



# POUGHKEEPSIE CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

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**Eric J. Rosser, PhD, Superintendent of Schools**

**To: Faculty and Staff**

**From: Dr. Eric Jay Rosser, Superintendent of Schools**

**Subject: PCSD School Closure Updates**

**Date: April 9, 2020**

Good day everyone. I hope that you and your family are well.

As the landscape continues to change day-to-day due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it is important that faculty and staff are recognized for all that you have contributed during this difficult period. Your thought partnership, creativity, commitment and patience are to be commended. Many faculty and staff members have and continue to display their dedication to children of the Poughkeepsie City School District, which will result in us weathering this storm.

Since the last correspondence, much has transpired that you should be made aware of.

## **Extension of School Closure and District Calendar**

Earlier this week, Governor Cuomo extended school closures to April 29, 2020. His executive order requires that all school districts with scheduled spring breaks postpone them until further notice. Therefore, to adhere to the Governor's order, PCSD's spring break will be announced at a future time.

The executive order also indicated that school board elections and annual budget votes will be postponed until at least June 1, 2020.

Given the closure of schools to April 29, the following provides information on how we will proceed in the various instructional and operational areas:

## **Extended Instructional Plan**

The Distance Learning Instructional Committee continues to meet to formalize and execute the Extended Instructional Plan. These meetings are designed to address topics that will ensure that PCSD complies with the governor's executive order and the expectations of New York State Department of Education. Our goal is to adhere to the orders and expectations while being mindful of the current limitations of our infrastructure within the time period that expectations must be met. As previously stated, the thought partnership, creativity, commitment and patience of faculty and staff eases the enormous responsibility in being able to do so.

## Instructional Plan: April 20, 2020 – Reopening of Schools

- Instruction for PCSD students will transition from At-Home Learning Materials to instruction provided through Google Classroom.
- In preparation for April 20, faculty should continue developing their Google Classroom learning environments using the Google U professional development provided from March 31 – April 9. Please reference the Google U Expectations document (document can be accessed [here](#)).
- Building administration will continue to converse with faculty as we prepare for an April 20 rollout of Google Classroom.
- A Faculty Google Classroom Resource Guide that outlines the expectations of facilitating learning through the Google environment is being finalized (Anticipated distribution date will be April 13 or sooner).
- A Student/Parent Google Classroom Resource Guide that outlines the expectations of learning through the Google environment will be finalized the week of the 13<sup>th</sup>.
- A parent survey has been developed to understand the technological needs of families.
- One-thousand two hundred and fifty Chromebooks have been ordered and received. The IT department is developing a plan for student distribution. More Chromebooks are being ordered but given supply and demand there is not an expected arrival and distribution date for those devices.
- Additional conversations with IBM and a taskforce inclusive of higher education, the philanthropic and business community are taking place to secure devices for PCSD students.
- The delivery of instruction should not be compromised by some students not being able to access by April 20. Increasing participation and access is and will continue to be a priority.
- This plan will be updated frequently as needed.

## Student Grades and 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter Report Cards

Exploring what is best for PCSD students immediately and in the future, the Distance Learning Instructional Committee will be outlining the teacher feedback/grading protocol for the following areas:

- **At-Home Learning Materials:** Once student packets have been turned in when schools reopen, at-home learning materials should be considered for extra credit in any calculation of 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter marking grades (see next bullet).
- **3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter Marking:** All student work from the beginning of the student marking period to March 13<sup>th</sup> should be evaluated and students should be issued a Pass/Fail for this work. As noted above, At-Home Learning Materials can be considered for extra credit. This should be done for any student who will be assigned a “Fail”. Given that the At-Home Learning Materials will not be accessible until school reopens, a Pass/Fail should be assigned and if student completion and mastery of the At-Home Learning Materials warrants a grade change, the process for changing a grade should be followed.
- **Google Classroom Teacher Feedback/Grading:** Teachers should provide feedback using the feedback structure outlined in the Faculty Google Classroom Guide.
- **4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Marking:** Contingent on guidance from NYSED and/or the length of the school closure, student 4<sup>th</sup> quarter marking will be based on the feedback provided by teachers on student Google Classroom completed

assignments. Please note that this structure may change if guidance is provided by NYSED.

### **New York State Regents**

On April 7, 2020 an announcement was made which suspended the administration of the June 2020 New York State Regents. I am working with Principals Royce-Giron and D'Avilar on the implications of this on PCSD students. Information will be shared with staff members at both the middle and high schools.

### **Building and Facilities**

Buildings are still undergoing cleaning to achieve a golden standard of cleanliness when schools reopen.

