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Washington Office of Superintendent of
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION
Chris Reykdal, Superintendent

k12.wa.us

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BULLETIN NO. 024-20 EXECUTIVE SERVICES

TO: Educational Service District Superintendents
School District Superintendents
School District Business Managers
School Principals

FROM: Chris Reykdal, Superintendent of Public Instruction

RE: Guidance for Long-term School Closures as of March 23, 2020

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PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

To slow the spread of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) in Washington state, Governor Jay Inslee announced on March 13 that all public and private K–12 school facilities will be closed and prohibited from providing traditional in-person instructional activities through April 24.

Although schools are closed and are not providing traditional in-person instruction, education must continue. Further guidance will be grounded in compassion, communication, and common sense; rather than the traditional compliance measures we are all familiar with in our education community. Our schools are the backbone of our democracy and the structures, routines, and ongoing learning opportunities will create calm connections our families need at this critical time in our state.

In late February and early March, we set a high bar for districts who wanted to continue distance learning if their school buildings were to close. The situation in our state has drastically evolved since that time. Subsequent to our initial guidance, Governor Inslee has shut down all schools in the state for a minimum of six weeks and the U.S. Department of Education has provided much needed guidance. We have an obligation to our students to provide them with opportunities to continue their learning during this pandemic.

If they haven't already begun, districts should be building their capacity to provide equitable services during school closures. Districts and communities are in varying states of readiness to

provide continuity of learning, and this guidance is intended to be used as a starting point as planning begins. We should avoid assuming that continuity of education outside of a typical school building can only occur through online means. Districts will provide instruction using printed learning materials, phone contact, email, technology-based virtual instruction, or a combination to meet student needs.

While most Washington school districts have already begun engaging students and families in learning, the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) expects educational services for all students will begin by Monday, March 30. Soon, OSPI will launch an iGrants form package to collect information about the nutrition, childcare, and educational services districts are providing. More information will be forthcoming.

This bulletin may be used to inform and support current planning efforts, keeping in mind the importance of longer-term contingency planning should circumstances change.

This bulletin addresses supports for continuous learning in the areas of:

1. School facilities closure priorities (page 2)
2. Guiding principles (page 3)
3. Sample plan (page 4)
4. Sample continuous learning workflow (page 7)
5. Next steps (page 8)
6. Resources (page 8)

SCHOOL FACILITIES CLOSURE PRIORITIES

The [March 17 letter from Superintendent Chris Reykdal](#) to school district superintendents and labor leaders identified the following priorities:

1. Ensure the provision of school meals including breakfast and lunch to students who need them.
2. Develop plans to be a childcare provider of last resort in response to the Governor's call to action.
3. Provide graduating seniors the content they need to meet their graduation requirements and support their post-secondary transition.
4. Offer learning opportunities for students and continued professional learning for staff.
5. Continue payroll for all employees as you develop meaningful work and professional development plans.

Districts and school communities have responded to these priorities in an unparalleled manner. It is now time to provide more specific guidance on continuous learning for students. During this unprecedented time, our work together will look different. It will be possible to serve students meaningfully because of the expertise of school and district personnel and their relationships with the communities they serve.

What students need from schools during this time will vary and many will need additional supports and accommodations. What schools and communities will need during this time will also vary—flexibility and communication are key. School staff will collaborate and plan to meet student learning needs and support student well-being. Districts will consider what tools, resources, and technologies students can access, or if they have access at all.

The March 21 [Supplemental Fact Sheet Addressing the Risk of COVID-19 in Preschool, Elementary and Secondary Schools While Serving Children with Disabilities](#) from the U.S. Department of Education, clearly states that equity barriers do not prevent schools from offering educational programs, and that “these exceptional circumstances may affect how all educational and related services and supports are provided.”

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

As school districts provide instruction and student supports, they should use the following principles to guide their work:

Keep Students at the Center

Intentional outreach to continue building relationships and maintain connections. Help students feel safe and valued. At minimum, plan to do the following:

- ✓ Plan for Student Learning: Build on each student’s strengths, interests, and needs and use this knowledge to positively impact learning.
- ✓ Develop a Weekly Plan and Schedule: Offer routines and structures for consistency and to balance think time, work time, and play time for health and well-being.
- ✓ Contact Families: Partner to support student learning through ongoing communication and collaboration. This will not look the same for every student and family—safety remains the priority. Provide translations as necessary.

