



APRIL 2020

Family Focused Updates

Quick Reference

To sign up for districtwide emails, including updates about COVID-19, please subscribe to [our mailing list](#). If you're already receiving emails from the district, you don't need to enter information.

[Distance Learning](#) | [Meal Sites](#) | [Online Learning Support](#)

BALTIMORE CITY
PUBLIC SCHOOLS



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April 1, 2020

COVID-19 Response FAQ

Out of concern and care for community, City Schools continues to monitor developments related to COVID-19. Thank you for working together to keep our community safe. We are providing this helpful list of frequently-asked questions to support your understanding as we act in the best interests of our students and community.

If you have COVID-19 related questions, please email communications@bcps.k12.md.us.

[View FAQs related to COVID-19](#)

Message Regarding COVID-19 Case

Dear City Schools students, families, staff members, and community partners,

Baltimore City Public Schools has learned that an individual supporting Steuart Hill Academic Academy recently tested positive for COVID-19 during the school building closure period. Once the person's condition was known, they immediately ceased contact with the campus. Based on discussions and a review of the timeline, the individual contracted the virus after schools were closed. Out of respect for the individual's confidentiality, we cannot release any personal information.

In recent days, federal and state leaders have been clear that as we learn more about the spread of COVID-19, additional cases will become known. City Schools places the highest priority on the health, safety, and well-being of our community while working diligently to support the education and social needs of its families.

The district is taking actions to continue distributing learning materials and emergency meals that are consistent with guidance from federal health authorities, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) as well as the Baltimore City Health Department.

The following steps reduce the risk of COVID-19 exposure include:

- To the greatest extent possible, practicing social distancing when distributing emergency meals or learning packets.
- Encouraging frequent handwashing for employees that are working.
- Cleaning and sanitizing high-use areas, paying particular attention to shared surfaces (doorknobs, sink/toilet handles, elevator buttons, etc.).
- Taking all available steps to reduce the time and number of interactions between all parties at our meal sites, including the use of designated interaction points.

In alignment with directives from Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan and guidance from the Baltimore City Health Department, City Schools strongly encourages students and families to avoid contact with other individuals unless absolutely necessary.

As the situation continues to change rapidly, we will work to keep you updated regarding this rapidly evolving situation, including updates on cases that have a direct impact on the delivery of services. And again, we encourage everyone to avoid contact with others. Please continue to check the school district's Health Updates Web site for information.

Thank you, and be safe.



April 3, 2020

NEW distance learning webpage available Monday, April 6

Distance Learning in City Schools starts on Monday, April 6. The hub for this initiative is www.baltimorecityschools.org/distance-learning (page goes live Monday, April 6). Beginning that day, students and families will have access to learning experiences in the following ways:

- **Lessons on television** - Students will be able to access daily reading, math, science, and art lessons on City Schools TV (Comcast 77) and the city's CharmTV (Comcast 25 and 1025). Additionally, CharmTV will offer lessons via streaming video at <http://www.charmtvbaltimore.com>. A schedule of lessons will be available on the district's Distance Learning webpage.
- **Distance Learning Packets** - Each week, a new set of distance learning packets will be available with lessons for students via download from the Distance Learning Webpage. Additionally, every Monday during the closure period, students will be able to pick up work packets at the district's 18 meal sites.
- **Teacher Collaboration** - Two ways teachers will work with students are via Blackboard Collaborate and Google Classroom. Blackboard Collaborate will be used to give live instruction, and Google Classroom will host class assignments and resources. Teachers will send a link to students to invite them to Blackboard Collaborate.

For help with homework and class assignments and questions about online learning, please call City Schools' Homework and Technology Help Desk at 443-984-2001. The hours are 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday to Friday.



April 6, 2020

Third Quarter Grading Update

City Schools firmly believes that grades are a measure of students' progress in their courses. To promote the continuation of academic engagement during the school building closure period, the district will take the following actions regarding grading in the Third Quarter:

- Student work completed through March 12 will not be adversely impacted due to the school building closure period.
- Students have until Friday, April 10, to submit any remaining assignments that were due through March 12.
- Teachers will communicate to students and parents the expectations for submitting makeup assignments and methods of submission. Students may have varied points of access to resources; therefore, teachers will consider accessibility limitations and exercise reasonable flexibility.

