

Wednesday, March 18, 2020

Dear DCPS Community,

During this unprecedented public health emergency, DC Public Schools (DCPS) remains committed to ensuring the well-being of our students, staff, and school communities. Thank you for your continued support as our district works to mitigate the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19).

In challenging times like these, we see our DCPS values in action every day:

- **Students First** as our incredible educators create dynamic lessons so that our students can continue learning;
- **Teamwork** as our district works closely with our interagency partners under the leadership of Mayor Bowser; and
- **Courage** as our dedicated operational staff take steps to continue necessary services and clean school buildings for our staff and students.

I am writing to provide an update on our district's response to coronavirus (COVID-19) and to share additional resources to support your student and family.

#DCPSatHome: Distance Learning Lessons for Students

Distance learning will start next week on Tuesday, March 24 after Spring Break (March 17 to March 23). DCPS prepared printed packets of materials for every grade level from Pre-K through 8th grade and each graduation requirement course for 9-12th grade. Some students may have already received these materials last week from their teachers prior to closing for Spring Break, but we will have official times to receive printed packets this week.

DCPS families can pick up hardcopies of distance learning materials at their school on the following days between 8:30 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.:

- **Thursday, March 19**
- **Friday, March 20**
- **Monday, March 23**

More information will be shared directly by your school principal and teachers. Distance learning materials will also be available online starting **Friday, March 20**.

Any family in the district can download lessons specific to a student's grade level or course through DCPS' Canvas site, with no login or password necessary. There, you will also see links to DCPS' collection of other online learning tools and helpful resources for students and families. Bookmark — **bit.ly/DCPS_ICP** — and start downloading distance learning lessons on Friday, March 20.

These activities will continue classroom learning and engage students during the period of school closure. DCPS' distance learning materials are designed to meet the needs of all students including English Learners and students with special needs. Students are expected to complete their distance

learning assignments and check in with teachers during virtual office hours, but will not be penalized if schoolwork is not completed.

We know that supporting your students' learning at home can be challenging, and we appreciate the ways that our families and communities are coming together in this critical moment. In addition to the lessons provided by our schools, I encourage families to think about how your student learns best through reading, playing board games, writing in journals, or other activities that will continue to support your student's academic growth and social-emotional wellbeing.

We will provide additional tips and ideas to engage your child through [DCPS social media](#), as well as on our [website](#). We encourage you to share on social media how your family is continuing learning at home using [#DCPSatHome](#).

REMINDER: Free Meals for All Students

I want to remind all families that meals will be available for all students every weekday at locations throughout the city. Visit coronavirus.dc.gov/mealsites and select, Meal Locations for All DC Students, for more information. Please share this information with your friends, family, and neighbors, so that all young people have access to healthy meals during this period of school closure.

Additional Resources

We know that this situation has caused uncertainty and anxiety in our community and want to support your student and family during this challenging time. I encourage you to review the following resources:

- [Viruses Don't Discriminate and Neither Should We: Coronavirus and Stigma](#)
- [Free Comcast Internet Service for Eligible Families](#)

We will continue to provide updates as more information becomes available at dcps.dc.gov/coronavirus.

Please visit coronavirus.dc.gov and continue to follow the guidance of [Mayor Bowser](#) and [DC Health](#) as we work together to manage this citywide health emergency. If you have additional questions, please email CEO.info@k12.dc.gov or call 202-442-5885.

I encourage you to continue to take steps to [stop the spread of germs](#), and check in on your neighbors and members of our community who are most in need. By working together, we can slow the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19) and continue to put the safety of our students, staff, and community first.

In partnership,

Lewis D. Ferebee, Ed.D.
Chancellor
DC Public Schools