



LOUDOUN COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

21000 Education Court
Ashburn, Virginia 20148

Additional Frequently Asked Questions

March 19, 2020

What type of learning resources are available for parents and students prior to March 30?

LCPS is providing optional resources ([LCPS Continuity of Learning](#)) that parents may use to engage students in learning activities, if desired. These optional learning experiences are consistent with the curriculum. Currently, the emphasis in these learning experiences is on reinforcing skills and knowledge that have been previously taught. The learning experiences developed and provided will also give students and teachers opportunities to go deeper into concepts, ideas, and skills with which they are already familiar. Additionally, packets of offline resources are available to families at the “meal stops” by request.

The work our teachers do in the classrooms with our students each day cannot be replaced. We realize that learning will look and feel differently compared to when teachers are working directly with students in the classroom environment. These activities are meant to help our students practice, review, and maintain their existing skills and knowledge.

By what date will my child’s teacher(s) start providing learning opportunities specifically for my child and my child’s classmates?

Teachers will begin providing online learning experiences specifically for their students covering **previously covered** skills and knowledge beginning on March 30.

Starting March 30, how will my child’s teacher(s) provide learning opportunities? Will the opportunities be digital or non-digital?

Teachers are designing learning opportunities for students and will engage students in learning experiences using Google Classroom. Teachers of some K-2 students have used a different platform this school year and so to increase consistency for our youngest learners, their teachers may choose to continue to use the platform with which their students are accustomed. Learning experiences provided by the teacher will be both digital and non-digital. Packets of offline or non-digital resources will be available to families at the “meal stops” beginning on Monday, March 23. At this time and until further notice, all learning experiences presented by teachers will provide reinforcement of previously taught content. This could change in the future.

What is the focus of the learning opportunities that my child’s teacher(s) will start providing March 30?

Learning opportunities will be provided covering **previously covered** skills and knowledge aligned to the curriculum of the grade level or course. This could change in the future.

How and how often will teachers communicate with my child and me starting March 30?

Some teachers have already communicated with their students. As of March 30, teachers are expected to connect with students and families regularly during the closure. Here are examples of best practices for that regular communication:

- Communication with parents via email;
- Communicate with students via Google Classroom on a regular basis during the closure;
- Maintaining consistent times at which they are readily available via Google and/or regularly checking email to answer questions;
- Acknowledging or responding to emails within 24 hours;

The school administration at each school is available to answer specific questions related to your student's learning experience.

These practices may evolve and we will keep the community informed of any changes.

Approximately how much time should I expect my child to spend on the learning opportunities provided by my child(s) teachers starting March 30?

The following student work time guidelines are currently being provided to teachers for planning:

- K-2 - Up to 60 Minutes daily
- 3-5 - Up to 90 Minutes daily
- 6-8 - Up to 30 minutes per class
- 9-12 - Up to 30 minutes per class
- AP/Dual Enrollment - Aligned to course expectations

Art, Music, Physical Education, and Library learning opportunities will also be provided at the elementary level and these opportunities are not considered to be part of the student work time guidelines listed above. In addition to the guidelines listed above, students are encouraged to read and write daily, engage in creative pursuits, and stay physically active.

The student work time guidelines may evolve and we will keep the community informed of any changes.

Will teachers provide grades or other feedback regarding student work? Why or Why not?

At this time, teachers will not be assigning grades to student work. Teachers will be providing formative feedback (ungraded and to promote student learning) regarding student work through Google Classroom.

VDOE provided the following statement in their COVID-19 FAQs:

Schools should thoughtfully evaluate their approach, understand their legal obligations, and maintain the standards for delivery of instruction and student supports. Services, programs and activities online must be accessible to persons, including individuals with disabilities unless equally effective alternative access is provided in another manner (U. S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, 2020) . . . we do not recommend grading work completed during the closures since schools are closed

The Departments of Instruction and Pupil Services continue to explore options for ensuring equitable access to all students and will provide updates as they are available. Until that time teachers may not require students to complete make-up work, teach new content, or assign grades.

High School Advanced Placement (AP) and dual enrollment (DE) courses are the only exception to this rule. LCPS works with external organizations for both AP and DE enrollment courses that impact specific guidance for these courses. Specific guidance will be shared with principals from the Department of Instruction.

We will keep the community informed of any changes in terms of grading and feedback on student work.