Again, all students have until Friday, April 10 to complete any uncompleted assignments and make-up work provided through March 12.

City Schools, similar to other school districts statewide, is seeking guidance from the Maryland State Department of Education regarding the grading of work packets and other assignments given during the closure period that began on March 16. City Schools will provide updates to students, families, and staff after receiving clarification by state officials.

Join us for a social media chat about distance learning

Do you have questions about navigating distance learning? Don't fret, help is on the way. A representative of the district's Teaching and Learning Office will be available to answer your questions on both Facebook and Twitter from 1 p.m. to 2 p.m. on Wednesday, April 8. Log in to @baltcityschools on:

- Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/baltcityschools>)
- Twitter (<https://twitter.com/BaltCitySchools>)

And we'll do our best to answer your questions.



April 8, 2020

Online Learning Support

As City Schools moves to distance learning, two ways teachers will work with students are BlackBoard Collaborate and Google Classroom. BlackBoard Collaborate will be used to give live instruction, and Google Classroom will host class assignments and resources. Please see the instructions for them on our [online learning support page](#).

City Schools Growing and Thriving Together: Compassionate, Connected, and Courageous

At City Schools, we believe that [nurturing student wholeness](#) is not only a top priority but a key part of how we ensure the success of our students as learners and as leaders in their schools and communities. This means that we must:

- Support students' physical, social, and emotional well-being, as well as their academic growth,
- Help them explore their interests and identities
- Make sure they have trusting and supportive relationships with people inside and beyond their school communities.

It also means that we must build healthy learning environments that are safe and nurturing for all young people to enable them to reach their highest potential.

We are Here to Support

To help our students navigate this time in a way that ensures they are safe and whole, it is important that the adults in their lives—parents, family members, teachers, coaches, mentors, faith leaders, and others—all work together to provide care and comfort. We recognize that for some of our students, this period of uncertainty may be challenging and stressful. Some of ways we can support are by...

- Creating opportunities for students to express what they are feeling
- Helping them to learn simple ways to manage stress and anxiety
- And encouraging them to stay connected to family, friends, teachers, and classmates.

But we know that this is not just a hard time for many of our students—it can be just as tough on adults. Many of us are struggling to manage our own anxiety, sense of isolation, or the stresses caused by being stuck at home, dealing with work related issues or unemployment, and figuring out how to parent children through these unprecedented experiences—including having to suddenly support our kids' learning at home. To be fully present for our young people, we must tend to our own physical and emotional well-being, too.

We are here for you. We are in this together.

As we continue to monitor this ever-changing situation, City Schools will continue to provide support that addresses the unique needs of our students and families. Each week, on "Wellness Wednesdays," we will use this space to provide a variety of tools and resources that support students and families in taking care of themselves, each other, and their communities.

Our aim is to stay connected, compassionate, and courageous as a community through these challenging times.

This week [check out this tip sheet for families and caregivers from our partners](#) at the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) about how to cope with the COVID-19 pandemic.



April 8, 2020

The Kids' Guide to Coronavirus with Kristen Bell!

From Nickelodeon is also a great resource for helping answer young people's questions about COVID-19.

For more information, please see the following:

City Schools is hosting virtual office hours for families who are interested in learning more about how to support the social and emotional needs of their children during this time. On Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, families of students in grades K-5 can participate in the virtual support hour from 12:30 to 1:15 p.m. or 5 p.m. to 5:45 p.m. using this [link](#) or by calling (571) 392- 7650. The pin number for accessing the call via phone is 898-721-9674.

On Tuesdays and Thursdays, families of students in grades 6- 12 can participate in the virtual support hour from 12:30 to 1:15 p.m. or 5 to 5:45 p.m. using this [link](#) or by calling (571) 392- 7650. The pin number for accessing the call via phone is 451-222-4687.

Distribution of devices for distance learning

We are providing many tools and resources to help students and their families access materials during this period of distance learning. This includes loaning computers to many students. As you're aware, we asked families to complete a survey about food and technology needs. Results from the survey have and will continue to inform our plan for distributing the computers. Please complete the survey if you haven't already.

