

## **Distance Learning in the Trumbull Public Schools: Questions & Answers**

*with Jonathan Budd, Ph.D., Assistant Superintendent, and Christina Hefele, Director of Digital Learning*

**March 18, 2020**

The following is pertinent information to help educate the community of the plans of Trumbull Public Schools. It is a paraphrase of the question & answer period of the March 18, 2020 Distance Learning in the Trumbull Public Schools presentation by Jonathan Budd, Ph.D., Assistant Superintendent, and Christina Hefele, Director of Digital Learning. The full presentation may be accessed at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gVfmwLUSgAg&feature=youtu.be>.

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### **What are the goals of Distance Learning, and how do they differ from the goals of a typical education?**

Distance Learning is necessary for the situation we are in now, though it can't replicate what happens in the classroom every day with the various person-to-person interactions that happen. Essentially, Distance Learning allows for students to maintain continuity of educational experience. They can stay up to date by reinforcing skills they've already learned and by moving into content of new skills.

### **Does my student need to be in front of a computer for 6½ hours every day?**

There is no expectation for a student to participate in more than four hours of learning per day, and this doesn't need to be continual or even during the hours published. The hours listed from TPS are to let you know when teachers would be available for conversation.

### **Do I have to monitor or help my child do their work?**

Although younger students typically may need more guidance, support, and possible motivation in the learning, there is not an expectation that the parent is the active teacher of the material. The digital learning has been developed by age group so that the student should be able to be engaged with the learning.

### **What are the grade-level expectations for students?**

*Grades K-5:* Teachers will be available 8:30-3:00 to develop activities, assess work, as well as answer questions and provide feedback.

*K-2:* Teachers will e-mail daily key learning in literacy (reading, writing, and phonics), math, and science; the learning will be mainly offline.

*3-5:* Literacy, math, and science will be the focus, including offline learning and Google Classroom.

*Grades 6-8:* Teachers will be working 8:00-2:30. Google Classroom will be used for these grades as well. Students can choose the order of their subjects (both online and offline activities) that will be posted from all the classes they typically would be in during the day. The expectation is balance; students should work a rough four-hour maximum per day, although that does not need to be continuous.

*Grades 9-12:* Teachers will be working 8:00-2:30. Also in Google Classroom, instructions will be posted for all students and e-mails will be provided for instruction in all their normal activities.

### **What about students with special needs or special accommodations for learning?**

We are providing activities at the level of the typical student in each classroom, but a student or parent may reach out proactively to the teacher if they need any further help or support, as well as look at the postings on our TPS website for those with special needs and accommodations. If a parent has a specific concern of implementation for their child, please reach out to the counselor, case manager, principal, or the Assistant Superintendent's office.

### **Can I call my child's teacher for extra help?**

The primary means of communication will be electronic. A parent's first communication with the teacher should be e-mail, though it is up to the teacher's discretion whether to reply by e-mail or phone. We encourage

first student communication with the teacher at both the middle and high school level, while the parent/guardian first would probably be appropriate for the elementary level.

### **What is the expectation for teachers in terms of returning students' and parents' e-mails?**

In general, it should be within 24 hours.

### **My child left materials back in school; how can we get them?**

Basically, there is no school building access, so materials left in the schools won't be able to be retrieved. An exception to this has been musical instruments in the middle schools and high school.

### **Should we be concerned about upcoming assessments such as Smarter Balanced?**

We should not, since the schedule may be modified or even cancelled. As we find out more information on this, we'll provide it.

### **How will AP courses be handled at Trumbull High School?**

This is changing on a daily basis. As College Board gives us information, we will forward it to teachers, parents and guardians. We also have students taking college credit courses (concurrent enrollment), and will let them know more information when available and reliable.

### **I heard meals are available; is this true?**

Emergency food is available for those who need it at this time. If a family has at least one child who attends TPS, that family is entitled to meals for every student aged 18 or young in their household. There is curbside pick up at Trumbull High School to receive a lunch for that day and a breakfast for the following day.

### **What administrators are available to assist my child and me while school is closed?**

As in any situation, the first point of contact would be the classroom or appropriate specialized teacher. The school principals are contacting their teachers daily. Although the Central Administration Building is not open for the public, it is open for operating essential services during this time. See the TPS website for details.

### **How will my child know what assignments to work on?**

*Grades K-2:* Teachers will send a daily e-mail with information, assignments, and when they are due.

*Grades 3-12:* The Google Classroom platform will be where assignments are posted and then submitted, where questions can be asked, etc.

### **What if we don't know how to use Google Classroom?**

Our technology integration specialists and teacher-librarians will be creating separate weekly e-newsletters for parents. There is a parent/guardian feature that can be added in Google Classroom; if interested, please contact your teacher.

### **What if my child needs a device?**

Any parent who needs a device can call Dr. Budd's office at 203-452-4336 with basic information and we will give you the time and place to then pick up a device.

### **What if my child's TPS device breaks?**

Please call Dr. Budd's office at 203-452-4336 or go to the TPS website and complete [the IT Request form](#). Someone will then notify you of the next steps.

### **What if a password is required?**

The main password a student needs is for their Google Classroom account, which is their student number @trumbullps.net and then the password the student has created. If the student forgot that password, he/she should reach out to his/her teacher.

**I receive [www.trumbullps.org](http://www.trumbullps.org) updates daily, but I still have a question.**

As a parent, if you haven't received an eBlast, please provide an updated e-mail address as soon as possible. For questions, you can contact your student's teacher, or Dr. Budd, Assistant Superintendent, at 203-452-4336 or [jbudd@trumbullps.org](mailto:jbudd@trumbullps.org), or Christina Hefele, Director of Digital Learning, at 203-452-4300 or [chefele@trumbullps.org](mailto:chefele@trumbullps.org).