

March 27, 2020

Dear Northwest Families,

We hope this message finds you and your family well during this challenging time. This past Wednesday, Dr. Lockard sent out an e-mail informing our families of the extended closure of April 24, and the steps that CCPS is taking to maintain continuity of learning for our students. While we still have many questions to answer, we have taken great strides to plan, prepare, and implement distance learning opportunities. Please know all teachers, staff, and administrators are working diligently and are here to support you and your child during this time – throughout the week we have been holding virtual meetings to plan and prepare.

During our meetings, we discussed all available information and expectations that we have at this time. Please know, this situation is evolving and flexibility by all involved is going to be essential. We are constantly receiving direction from federal, state and local regulations, with the focus on maintaining the safety of all students and families.

Distance Learning Platform:

As Dr. Lockard referenced in his letter, all teachers will begin to reach out to parents regarding the Distance Learning Platforms (Google Classroom for online learning) for students with a focus on **continuity of learning** on Monday, March 30th. Monday afternoon you can expect an e-mail from Northwest academic team leader, as well as the physical education and related arts team leader with some more information. This will provide consolidated information on how students can access the learning platform. Next week will give both student and teachers an opportunity to become familiar with the Google Classroom platform, and by Monday April 6 all teachers should be up and running.

Here are some important items to understand about the distance learning process:

- **Virtual Learning:** This means independent, self-paced work. Students are not expected to be joining online video chats every day with all their teachers, but some teachers may occasionally use videos and chats to communicate with students. Students would be able to view this information without time constraints.
- **Manageable Content:** We are hoping that the instruction, assignments, and communication all lead to vital points in the curriculum. Students will be able to work at individual paces, understanding family needs vary.
- **Same but Different:** While all teachers are expected to create and provide online platforms, it could (and most likely will) look drastically different from class to class, teacher to teacher. Remember, be patient & flexible!
- **Technology:** CCPS is working hard on gathering resources to provide for families without devices. I do not have all the details as to how this will work, but they are working hard to make it happen! All students will be provided with a packet/workbook that can be used in lieu of the

online platform. These will be mailed out centrally and should arrive in the next two weeks. More information will be shared as it becomes available.

- **Student Expectations:** We are asking teachers to be mindful of family dynamics. Sharing devices, spotty internet, parents working from home, are just a few things that most families will be dealing with. We understand the need for flexibility and self-pacing of activities and learning opportunities that are provided.
- **Availability:** Students and parents can feel free to contact teachers at any time. Teachers and staff at all levels will have designated “office hours.” Teachers may respond early or at different times, but designated times are as follows:
 - **Elementary School Teachers:** 8:30-10:30 M-F
 - **Middle School Teachers:** 10:00-12:00 M-F
 - **High School Teachers:** 1:00-3:00 M-F
- Teachers will be available to answer questions and provide feedback beginning on Monday, March 30. Initially, students will receive feedback on their progress. This will not be in the form of grades in the gradebook, but in feedback. We are waiting for more direction from MSDE on grading. As new information becomes available, we will be sure to communicate with you. Again, this is all new to us so please be flexible!
- **Resources:** Teachers are collaborating with each other, supervisors, and using online resources to come up with the best plans that will support our students. As we receive links and resources, we will send them out. We understand e-mails can become overwhelming, but during this time, we will be sending more than usual. Attached, you will find a Google Classroom Guide for parents and the link below has additional tutorials to help you navigate our virtual classrooms.
- <https://sites.google.com/carrollk12.org/ccps-learning-resources/home>

Additional Information:

- **Special Education:** The Special Education department is working hard to format how students will receive their services. We will communicate more about that moving forward.
- **Events:** Events such as 8th grade farewell and end-of-year concerts, will be considered as time moves forward. We will communicate expectations for these as soon as decisions are made.
- **Access to the Building:** At this time, and for the safety of our school community, there is no access to the school building except for our custodial staff who is working hard to disinfect and prepare the building for a hopeful return. We apologize for this inconvenience but will notify families when we regain access.

Thank you for understanding and flexibility during this time. It is going to take the entire Northwest community working together for us to continue to provide learning opportunities for our students. We are confident that we can make this happen! Please feel free to reach out to either administrator at any time as we move forward. On behalf of our staff, we wish you well and good health during this time.

Take care of yourselves!

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