Beginning Monday, April 13, some high school students will begin to receive computers. We are prioritizing students in these grades to make sure they can meet graduation requirements. Principals and school staff will contact families of students who have been identified to receive a computer with instructions and possible dates and times for picking up the computer.

This information will also be available on the [distance learning page](#) on Friday.

The week of April 20, students in other grades who have been identified as needing a computer will be notified by their school leader that they may pick up computers at their schools during specified time periods that will continue through the end of April.

If you have questions about homework, class assignments, online learning, or need support accessing tools such as Google Classroom and BlackBoard Collaborate, please call the help desk at 443-984-2001, Monday to Friday, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., or visit the [distance learning](#) or [online learning support](#) pages on the district website.

Observing religious holidays

The COVID-19 pandemic is unlike any challenge our nation has ever faced, forcing us to make many adaptations and some radical changes to the ways in which we live, work and educate our young people. A few changes we were required to make in our annual Spring Break schedule, and what that means for upcoming religious observances.

As you know, Spring Break for schools was originally scheduled from Monday, April 6 through Monday, April 13, and was linked to days of observance for Passover and Easter. As a result of the first school closure period related to the COVID-19 outbreak, the district followed the recommendation of MSDE to change the dates for Spring Break for schools to Friday, March 20 through the following Friday, March 27. These changes eliminated the correlation that we had planned between the Spring Break dates and observance of these key holidays.

We recognize that the observance of such high holy days is important to many staff members. Students and families may find that some teachers and staff members will be unavailable on April 10-12, as they use personal time to observe this period. We thank you for your support and patience as employees recognize this religious season.



April 9, 2020

Message from the CEO about the launch of Distance Learning

CEO Sonja Brookins-Santelises [shares her thoughts](#) on the launch of City Schools' Distance Learning effort and the benefits for students and families.

Notice regarding COVID-19 case at City Neighbors Hamilton

Baltimore City Public Schools has learned that an individual working at the emergency meal site at City Neighbors Hamilton recently tested positive for COVID-19. The individual may have had contact with others. In conversations with the individual, they began to display symptoms Tuesday. According to health experts, a person infected with COVID-19 is contagious two days before they start to show symptoms.

Out of respect for the employee's confidentiality, we cannot release any personal information.

City Schools places the highest priority on the health, safety, and well-being of our community while working diligently to support the education and social needs of its families. The district is offering the following guidance:

- **Effective Friday, April 10, City Schools will close City Neighbors Hamilton to follow the district's Standard Operating Procedure on cleaning and disinfecting school buildings.**
- Individuals who may have been in contact with staff working at the City Neighbors Hamilton emergency meal site should self-monitor for symptoms such as fever, cough, shortness of breath for 2-14 days.
- [According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#), if you think you have been exposed to COVID 19 and develop a fever and symptoms, such as cough or difficulty breathing, call your healthcare provider for medical advice.
- For students and families seeking meals or learning packets, please visit our [Meal Sites webpage](#) for a list of 17 other sites where meals and learning packets will be available. We will notify the community of the date when the meal site at City Neighbors Hamilton will reopen.

As the situation continues to change rapidly, we will work to keep you updated regarding this rapidly evolving situation. And again, we encourage everyone to avoid contact with others.



April 10, 2020

City Schools wishes you a prosperous holiday weekend. Take the time to rest, reflect, and rejuvenate. May love, peace, and happiness be showered on you and your family.

Work packet availability

Distance Learning work packets and Family Guides for the week of April 13 will be online after 4 p.m. today. On the [Distance Learning webpage](#).

Students and families should use the links on the page as a resource while school buildings are closed. Find your grade level and click the link to download daily lessons. Additionally, every Monday during the closure period, students will be able to pick up work packets at [the district's 18 meal sites](#). Be sure to check out our helpful [Distance Learning primer](#) which outlines our Distance Learning materials.

CEO Conversation

On Thursday, April 16 at 5 p.m., join Dr. Santelises and a panel of City Schools leadership. They will provide updates on distance learning, technology, and student wholeness. This event will be streamed live on the City Schools [Facebook page](#).