Design Learning for Equity and Access

Plan and deliver content in multiple ways so all students can access learning.

- ✓ Teach Content: Set goals using knowledge of each student and of Washington State K–12 Learning Standards.
- ✓ Deliver Flexible Instruction: Consider how to deliver content depending on tools and resources accessible to each student. Delivery of instruction may include printed learning materials, phone contact, email, technology-based virtual instruction, or a combination to meet diverse student needs.
- ✓ Engage Families: Communicate with families about engagement strategies to support students as they access the learning. Families are critical partners. Provide translations as necessary.

Assess Student Learning

Manage and monitor student learning and plan what's next for learning.

- ✓ Check Student Learning: Use a variety of strategies to monitor, assess, and provide feedback to students about their learning.
- ✓ Make Instructional Adjustments: Use formative assessment results to guide their reflection on effectiveness of instruction and to determine next steps for student learning.
- ✓ Engage Families: Communicate with and seek input from families about assessment results in order to inform next steps. Provide translations as necessary.

To support school districts in the work of translating guiding principles into actions, below is a sample district level plan.

SAMPLE PLAN

Develop a plan with involvement and decision-making from a broad group of stakeholders, including administrators, teacher leaders, local labor groups, technology departments, food service personnel, and local community-based partners. These examples can be applied flexibly and adjusted to allow districts less or more time in preparation.

Stage 1 focuses on district-level communication and staff readiness. Districts already providing supports to students will continue to do so.

Stage 1	Communication <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Evaluate previous OSPI guidance as well as communications about expectations from district leaders to their workforce and families. Determine which, if any, messages need to be updated.<input type="checkbox"/> Celebrate successes with your community, including your efforts to continue food services and childcare.<input type="checkbox"/> Send out surveys to families about access to technology and educational resources to determine resources available in student homes. As examples, these surveys may include questions about preferred method of communication, access to technology, access to learning supplies, device capabilities, and internet reliability, among others.<input type="checkbox"/> Send out surveys to educators and support personnel about access to technology, educational resources, and supports needed to use during instruction.<input type="checkbox"/> Review applicable district policies dictating communication between staff and students.
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	<p>Student Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Establish plans to reach special populations of students, including students with disabilities, English learners, migrant students, those who are medically fragile, and students experiencing homelessness. <input type="checkbox"/> To honor student work, consider adoption of pass/no credit grading, competency-based credit, or other grading methods. <p>Support for Staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Schedule and hold building-level small group meetings with elementary, middle, and high school leaders. Convene remotely to discuss expectations and develop and prepare for continuity of learning. <input type="checkbox"/> Identify and prepare to connect with teacher leaders in curriculum and technology integration, including those who work with special populations. <input type="checkbox"/> Identify learning platforms and existing print materials already in place for teachers to utilize to support instruction. <input type="checkbox"/> Identify and prepare plans for documenting contacts with students as communication plans are developed. <input type="checkbox"/> Identify and engage stakeholders to discuss student accountability, including attendance.
<p>Stage 2</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Continue and complete any Stage 1 tasks that remain. <p>Communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Administration communicates school community expectations for each building, including developing a plan for each student to receive at least one contact prior to the end of the week. For example, using email or another notification method to send a class-wide message. <p>Student Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Adjust plans to reach special populations of students such as, students with disabilities, English learners, migrant students, those who are medically fragile, or students experiencing homelessness. <p>Support for Staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Continue to schedule and hold building-level small group meetings with elementary, middle, and high school leaders. Convene remotely to discuss expectations and develop and prepare for continuity of learning. <input type="checkbox"/> Principals plan to provide daily updates to building staff on health and safety circumstances and available resources; and define continuity plans (back-up plans in the event of staff illness).
<p>Stage 3</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Continue and complete any Stage 1 or Stage 2 tasks that remain. <input type="checkbox"/> Prioritize activities related to previous OSPI guidance.