Given the likelihood that school closures will extend beyond April 29, 2020, there will be future dates announced that will provide opportunity for faculty to enter the buildings to obtain additional instructional materials. This will be coordinated with building and facilities to ensure that the premises are cleaned after faculty have obtained the instructional materials.

### **Payroll**

The Business office will continue to meet payroll expectations. The timecards of hourly employees who have engaged in essential work should be submitted to Payroll with enough time to process. Time cards should have supervisor signoff to be processed.

### **Employee Wellness**

During this period of uncertainty and high stress it is important that we find ways to manage the constant change that we are subjected to. The district has updated its website to provide information on the Employee Assistance Program the district subscribes to. If you need or know of a colleague who might need these services please encourage them to access this support. Information about these services can be located by clicking [here](#).

Additionally, the CDC has published helpful information on its website to assist in maintaining good mental health during the COVID-19 crisis. To access, click [here](#).

### **Employee Social Distancing and Working Remotely**

All employees should be abiding by social distancing requirements when engaging in school district work. While the New York is experiencing its highest number of deaths associated with COVID-19 it is also experiencing reductions in the number of people being admitted to the hospital due to the virus. Abiding by the stay in place, social distancing, and workforce reduction directives each of the district facilities will be closed and/or opened to a very limited number of essential employees.

Where feasible, PCSD instructional and operational business should occur remotely. Employees who need clarity or resources to complete work remotely, should communicate directly with their immediate supervisor.

Supervisors of all essential employees will communicate expectations of all required expectations during this period. Where employees are required to work on-site personal protective equipment will be provided, where necessary, to employees.

All staff who are required to engage in essential in-district work and who are considered medically at-risk for complications that might be exacerbated by COVID-19 are strongly encouraged to discuss working remotely with their supervisor.

### **Student Meal Distribution**

To address the nutritional needs of Poughkeepsie City School District students, PCSD's Food Service department continues to provide free breakfast and lunch to students at 10 sites throughout Poughkeepsie. The following locations provide free breakfast and lunches Monday through Friday.

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| <b>Distribution Days:</b> Monday – Friday   | <b>Distribution Times:</b> 9:00 a.m. -10:00 a.m.    |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Hudson Gardens, 120 Hudson Ave.</li><li>• Thurgood Marshall, 109 Delafield St.</li><li>• MLK, 159 Washington St.</li><li>• Dr. J. Brady Apartments, 11 Boulevard Knolls</li><li>• Bixby Apartments, 21 Charles Street</li><li>• Christ Episcopal Church, 20 Carroll St.</li></ul> |   |
| <b>Distribution Days:</b> Monday – Friday   | <b>Distribution Times:</b> 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Poughkeepsie High School parking lot, 70 Forbus St.</li><li>• Eastman Tower, Montgomery St.</li><li>• Rip Van Winkle Tower, Main Street and Rinaldi Blvd.</li><li>• Harriet Tubman Apartments, Jefferson and Church Streets</li></ul>   |   |

### **Childcare for First Responders and Healthcare Professionals**

PCSD is partnering with Christ Episcopal Church and Healthy Kids to help coordinate childcare services for parents who are first responders or healthcare workers.

[Christ Episcopal Church](#): Is providing childcare to students 5 years of age and up. Childcare during school closure will follow the [Summer Camp model](#) for providing meaningful activity and programming.

Christ Episcopal Church is located at the following address:

- 20 Carroll Street Poughkeepsie, NY 12603 (map location [click here](#)).

[Healthy Kids](#): During the school year, PCSD partners with Health Kids to provide Universal Pre-K programming and wrap-around services for our 4-year-old children. During this time of need, we are continuing to partner with Healthy Kids to provide child-care services for first responders and health care professionals.

Healthy Kids is located at the following addresses:

- 103 Hooker Ave, Poughkeepsie, NY 12601 – Childcare for children under 4 (map location click [here](#))
- 70 Hooker Ave, Poughkeepsie, NY 12601 - Childcare for children 5-12 (map location click [here](#))

To access these programs, parents and caregivers are asked to complete the short registration document [here](#).

### **COVID-19 Case at PHS**

On Sunday, March 22, 2020, the Poughkeepsie City School District (PCSD) learned that a staff member at Poughkeepsie High School tested positive for COVID-19. The staff member and the sixteen people who had contact with all are doing well and are no longer quarantined.

### **In Remembrance**

On Sunday, April 5, 2020, PCSD lost a valuable veteran teacher Mrs. Tina Wandy, teacher at Warring Elementary School, to a medical issue unrelated to COVID-19. Please keep her family in your thoughts.

Be safe and stay healthy.