Reminder about meals

Baltimore City is providing free grab-n-go meals for youth on Saturday, April 11, at rec centers across the city. Meals will not be served on Sunday, April 12, in observance of Easter.

Visit bmorechildren.com for info on daily meal sites and times.

Distribution of devices for distance learning

Beginning Monday, April 13, some high school juniors and seniors will begin to receive computers. We are prioritizing students in these grades to make sure they can meet graduation requirements. Principals or school staff will contact families of students who have been identified to receive a computer with instructions and possible dates and times for picking up the computer. This information will also be available on the [distance learning webpage](#).

The week of April 20, students in other grades who have been identified as needing a computer will be notified by their school leader that they may pick up computers at their schools during specified time periods that will continue through the end of April.

If you have questions about homework, class assignments, online learning, or need support accessing tools such as Google Classroom and BlackBoard Collaborate, please call the help desk at 443-984-2001, Monday to Friday, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., or visit the [distance learning](#) or [online learning support](#) pages on the district website.

Visit [our FAQ page](#) for more information on device distribution.

City Schools spirit week

YOU(th) Up Next Baltimore presents City Schools spirit week! This week is designed to help students feel connected and express themselves during this unprecedented time.

- Monday, April 13: **School spirit day**
Take a selfie wearing school swag.
- Tuesday, April 14: **Book Selfie Day**
Take a selfie with the book you are currently reading.
- Wednesday, April 15: **Wellness Wednesday & Workout Day**
Take a selfie showing how you are staying active.
- Thursday, April 16: **Thoughtful and Thriving Day**
Create or repost encouraging memes or videos.
- Friday, April 17: **Social Mixer and House Party**

Don't forget to tag City Schools and use the hashtag **#CitySchoolsSpiritWeek**

[Flyer](#)



April 14, 2020

National Guard is here to help at meal sites

Baltimore City Public Schools is pleased to continue operating 18 sites across the community for you to pick up meals and learning packets for students. We encourage families in need of those items to visit any one of the locations.

Beginning Wednesday, April 15, the Maryland National Guard has graciously offered to assist the district in helping to distribute meals and learning packets at 14 of the meal sites. With its help, we can minimize the time you spend at the locations and keep you safe.

The men and women that make up the National Guard will be on-site to help City Schools achieve our goal of ensuring our academic materials are accessible and that students, families, and communities have access to healthy meals.

We look forward to seeing you – safely while practicing social distancing – at any of the 18 meal sites. To learn more visit, baltimorecityschools.org/meal-sites.

Reminder: Pre-kindergarten and kindergarten enrollment to be delayed

Due to the school building closure period, the pre-kindergarten and kindergarten enrollment period for Baltimore City Public Schools will be delayed. Currently, the district is considering alternative methods to support enrollment while keeping families safe. Additional information will be available the week of April 28.



April 15, 2020

Virtual Office Hours

City Schools is hosting virtual office hours for families who are interested in learning more about how to support the social and emotional needs of their children during this time.

On Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, families of students in grades K-5 can participate in the virtual support hour from 12:30 to 1:15 p.m. or 5 to 5:45 p.m. using this link <https://bit.ly/2Va3t2F> or by calling (571) 392- 7650. The PIN for accessing the call via phone is 898-721-9674.

On Tuesdays and Thursdays, families of students in grades 6-12 can participate in the virtual support hour from 12:30 to 1:15 p.m. or 5 to 5:45 p.m. using this link <https://bit.ly/3bet9kr> or by calling (571) 392- 7650. The PIN for accessing the call via phone is 451-222-4687.

Check out our flyer in [English](#) and [Spanish](#)



April 17, 2020

School closure period update

Today, the state of Maryland extended the closure period for public school buildings. All school buildings in Baltimore City Public Schools will remain closed through **May 15, 2020**. During this time, City Schools students will continue with distance-based learning curriculum. Students may call our Homework Hotline for assistance at 443-984-2001, Monday-Friday from 8 a.m.- 6 p.m.

Learning packets and grab-and-go meals will continue to be available at our 18 emergency food sites from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Please visit our [Meal Sites](#) webpage for list of locations.