	<p>Student Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Review survey results (if available) and identify and fill gaps for families and educators. <p>Support for Staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Continue to schedule and hold building-level small group meetings with elementary, middle, and high school leaders. Convene remotely to discuss expectations and develop and prepare for continuity of learning. <input type="checkbox"/> Train staff on technology as needed.
<p>Stage 4</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Continue and complete any Stage 1–3 tasks that remain. <p>Communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Establish a plan to communicate with students and families each week (log contacts and identify how information collected by individual staff can be accessed by school personnel, as needed). Provide translation services as needed. <input type="checkbox"/> Identify which staff will be contacting which students, partnering with Education Support Personnel (ESPs) for routine communication. <input type="checkbox"/> School teams establish and communicate a daily or weekly routine for students and adjust for learners with unique needs. <input type="checkbox"/> Answer new questions and problem solve. <p>Student Learning and Support for Staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Plan to deliver content in a flexible and adaptable way that is accessible for all students (e.g., printed learning materials, phone, email, videos, or other online means). <input type="checkbox"/> Begin planning for using specialized certificated personnel to provide support for differentiated instruction and accessibility.
<p>Stage 5</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Continue and complete any Stage 1–4 tasks that remain. <input type="checkbox"/> Answer new questions and problem solve.

SAMPLE CONTINUOUS LEARNING WORKFLOW

Evaluate Supplemental Learning Access, Methods, and Technology Needs

Student and family access to:

- Computer, laptop, or tablet
- Internet access or Wi-Fi hotspot
- Streaming/ download capability
- Websites
- Books
- Printed learning materials

Begin Communication Review and Determine Course Materials

Two-way communication between district staff and student and/or family:

- Email, phone, or other type of messaging
- Designated times
- Ongoing

Determine Course Materials

Course, content, or grade level specific;

Align to learning standards;

Tailor methods to student access:

- Online course
- Streaming
- Reading materials
- Self-directed, parent-directed, or teacher-directed

Create Learning Plans

Individualized to the student or specific to the course:

- Learning goals
- Course expectations
- Timelines

Monitor Progress

Review student progress:

- Evaluating learning
- Monitoring and supplementing online courseware
- Providing supports and interventions as needed to keep students on track

NEXT STEPS

To support more specific guidance in the future, OSPI is remotely convening a small stakeholder group of practitioners and education leaders during the week of March 23–27. The group will focus on determining minimum standards for delivery of educational programming during the school facilities closure. This group will start their work with an existing resource provided by the [Kansas State Department of Education](#).

Washington school districts are already creating innovative opportunities to continue to provide education to students. One local district is designating content-specific days (e.g., only reading, math, and science on Mondays). Another district has assigned a specific content area for each day (e.g., social studies on Tuesdays). Some districts have posted student learning schedules and learning opportunities on their website. Districts should take the opportunity to embed social-emotional learning and supports wherever possible. OSPI encourages communities to share ideas and activities.

The nation is facing an unprecedented challenge with an unknown timeline. Providing continuity of learning for Washington’s students at this time will require the best from each of us. Districts should remember to be creative and flexible in their thinking and actions. What is being asked may feel unfamiliar and sometimes frustrating. Districts should try new things—share ideas that work and learn from ideas that do not. OSPI thanks you for the tremendous show of community as we pull together to keep our state moving forward.

OSPI is continuing to curate a list of resources for family and educator use. A partial list is included below, and [a comprehensive list is posted on the OSPI website](#).

RESOURCES

[Fact Sheet: Addressing the Risk of COVID-19 in Schools While Protecting the Civil Rights of Students](#) (March 16, 2020)

[OCR Short Webinar on Online Education and Website Accessibility Webinar \(Length: 00:07:08\)](#) (March 16, 2020)

[Protecting Student Privacy: FERPA and Coronavirus Disease 2019](#) (March 12, 2020)

[Fact Sheet: Impact of COVID-19 on Assessments and Accountability under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act](#) (March 12, 2020)

The Office for Civil Rights issued a [Letter to Education Leaders on Preventing and Addressing potential discrimination associated with COVID-19](#) (March 4, 2020)

[FERPA and Virtual Learning Related Resources](#) (Updated March 2020)

Bulletin No. 024-20 ES

March 23, 2020

Page 9

The OSPI TTY number is 360-664-3631. Previous guidance and additional information related to COVID-19 and school closures is available on the [COVID-19 page of the OSPI website](#). This bulletin is also available on the [Bulletins page of the OSPI website](#).

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