

## Continuity of Education Plan

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### Goal of Plan

The goal of Wissahickon Charter School's plan is to meaningfully engage students with our school community in a manner that reinforces concepts and skills that they have developed prior to the COVID-19 closure, ultimately moving on to new academic concepts in the latter stages of the year. Beyond academic goals, our plan seeks to ensure that we are providing resources that meet families where they are as they navigate their way through myriad uncertainties.

### Overview of Plan

Wissahickon Charter School's Continuity of Education Plan has three distinct phases: two of enrichment and review, and one of planned instruction. The first phase of enrichment and review was from 3/16/20-4/3/20 (including a 3/23-3/27 Spring Break) and consisted of packet-based activities provided to students prior to the closure. The second phase will be from 4/6/20-4/30/20 and consists of a variety of web-based enrichment and review activities that reinforce key concepts from the year to date while helping children acclimate to the technological and socioemotional challenges caused by this seismic change in instruction and their overall lived experiences. From 5/1/20 through the end of our school year (6/12/20 for students), we will move into our third phase of planned instruction where new academic concepts will be explored. The two web-based remote learning phases will include both synchronous and asynchronous activities, recognizing both the value of live interaction with teachers and classmates and the need to allow families flexibility in finding a way for their children to have time for meaningful learning in a time of upheaval for their typical routines.

### Expectations for Teaching and Learning

The initial steps of our continuity of education plan were to devise packets featuring of two weeks of enrichment content in core subjects as we developed a long-term plan for remote learning in the event of an extended closure. Our first week of closure coincided with our second trimester report card conferences, which occurred via telephone March 18-20. A major component of the conferences included discussing the family's existing technology resources and general readiness for internet-based remote learning.

As we enter the internet-based remote learning phases of our continuity of education plan, families

will receive detailed instructions on how to access grade-specific webpages, logins for various learning applications, and other pertinent information. Weekly schedules of synchronous and asynchronous activities (including links to all relevant web-based activities) will be shared on grade-specific webpages the Sunday prior to each school week. Synchronous activities include half hour morning meetings (3 times per week), online office hours (1-hour sessions twice weekly), live elective activities offered throughout the week, and daily tech support hours where families with access issues can troubleshoot with our IT staff. All synchronous activities occur via Zoom. Asynchronous activities are a mix of pre-recorded video activities created by instructors with corresponding assignments and independent work on learning applications.

#### Communication Tools and Strategies

Since closing, we have updated parents through email communication multiple times per week, website postings, and text messages. Starting the week of March 23, we let families know that we were transitioning to online learning as of the week of April 6. We conducted an online learning survey to assess family's technology needs and made follow-up emails and phone calls to all non-responsive households to inform them of this transition and assess any technology needs they might have.

Now that we have transitioned to online learning, class information is generally disseminated through Google Classroom pages maintained for each grade level. These pages contain critical information for participation in synchronous and asynchronous activities. As we describe in detail below, we have taken steps to ensure all families have access to these web-based resources so that they may be able to participate as fully as possible. Teachers have also continued to use parent communication tools they used prior to the closure, including email, Remind, Class Dojo, text messaging, and phone calls.

#### Access (Devices, Platforms, Handouts)

The first two weeks of our closure (3/16-3/20, and 3/30-4/3 with Spring Break in the week between) consisted of remote learning through packets sent home with families the week leading up to closure. From 4/6 onward, we have transitioned to a remote learning model where assignments are disseminated via class-specific internet sites. Families have been surveyed to identify any technology gaps; households with device needs are being supplied with Chromebooks or tablets, and families without reliable internet access are being connected to free and/or low-cost options that meet their needs.

#### Staff General Expectations

While responsibilities may vary somewhat by grade level, all instructional staff are responsible for holding 30-minute morning meetings three times per week. Additional responsibilities include holding two one-hour office hours sessions per week; developing and posting weekly schedules of synchronous and asynchronous activities the Sunday prior to each school week (including links to materials and related videos); creating assignments and focus areas in various learning apps; regularly reviewing student engagement in learning apps and following up as needed; reviewing student work submissions; offering feedback to families and students on their level of engagement with learning tasks and the quality of their work. The mix of synchronous (live) and asynchronous activities for staff balances the need for staff to be available and working during core daily hours with the reality that many staff are simultaneously working and parenting from home.

### Student Expectations

Student expectations vary by grade level, but the general expectation is that students will be engaged in learning activities 3-4 hours per day. The main synchronous activity expectation is attendance at morning meeting (3 times/week), but the hope is that students will seek out support from their teachers through office hour zoom calls or through Students are also encouraged to participate in a variety of Zoom-based elective activities. Each week, the student's schedule delineates expectations for each of their asynchronous activity areas. Students are expected to complete all assigned activities and each week are rated in their engagement in each area on a "high/medium/low/none" scale. In mapping out our expectations for students in this new learning model, we have tried to strike a balance of maintaining high expectations for our students with a recognition that these circumstances have created a unique set of challenges for each of our families. With that in mind, we decided that we will only use this engagement tracking system internally to identify students who might need additional support to fully participate in remote learning. We will not be assigning traditional grades for content mastery and academic performance like we would normally, although our educators will continue to provide constructive feedback on students' work. While the expectation is that students will demonstrate high engagement in each area, the largely asynchronous nature of the activities maximizes flexibility for students to complete their work in a self-paced manner.

### Attendance / Accountability

We have not applied for the Flexible Instructional Days Program and do not intend to track attendance for child accounting purposes. However, our instructional team has developed a tracking system for teachers to track student engagement in each of their weekly synchronous and asynchronous activities. Families of students exhibiting low engagement will be contacted to identify barriers to engagement, with staff taking into account the challenges beyond academics that some families may be experiencing during the pandemic.

### Good Faith Efforts for Access and Equity for All Students

From the outset of our planning, all of our IEP, 504 Plan, and homeless students have been our highest priority in identifying gaps in access to appropriate devices or internet access, and we are committed to filling all needs for those groups within the first week of remote instruction. For our IEP and 504 plan students, we are committed to providing the services documented in their plan through remote means, including Zoom meetings with therapists, phone-based IEP team meetings, and continuing to document and address all parent concerns.

For our homeless and housing insecure students, our guidance counselors are committed to following up with those students' families' holistically to ensure that their basic needs are being met, realizing that this is a prerequisite for their ability to engage in remote learning.

Throughout our remote learning time and during the first week especially, we are largely focused on tracking student engagement in synchronous and asynchronous activities as a barometer for potential special circumstances we might not be aware of. Each teacher is tracking student engagement in each type of activity, and if there are instances of a lack of engagement, we are following up with students' families to determine the reasons for any lack of engagement. We anticipate that in addition to helping us address the needs of students overall, this practice will help us proactively identify instances where additional accommodations may need to be made to fully ensure equitable participation for students with IEPs, 504 plans, and housing insecurity issues.

### Special Education Supports

We have taken the following steps to ensure sufficient Special Education supports:

- Prioritized students with IEPs and 504 plans in our technology loan program.
- Built distance learning to be accessible to students with itinerant services
- Built distance learning with inclusion in mind; teachers can easily differentiate for each learner.
- Accommodating program to individualize for the students with significant IEPs.
- Implemented distance learning for all related services immediately for the amount of time listed on the IEP.

### EL Supports

Wissahickon Charter School does not currently have any EL students.

### Gifted Education

Wissahickon Charter School does not currently have a gifted education program

### Building/Grade Level Contacts

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Resource Links

Remote Learning Hub: <https://wcs1.zendesk.com/hc/en-us/articles/360040940431-Remote-Learning>