The district will also continue to provide updates related to the schedule change as we learn more. For questions, you may call our COVID-19 Hotline at 443-984-2000 or visit our Health Updates webpage at www.baltimorecityschools.org/health-updates.

Free STEM and art kits

City Schools will offer free STEM and art kits for students at some meal sites. Please check the [district website](#) for the dates and sites.

Replay of the April 16 CEO Conversation

Did you miss the CEO Conversation on Facebook with Dr. Santelises on April 16? Get the latest updates on learning packets, distance learning, and the schedule for the rest of the school year. Watch the full video on [Facebook](#).

Free meals

Free meals this weekend (April 18 and 19) are available at city recreation centers from 12-4 both days, with the exception of Carroll F. Cook Recreation Center, which is temporarily closed.



April 20, 2020

CEO Round Up

Dr. Santelises will be answering your questions about the closure extension and 4th-quarter grading this Thursday, April 23 from 1-1:30 p.m. live on [City Schools' Facebook page](#).

Sidewalk Grab and Go Pantries

City Schools is pleased to announce it will launch 10 new sidewalk grab-and-go pantry with food donated by the World Central Kitchen. A truck of frozen prepared meals will arrive at the 10 sites once a week on a designated day (either Wednesdays or Fridays). Meals will be distributed between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.

An individual person may take 7 meals. Families may pick up meals based on the number of people in their household. For example, a family of 3 may pick up 21 meals or 3 bags of 7 meals each. The maximum number of meals one family may take is 28 meals.

School Pantry Schedule:

Wednesday, 10am - 2pm

- [Vanguard Collegiate Middle School, Edgewood Elementary School, Walter P. Carter Elementary/Middle School, Fort Worthington Elementary/Middle School, Baltimore Montessori Public Charter School](#)

Friday, 10am – 2pm

- [Highlandtown Elementary/Middle School #237, Southwest Baltimore Charter School, Harford Heights Elementary School, Sarah M. Roach Elementary School](#)
- (12pm - 2pm) [Elmer A. Henderson: A Johns Hopkins Partnership School](#)

Please be sure to practice social distancing when picking up meals. In addition to the sidewalk grab-and-go meals, City Schools will also continue [operating its 18 meals sites](#).

Updates for seniors

City Schools has created a helpful guide to keep seniors up-to-speed and on the right track to graduation. [Please review the document](#) and work with your school counselor as needed.

* Additionally, seniors packets, with six weeks of work for seniors projects, will be available at meal sites beginning on Tuesday, April 21.



April 21, 2020

Grading Updates

Beginning April 28, all City Schools student report cards, including charter schools, for third quarter may be viewed electronically using [Campus Portal](#). Report cards will also be mailed to families no later than May 8.

If you don't have access to Campus Portal and can't receive mail, please call the online learning support help desk after April 28 at 443-984-2001.

City Schools has also announced its Fourth Quarter Grading plan.

- City Schools will offer a Pass/Incomplete grading option for quarter 4 for students in PreK-12
- Graded work will include online learning opportunities, learning packets, and lessons via television.
- Students may submit work assigned to them via our distance learning platforms. Students engaging with learning packets will not return paper copies. Instead, teachers will monitor and offer support to students via weekly check-in calls.
- “Pass” is issued to students who have been able to engage in distance learning, to include learning packets.
- “Incomplete” is issued to students whom the schools have not been successful in engaging through multiple avenues.

Charter and contract schools may have different requirements for 4th quarter based on their model; families should look for their school's guidance on their website next week as it is still going through the approval process.



April 23, 2020

City of Baltimore to provide 30-pound boxes of food April 24-25

The City of Baltimore will be providing 30-pound boxes of food to families at 10 City Schools campuses starting at 10 a.m. on Friday, April 24. The boxes will be available while supplies last at the following sites:

