

Manchester Essex Regional School District

MERSD Educational Continuity Plan

During school closure, MERSD will provide Supplemental and Enrichment Activities to maintain skills and to keep students connected with their school community. The overall goal of our approach is to utilize technology to keep students in contact with their teachers and peers while providing opportunities to participate in supplemental and enrichment based activities during the shutdown. We are not trying to replicate the school day, but we are making our best effort to keep students engaged.

Middle/High School

[Parent Communication] Following please find the “Plan for Extended Closure” for MERHS faculty, students, and families. Individual teachers will be reaching out to students with the plans for their individual classes. The goal of this plan is to provide a continuity of education during the school closure. Certainly distance learning is not optimal, but continuing to provide supplemental enrichment activities for MERHS students is our goal. We realize that there will be obstacles as we begin this work. Students, parents and faculty members will need to be patient with the process. As obstacles arise we will problem solve.

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education provided guidance that we should not be attempting to replicate what students would learn while in school. Rather, the goal should be to provide daily work and preserve existing skills as much as possible. Students should not be expected to spend the length of a school day online doing school work.

After meeting with the Department of Education, some of the language in our initial planning has been adapted. Throughout the document below you will note phrases such as, “Supplemental Enrichment Activities” and “Learning Experiences.” As stated above, it is important to understand that distance learning is not optimal and our focus should be on the continuity of skills. At this time, we will not be grading work. Teachers should provide specific feedback to students to reinforce their learning. We will start by focusing on the completion of work, not the grading of work. We will document the completion of work by putting an “X” in the gradebook. Although the X in the past has indicated that the assignment was waived, from this point forward it will indicate the work is complete. Please note this will be an evolving experience which may require adjustment as we learn more.

Supplemental enrichment activities will commence on Wednesday. This will provide the time for teachers to adjust their practice as necessary. Special Education students will receive a separate correspondence that will provide them with resources for support on Tuesday or Wednesday.

In effort to make this more manageable for students and faculty, teachers will post every other day. Social Studies, Science and electives will begin posting on Wednesday. Math, English and Foreign Language will post beginning on Thursday. This pattern will continue throughout the closure. I have attached a calendar listed posting dates for the month of March. On Wednesday and Thursday, students will receive correspondence from his/her teachers about next steps for each class.

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For families that do not have wifi in their homes, Comcast is providing free 60 day access to the internet. Details can be found below. Students needing a device should email me by 7pm on Monday. Please keep in mind that we have a limited number of devices available to loan, and would like to make them available to the families in greatest need. Computers will be available between 10am and 11am on Tuesday. More information will be sent directly to families borrowing a device. There will be no access to the building.

During this extended closure, we will continue to review the impact of this type of delivery of experiences to students and their grade point averages. We will be flexible in our response to this work and make adjustments as necessary. We will make decisions that are in the best interest of the students.

The Department of Education has not provided guidance pertaining to Grade 10 MCAS at this time.

Also below, please find information related to access to lunch for students in need.

Supplemental Enrichment Activities Plan

For Teachers

- Google Classroom is the preferred method of communication with students.
- Teachers should post supplemental enrichment activities on Google Classroom according to the posting calendar for the **High School. Middle school** teachers should post activities once a week (starting on Wednesday) with a one week due date based on the day of the week students will be focusing on their specific content area.
 - Experiences should be preceded by either video (preferred) or written explanations.
 - Check-in and due dates should be posted with the supplemental experiences/activities.
- Teachers should post “Office Hours” for real-time access for students with questions. Teachers should be available for students at two different times during the day/evening. *For example: 11am - noon and 4pm - 5pm.* Office Hours should be posted on the communication sheet..
- Virtual attendance will be monitored through work completed.
- Teachers will track the completion of activities, by marking an X in Aspen, but will not post grades.
- Special Education teachers will provide students with a “toolbox” to support student access to supplemental enrichment experiences at home.
- During closure, Special Education teachers will check-in directly with students to identify problems and troubleshoot solutions.
- During closure, Regular Education teachers should reach out directly to parents and students if they notice that a student is not completing supplemental activities consistently.
- If a teacher becomes ill, the teacher should post if they will be unavailable.

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- Regular Education teachers should regularly update Aspen noting completion of experiences. For students with IEPs, Special Education teachers will also be involved in monitoring student progress.

