



# PINE GROVE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

*Promoting Growth, Achievement, Success, and Direction for ALL Children!*



*Heath W. Renninger  
Superintendent*

April 17, 2020

Good afternoon everyone,

I want to thank everyone for your excellent efforts during the implementation of our Instructional Continuity Plan. We all have a duty to make this the best possible experience for students. Our plan has now received full school board and statewide approval from PDE. One of our main goals in the plan is to ensure that a student's final grade or ability to graduate not be negatively impacted by the inability to complete the fourth quarter due to barriers beyond their control – lack of technology access, lack of parental support, potential sickness of a student or family member, etc. However, a student's intentional refusal to engage in flexible learning is another thing and this concern will be addressed by our building principals. Our Instructional Continuity Plan is not voluntary for students and work is not optional. Another primary goal is to provide our students with planned standards-based instruction on new material that includes responsive feedback. It is expected that student completed work will be reviewed by teachers and remediated with students, however formalized number or letter grades will not occur. This is new for everyone and we are working to improve. Our final goal is to provide a place where students can connect with their teacher and classmates online to lessen the feelings of isolation. It is our belief that the social and mental health of our students may end up being affected to a greater extent than the loss of formalized education. As much as we all crave normalcy; unfortunately, these are abnormal times.

In order to be able to accomplish our goals, it is necessary that we partner with parents. We hope that you are supportive of working with our staff to ensure that learning takes place in the home and that you hold your students accountable for completion of the work.

Feedback on the assigned work is beginning to happen and will be happening in multiple ways in our different learning environments. At grades 6 through 12, teachers are expected to give specific feedback on assigned work through the numerous platforms being used. Starting next week, teachers will be assigning work that would have typically happened in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of your course. Teachers are also available virtually multiple hours per day to connect with students by way of video conferencing to provide further feedback on assignments and to offer explanation and remediation. If students are not engaging, staff will be reaching out to families directly to discuss the lack of engagement.

At Kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> grade, we are utilizing the use of our district website as a way to distribute video content, assignments, and activities. Currently, feedback is happening in virtual sessions similar to the secondary grades. Teachers are able to review assigned content, remediate, and connect with students in this virtual environment. Students are encouraged to save their work as a PDF, scan, or take a picture of assigned work and email your teachers for additional feedback. As we begin next week and begin assigning new types of work, teachers will be adding additional ways to provide feedback with their students. As of a few days ago, our elementary teachers are now able to make editable PDFs as a way to make the process of emailing or submitting work easier. The following week, you will see an additional way to submit assignments on our website which will allow students and parents the opportunity to upload assignments to submit work.



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Last night our school board formally approved *Instructional Continuity Plan - Addendum #1* which essentially addresses grading in the 4<sup>th</sup> marking period. The addendum states that all students are expected to complete three quarters of formalized grades, and one quarter engaged in flexible learning. For high school students, credits will be awarded accordingly and class rank will be calculated based on the numeric value of the first three marking periods. The district understands that extenuating circumstances currently exist and the building administrator has the ability to address final grades on an individual student basis.

More specifically in the fourth quarter, the district will focus on **student growth and engagement**. When evaluating student progress, our staff will focus on student understanding of material and engagement level as followed: Highly Engaged, Moderately Engaged, or Not Yet Engaged.

**Highly Engaged** – means a student is actively engaged in the learning process, actively engages in learning sessions, and actively completes activities/assignments.

**Moderately Engaged** – means a student is meeting minimum expectations and/or is partially engaged, attends some learning sessions, and completes some activities/assignments.

**Not Yet Engaged** – means a student is intentionally not engaged in the learning process, does not intentionally attend learning sessions, and does not intentionally complete activities/assignments. A student's final grade may be negatively impacted if they have not yet engaged.

We know there may be many extraneous reasons as to why a student's engagement may be affected, and we will do everything we can to support them. We ask that you notify your teacher/s if any of these reasons may exist in your current environment.

Again, I appreciate everyone's support and understanding as we move through these uncharted waters. Believe me, none of us want to be in this predicament, but unfortunately we are....and we are trying our best to map the way towards a brighter future.

Thank you for your continued support,

Heath W. Renninger, Superintendent