

Ephrata Area School District

Continuity of Education Plan

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Goal of Plan

The goal of the Ephrata Area School District Continuity of Education Plan is to provide a set of instructional experiences that engages all students in a digital version of our overall District curriculum while schools are closed.

Overview of Plan

Our plan can be divided into the three stages: preparation, calibration, and implementation. Throughout the past few school years, our teachers have been using SeeSaw (K-4) and Schoology (Grades 5-12) as classroom tools to improve communication related to classroom activities among students, parents, and teachers. Since the closure, teachers have been using these same tools to reach out and connect with students to see how everyone is coping with the closure.

Preparation

Throughout the week of March 23, teachers received four days of support through online training and had work time to prepare instructional activities and design lessons to be delivered online for all students. While all instructional activities are optional during the closure, based on guidance from the State, we are emphasizing the importance of keeping all students engaged in the learning process.

Calibration

We recognize that learning in an online environment is also new for many of our students. Accordingly, we are spending the first week of our plan focusing on content that has already been taught during this school year. Activities for Week One will be review, enrichment, or extension assignments on familiar content so that students can get adjusted to the format in which assignments are presented. Communication during Week One will be ongoing between students, parents, and teachers through online learning tools, and more formally through a

District-wide survey. Additionally, throughout the week, teachers will identify the time(s) of day when they will be able to offer 90-minutes of synchronous “Office Hours” for students. During this time, teachers can hold virtual meetings with students, be available for phone calls and questions via chat rooms and messaging from parents and students, or simply be readily available for supporting student learning on an as-needed basis.

Implementation

Based on the relatively high percentages of student engagement we are seeing during Week One, we are ready in many grade-levels and courses to introduce new content starting next week. We also recognize that another week of enrichment and review may be beneficial for students and teachers who are still adjusting to this new environment. As a result, we have a mix of grade-levels and courses choosing to spend another four days on review and enrichment activities while others are moving into new content. For the week of April 14-17, the expectation is that all teachers will be planning instruction of new content.

Continuous surveying and communication will be maintained throughout the closure to ensure a high level of engagement and learning takes place.

Expectations for Teaching and Learning

District expectations for the amount of combined time students are completing instructional activities and assigned work should not exceed 30-minutes per core class for Grades 7-12 and a maximum of two hours for Grades K-6. So, if a high school student has a six-period schedule, he/she should have a maximum of 3 hours of work each day; if he/she is carrying a full schedule of seven periods, he/she may have 3.5 hours. A 7th grader who has four core and two Related Arts classes would be doing a maximum of 3 hours, depending upon what activities are involved with his/her Related Arts courses. Since Intermediate and elementary students do not rotate through as many teachers in a day, the two-hour maximum should be coordinated by the individual teacher or pair/team of teachers.

Teachers are being asked to survey students to gauge how long virtual instruction and assigned tasks are taking.

Communication Tools and Strategies

Communication is taking place across a variety of platforms on a regular basis, including emails, calls, and text messages to families via SchoolMessenger. Additionally, all communication is housed chronologically on the District website at easdpa.org and regularly shared on social media channels. This communication has included information on closure updates, online learning, technology distribution and troubleshooting, free educational resources, meal distributions, community resources, and more. Surveys, through SchoolMessenger and SurveyMonkey, have also been provided to gauge families’ access to the Internet and obtain feedback on students’ online learning experiences, interactions with teachers, and overall effectiveness of communication.

Access (Devices, Platforms, Handouts)

Students in Kindergarten through Grade 4 have been provided District classroom iPads to use at home. Students in Grades 5 through 12 have their school-issued devices, iPads in Grades 5-6 and laptops in Grades 7-12.

Elementary students are engaging through software platforms such as SeeSaw, McGraw-Hill learning software, BrainPop, and live interaction with their teachers using Zoom. Additional resource packets are available for students who do not have Internet access at home.

Secondary students are engaging in their primary learning management system, Schoology. Here, students can participate in both asynchronous and synchronous learning activities. Remote access locations are being set up for students who do not have Internet access.

Staff General Expectations

Our expectation for Professional Staff is that the flexibility of working from home affords the opportunity to develop schedules that meet the needs of home situations, as well as the needs of our students, without requiring more time than a traditional workday. Hourly staff are receiving specific direction from their immediate supervisor regarding their work expectations.

Student Expectations

The goal of our online learning plan is to provide a consistent structure to engage K-12 students with content and resources on a daily basis. Each school day there will be lessons and activities for students to complete. The first week will be focused on review and enrichment of competencies and learning targets that have already been covered this school year. Through review and enrichment activities, we hope to reinforce and extend students' prior learning. Our expectation is that every student will spend time each day working through the lessons and activities that teachers have prepared for them.

Attendance / Accountability

Teachers will be informally tracking attendance each school day. Student participation in the online program is voluntary but highly encouraged. As students complete projects and activities, their teachers will provide them with feedback to identify strengths and growth areas. Teachers are also available through group or individual conferencing to answer questions and help provide guidance.

Good Faith Efforts for Access and Equity for All Students

The Ephrata Area School District continues to make significant efforts to ensure every student has a means to enhance his/her education and remain connected with his/her teachers. Internal checks and balances will ensure external barriers do not limit any student and his/her right to learn.

Special Education Supports

EASD is committed to making review, enrichment, and learning activities available to all learners. IEP teams will be in contact with each individual learner to ensure access to educational tools, specialized programs, and alternative plans. Teachers will match programming to learner goals. Therapists will be offering online services individualized to each student. Weekly communication to families of students with IEPs or 504 Plans will ensure continued efforts toward educational outcomes, one student at a time.

EL Supports

Students who are deemed ELL (English Language Learners) have an added support system at EASD. ELL teachers ensure each student has access to curriculum and prioritize learning and practice for the development of oral language and literacy skills. Special emphasis is placed on speaking, writing, listening, and reading. Staff may access interpreters daily to communicate with students and families.

Gifted Education

GIEP teams/teachers will be connecting with each student to ensure access to specially designed instruction and program modifications as written in formalized plans. Enrichment, acceleration, and challenge opportunities will be offered as well as individualized consultation to promote a continued growth mindset.

Building/Grade Level Contacts

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Resource Links

[EASD Communication & Resources](#)
[EASD Meal Distribution](#)
[EASD Community Resources](#)
[Free Educational Resources](#)
[Twitter - @GoMounts](#)
[Facebook - @EphrataAreaSD](#)
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