For Students:

- Students should check both MEAPPs email and Google Classroom on a daily basis, as teachers may be communicating both ways.
- Students are responsible for completing posted supplemental enrichment activities and experiences.
- If a student is having difficulty, he/she should reach out to the teacher during digital “office hours” or via email to schedule an appointment for an online conference (Facetime, Google Hangouts Skype, etc. or Chat). Middle School students will be advised by their teacher(s) which tool will be used.
- For students with IEPs, please also reach out to your liaison/case manager if you are having difficulties. Email is best.
- Understanding students may not have taken home all necessary tools, supplies, books, etc., students should contact their teacher if they do not have access to a needed resource to find a way to work around that obstacle.
- If a student becomes ill, they should contact each teacher to let them know.

For Parents/Guardians:

- Parents/Guardians should monitor students to assure completion of the supplemental experience/activities.
- Parents/Guardians should contact the teacher if there is a concern about their student’s progress
- For families that do not have internet access, Comcast has options:
<https://www.internetessentials.com/apply>

RESOURCES

COMCAST Information

As our country continues to manage the COVID-19 emergency, we recognize that our company plays an important role in helping our customers stay connected – to their families, their workplaces, their schools, and the latest information about the virus – through the Internet.

We also know that for millions of low-income Americans who don’t have Internet service at home, this uncertain time is going to be even more difficult to manage. As schools and businesses close and families are encouraged, or even mandated, to stay home, Internet connectivity becomes even more important.

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At Comcast, we've been looking for ways to help through our Internet Essentials program, which is the nation's largest and most comprehensive broadband adoption program for low-income Americans. Since 2011, it has connected millions of individuals to the Internet.

A hallmark of this program has been our flexibility in adjusting Internet Essentials to meet the needs of low-income residents in our footprint. So, effective Monday, we are putting in place two substantial program enhancements to help these families deal with this crisis.

1. We will make it even easier for low-income families who live in a Comcast service area to sign up by offering new customers 60 days of complimentary Internet Essentials service, which is normally available to all qualified low-income households for \$9.95/month.

2. Also, we are increasing Internet speeds for the Internet Essentials service from 15/2 Mbps to 25/3 Mbps for all new and existing customers, which will be the speed of the service going forward. In this way, we will ensure that Internet Essentials customers will be able to use their Internet service for all their increased needs as a result of this health crisis.

We want to make it as fast and simple as possible to access this service:

- To receive the increased Internet speeds, existing customers will not need to do anything. The new speeds will be rolled out nationally over the next few days.
- We'll send all new customers a free self-install kit that includes a cable modem with a Wi-Fi router. There will be no term contract or credit check and no shipping fee.
- To sign up, applicants can simply visit www.internetessentials.com. The accessible website also includes the option to video chat with customer service agents in American Sign Language. There are also two dedicated phone numbers 1-855-846-8376 for English and 1-855-765-6995 for Spanish

Elementary

SUPPLEMENTAL ENRICHMENT ACTIVITY PLAN

Classes/grades who currently use Google Classroom can choose to provide activities via this tool. Other classes can use parent and school email to deliver enrichment activities.

All staff will be available for “office hours” one hour per day. Staff should notify parents each week what their daily office hour will be for the week. During office hours, staff will be available to communicate via email with parents.

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- **Teachers and service providers will email families by 9:30 AM** each Monday with a welcome email and will include supplemental enrichment activities for the week. Please note that activities are not to be graded, but teachers may provide feedback. The email will include the following (if applicable):
 - **WELCOME** message – with overview for the week, list of supplement enrichment activities, office hours, etc. This will happen on Wednesday for the first week.
 - **MATHEMATICS** Enrichment Activities
 - Consider activities that can be done at home to maintain their mathematics skills
 - **LITERACY** Enrichment Activities
 - Consider activities that can be done at home to maintain their reading skills
 - Consider having students write in a journal in response to reading or in response to writing prompts
 - **OTHER** – Teachers may recommend other content activities as they see necessary to keep previously-learned skills fresh for students.
- **Teachers and service providers** will announce “office hours” – at least one hour per day when parents can email questions and/or students can get guidance via school/parent email.
- **Special Educators** will collaborate with their team chairperson to create resources to provide to families for students on their caseload.
- **Specialists** will collectively send an email out each Monday (Wednesday for week 1) to all families with suggested activities for the week pertinent to their discipline. The team leader will coordinate this effort.
- **All Staff not assigned students/caseloads** will check and respond to email each day and **will be available for “office hours”** one hour a day should a parent need to reach out to them.