language Therapists and the BCBA will send programs to identified students during the extended closure.

5. Who do I contact if I have a question regarding schoolwork?

The best point of contact for questions, concerns, or issues regarding school work are the classroom teachers. If you fail to get an adequate and timely response, please reach out to a building administrator.

6. Are teachers and students required to post and check their emails every day?

Yes, staff members are available via email / messaging apps Monday-Friday from 9:00am - 3:00pm. Staff members will post assignments for the next day, by 3:00pm the day before. For example, assignments/lessons for Tuesday will be posted on their websites by 3:00pm on Monday. It is important that students log on each day and complete the day's work. While there are timelines, those are flexible being this is a new delivery format for Washington Township School District. Teachers are understanding of special circumstances. Please correspond with the teacher to discuss special family circumstances. Teachers have also been instructed to check email, phone messages and respond to students and parents in a timely manner, but due to the high volume of correspondence, responses may not occur immediately.

7. How will my students be graded during this time? If paper copies were sent home, how and when will grades be updated?

Teachers are updating their gradebooks as they receive assignments that are submitted electronically. Teachers will request pictures/scans of completed paper and pencil work to their email, messaging app, etc. If you are unable to do this, please inform the teacher as soon as possible.

8. When will my child's assignments be due?

This is determined by school, grade-level and individual teachers. Teachers have been instructed to keep their gradebook up to date and should be an indicator of the work that your child has turned in. If you have questions about individual assignments, please contact your child's teacher.

9. If there are discrepancies with my child's grades or assignments, who should parents/guardians contact?

Please contact your child's teacher, first. If you fail to get an adequate and timely response, please reach out to a building administrator should you find discrepancy in grades or assignments.

10. I have an IEP meeting scheduled for my son/daughter, will the meeting still take place and how will I be notified?

When it comes to IEP meetings, the CST is making every effort to go on as business as usual. If meeting face to face is not required and the legal guardian gives consent, the meeting will take place via teleconference. The case manager will contact the parent and teachers to schedule the meeting. If the meeting does require face to face contact or if the legal guardian does not give consent, the meeting will need to be rescheduled to a time in which the district is back in session. Videoconference / phone conferences may also be scheduled with the consent of parent / guardian.

11. My child has an evaluation that needs to be completed, how and when will this be completed?

If an evaluation of a student with a disability requires a face-to-face assessment or observation, the evaluation or meeting would need to be delayed until school reopens. Evaluations and re-evaluations that do not require face-to-face assessments or observations may take place while schools are closed, so long as a student's parent or legal guardian consents.

12. How will my child be receiving related services during this closure?

As with any extended absences, all related service providers, as well as the IEP team, will be assessing students upon our return to determine if additional time or sessions are warranted. Speech Therapists, Occupational Therapists, Physical Therapist and the BCBA have created activities to support your child's skill acquisition while at home. These activities should have been received; if you did not receive any related services activities please reach out to your child's service provider and case manager.

13. Can my child receive breakfast & lunch?

Families that participate in the District's School Nutrition Program are eligible to receive breakfast & lunch each day. Participating families may pick up food from 9:00am – 11:00am, Monday – Friday at the Brass Castle School. In special circumstances food may be delivered to participating families in need. Breakfast/lunch will not be available during the Spring Break period.

If your financial situation has changed due to recent events, please complete the Free & Reduced Application for Breakfast and Lunch. This application can be found on the Cafeteria page of our website. Please return the application

using one of the following methods: email jflynn@washtwpsd.org, fax 908-689-2356 or via mail to Brass Castle School, 16 Castle Street, Washington, NJ 07882. Please note, that meals will not be available during Spring Break.

14. Will class trips be canceled?

Class trips will be cancelled for the remainder of this calendar year. For pre-paid trips, the District is working with vendors to try and reimburse funds when possible.

15. Will our District offer activities when school returns to session?

A decision regarding after school clubs and activities will be made upon return to school.

16. Will NJSLA or any form of New Jersey State testing take place?

The District does not have the authority to make these decisions. Any decision related to N.J. State assessments and testing will come from the Commissioner of Education's office. The District will alert parents when information is provided by the New Jersey Department of Education.

Update: The New Jersey Department of Education has cancelled all state mandated assessments for the 2019-2020 school year. State mandated assessments include: the New Jersey Student Learning Assessments (NJSLA), ACCESS for ELLs, and the Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) assessment.

17. Are the buildings being cleaned?

Keeping staff and students safe is the District's primary concern. During the extended school closing, custodians have been working hard to deep clean District schools. The custodians have completely sanitized the building and will do so again before the re-opening of school.

18. What should I do if someone in my immediate family falls ill?

Immediately report to your family physician for further guidance and possible mandatory reporting, if the illness relates to COVID-19. If you are tested and are confirmed positive, please contact your building administrator who will then contact the Superintendent of Schools. The Superintendent of Schools is then required to contact the Warren County Health Department and Warren County Educational Offices for reporting purposes.

19. How do I explain the realities of COVID-19 to my child should a family member, family friend, staff member, etc., fall ill?

Anytime a loved one falls sick can be a period of stress for the entire family. Are they going to be ok? Can I get sick too? The Covid-19 virus will have a significant effect on the elderly and medically fragile. If you or your family are experiencing a hardship related to the virus, please contact our guidance services for support. Below please find some online resources that are available to you.

<https://www.pbs.org/parents/thrive/how-to-talk-to-your-kids-about-coronavirus>

<https://childmind.org/article/talking-to-kids-about-the-coronavirus/>

<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/coronavirus-how-talk-child.html>

<https://www.healthline.com/health-news/how-to-talk-to-kids-about-the-coronavirus>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/talking-with-children.html>

20. How long does my family need to practice safe distance measures?

The District recommends that all community members follow ALL recommendations and/or suggestions set forth by Government officials regarding safe and social distancing, social interactions and group gatherings.

21. When a human becomes irritable or restless because he/she has been isolated indoors for too long, we refer to this as cabin fever. What are some strategies we can do to lessen the effects of cabin fever?

Keeping your mind active is important. Try to look at everything you normally do from a different light and make changes to your daily routine. Also, consider exercising. There are a lot of free videos out there that will walk you through some great workouts! Yoga is a great way to calm the mind and body. Also take time to learn that new skill you never had time to practice before (examples: playing the guitar, learning to knit or learning to juggle). You can also read a new book or conduct a science experiment. There are plenty of resources online that can assist you.

Please continue to check for updated information on the District website and Facebook page.