- Alexander Hamilton Elementary School, 800 Poplar Grove St. 21216
- Arlington Elementary School, 3705 W. Rogers Ave. 21215
- Beechfield Elementary/Middle School, 301 S. Beechfield Ave. 21229
- Franklin Square Elementary/Middle School, 1400 W. Lexington St. 21223
- Gwynns Falls Elementary School, 2700 Gwynns Falls Parkway 21216
- Holabird Elementary/Middle School, 1500 Imla St. 21224
- John Ruhrah Elementary/Middle School, 701 Rapolla St. 21224
- Maree G. Farring Elementary/Middle School, 300 Pontiac Ave. 21225
- Paul Laurence Dunbar High School, 1400 Orleans St. 21231
- Sinclair Lane Elementary School, 3880 Sinclair Lane 21213

In addition, the City will provide meals starting at noon on **Saturday, April 25** at the following sites:

- C.C. Jackson Rec Center, 4910 Park Heights Ave. 21205
- Crispus Attucks Rec Center, 1601 W. Madison St. 21217
- Harlem Park Rec Center, 700 N. Calhoun St. 21217
- Northwood Rec Center, 1517 Winford Road. 21239
- Oliver Rec Center, 1600 N. Spring St. 21213
- Samuel F.B. Morse Rec Center, 424 Pulaski St. 21223
- Virginia S. Baker Rec Center, 2601 E. Baltimore St. 21224

For more information about the 30-pound boxes of food, visit bmorechildren.com/freemeals

To learn more about City Schools' 18 meal and learning packet sites as well as 10 new Sidewalk Grab-and Go pantries, visit [our meals webpage](#).



April 24, 2020

Follow these tips to protect your student online

City Schools is committed to keeping students safe while interacting with teachers and schools online. To help, the district is providing flyers in [English](#) and [Spanish](#) with information on protecting student privacy.

Mobile Device Hotspot

Students and families with free Sprint phones from Sprint's [1 Million Project](#) can use their phones as a hotspot for free internet. For directions, please check the [Sprint website](#).

Additionally, Sprint has increased the monthly data plan for these phones from 10 to 20 gigabytes through June 30.



April 27, 2020

Deadline for choice application and decline statements extended

In an effort to support families through this difficult time, the deadline for the submission of Updated Choice applications and Decline Statements is May 1. For information about choice applications visit <https://www.baltimorecityschools.org/choice>. If you do not have access to download, print, or email the updated application, please call 410-396-8600.

3rd Quarter Report Cards

Beginning tomorrow, Tuesday, April 28, all City Schools student report cards, including for charter schools, for third quarter may be viewed electronically on Campus Portal. To access report cards on Campus Portal, please follow the following instructions:

1. Login to Campus Portal
2. At the bottom of the list on the left-hand side, click **More**
3. Under **Quick Links**, select **Academic Progress** (Academic Progress displays in new tab)
4. Find **Report Card** and click **Quarter 3** (the report card will display in a new tab)

Report cards will also be mailed to families no later than May 8. If you do not have access to Campus Portal and cannot receive mail, please call the online learning support help desk after April 28 at 443-984-2001.



April 28, 2020

AP Exam Update

AP Exams are scheduled for May 11 – 22, 2020, and are designed to be taken online from home. Only students who were registered prior to March 14 to take the exam by their schools are eligible to take this year's exams.

Other important points include:

- AP Exams have been revised to about 45 minutes each, are limited to content that most teachers would have covered by March, and will only include free response components.
- Please note that Baltimore City Public Schools' students follow the Eastern Time schedule for exams.
- Log into your device 30 minutes prior to the start of the testing window.
- Students can access daily, online AP classes and review for the exam by following this link [AP Exam Review](#).
- Finally, students who have not received an email from the College Board with details about their exam schedules should contact their AP teacher or AP coordinator immediately in order to receive their testing access codes just prior to the exam.
- Other AP related questions can be directed to Dennis Jutras (djutras@bcps.k12.md.us).

Young Audience's and Future Maker's Arts & Learning Snacks

Young Audiences is providing Arts & Learning Snacks - activity packs that children can work on independently or with their families. The packs do not require internet access and that support academic, creative, and social and emotional development.

Each snack pack will also link to a website where families and educators can engage with the featured artist in video activities to further support learning and instruction. Parents and students can pick up the arts and learning snacks between the hours of 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. at the following locations on Thursday, April 30:

- Maree G. Farring
- Gwynns Falls
- City Neighbors Hamilton
- Dunbar