What steps are being taken by the Virginia Department of Education to support seniors graduating?

The Virginia Department of Education is currently seeking waivers related to the COVID-19 closures. This includes requirements related to graduation. Updated information will be released as available.

Per a [press release](#) from the VDOE, Dr. James Lane, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, stated,

“VDOE has advised school divisions of the flexibility they already have to delay Standards of Learning testing, but it is clear that we now have to take additional steps to ensure that schools and students — especially seniors completing their graduation requirements — are not adversely impacted by circumstances beyond their control.”

He also stated, “I want students and parents to know that Governor Northam and I are committed to taking every step possible to minimize the impact of coronavirus on students and to ensure that our seniors are able to graduate.”

How will LCPS celebrate the strengths, talents, and accomplishments of the Class of 2020?

As Superintendent Eric Williams commented in the update he provided to the Board of Supervisors on March 17, 2020,

As I think back to my own time in school as a student but also as a parent and as a high school principal, obviously senior year is a big deal. It's a year many students have been waiting for their entire academic career and so even thinking about the possibility of not playing in or singing in their last concert, or not taking the field for their final spring sport . . . or not receiving the awards that you've worked hard for, that's not easy. But really, you know we are in this together. I am committed to working with principals and staff to ensure that seniors do not feel forgotten or overlooked. We're committed to thinking of creative ways of recognizing our seniors, their hard work, and their accomplishments. Is it still going to be difficult? Absolutely, and we want to acknowledge that difficulty. It's a big deal and for someone who would say (to a senior), "Oh, just be happy you have your health" you know, I respectfully disagree. Yes, we need to all focus on our health and be grateful for that, but I also understand the perspective of seniors who are experiencing some anxiety now and so we're committed to celebrating the excellence of our seniors.

My child does not have access to a laptop or other device with internet connectivity. Is there a way for my child to gain access to a laptop or other device with internet connectivity?

Chromebooks

Plans are being developed to ensure all students enrolled in LCPS in grades 3-12 are assigned a Chromebook. There are no plans to distribute devices to students in grades K-2. Additional details about the rollout plan are forthcoming and will be subject to the latest guidance from health officials.

Mobile Internet Hotspots

LCPS has made an initial purchase of mobile internet hotspots to help with continuity of access to internet-based instructional resources for students and staff during an extended closure. LCPS is prioritizing the distribution of hotspots to students in grades 3-12 in households with the greatest needs, with a limit of one hotspot per household. Hotspot devices could be available for distribution as early as the week of March 23.

Families and staff will need to formally request a mobile hotspot via the described process. To request a device, families/staff must:

- Complete the [online form](#) or
- Call the LCPS Technology Support Center at 571-252-2112 between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. weekdays. Translation services are available.

Each hotspot supports up to 15 device connections. The hotspots come with pre-configured internet content filtering, meeting the requirements set forth by the Children's Internet Protection Act. Submitting a request does not guarantee access to a hotspot.

The LCPS hotspots are configured to operate on the T-Mobile cellular network. For a hotspot to work T-Mobile cellular coverage must exist in your area. T-Mobile cellular coverage is not available in all areas of Loudoun County, though most of our high need areas in Loudoun do have T-Mobile cellular coverage. LCPS continues to explore options for connectivity in areas of Loudoun without T-Mobile cellular coverage; identifying a solution for these other areas may take several weeks.

LCPS is planning for the pickup of the hotspots by parents and guardians at locations throughout the community. The distribution will be subject to ongoing guidance from the Loudoun County Department of Health and other experts to ensure appropriate measures are in place to meet public-health recommendations. Each household receiving a hotspot will be required to sign a hotspot usage agreement before a hotspot can be taken home.

Please note that many commercial vendors have made available increased services to support schools and the community. We recognize that people without connectivity may not be able to access the following links, and are including the information for broader community awareness.

- Comcast is offering the Essentials internet package for free for 60 days
 - <https://www.internetessentials.com/>
- AT&T, T-Mobile, and Sprint have removed data limits for cellular data customers
 - <https://about.att.com/pages/COVID-19.html>
 - <https://www.t-mobile.com/news/t-mobile-update-on-covid-19-response>
 - <https://newsroom.sprint.com/covid-19-updates-sprint-responds.htm>
- Verizon offers unlimited data on hotspots and cell phones