

Dear JCS Families

The highest priority of anyone who loves a child is their physical safety and emotional well-being. As educators and caregivers ourselves, we have taken proactive steps from the beginning of this unprecedented event to ensure their safety and make sure that the vital nutrition, counseling, and educational services we provide continue. During a time of crisis, we know that consistency and connection are vital for children to develop resiliency that will serve them the rest of their lives.

As this pandemic continues to unfold we continue to re-evaluate our practice, listen to our families, and work to ensure that what we are providing is what our community needs from us. In the last three weeks, we have spoken with thousands of families, while working to manage our own families in crisis. We have heard from each of you over and over again that providing nutrition and social-emotional support has proven to be the prevailing need during the school closure. We have heard the stories of how overwhelmed you are as you juggle multiple classes, master new technology, and maintain your work schedules. This is true of our staff as well. Teaching is hard, raising children is hard, and making a living is hard. Doing them all at the same time is nearly impossible.

In supporting you, we are dedicated to making education fit the needs of the families we serve. **A student's education is your CHOICE, and we will respect and support that choice by offering all of the following options:**

1. Any student passing their coursework when the closure began on March 9, 2020, will advance to the next grade level and receive full credit regardless of any subsequent work completion. No student will be penalized for any educational performance after the 3rd nine weeks.
2. We will continue to provide lessons, work packets, and teleconference classes for extension activities and skill maintenance. You may choose to use them, and we hope that you do, but students will NOT be penalized if you do not. This is a GREAT opportunity for you to help students pursue what they are passionate about and to strengthen areas that they struggle in without the pressure of potential failure.
3. We will continue to provide students with feedback on their work if you wish. However, that feedback will be from the teacher about areas of strength and where the student may wish to practice more. It will NOT be in the form of a grade. We will not be assigning grades, just giving students feedback on their performance. For instance, a teacher may send a note stating that a student's work is inconsistent with using balanced equations and then offer some more practice problems. They may host a Zoom lesson on that topic and invite the student to join, but teachers will not "fail" a student on balanced equations.
4. If you wish to have work graded to improve upon a poor grade at the end of the 3rd quarter, please contact the student's teacher and request that their work be graded for consideration in their end of year average. This will not be on an assignment by assignment basis. Either you wish to have the entire 4th quarter work graded for that subject/course and averaged into their overall grade or you do not.

5. Any student who was failing when the closure began has been prioritized and is receiving additional targeted instructional support and communication from their teachers as well as technical resources. Those students will be given EVERY opportunity to catch up and attain the skills necessary for the next grade level. This time allows us to be more intensive with those students in advancing their knowledge. Decisions about their advancement to the next grade for these students will be made at the end of the school year based on their collective performance.
6. Students who are enrolled in dual enrollment courses with colleges WILL NEED TO FOLLOW THE GUIDANCE FROM THEIR ENROLLED COLLEGE. The college issues the credit and their criteria are the ones that must be met for credit and may well differ from ours.
7. Students participating in AP courses will still be receiving instruction to prepare them for the AP exams. Their work will not count for a grade but act as preparation for when College Board announces make-up dates for the AP exams.
8. We will continue to conduct wellness checks, telecounseling services, and to meet our mandatory reporter responsibilities. The health, safety, and welfare of students is our number one priority, and we will fill that responsibility in every circumstance, in every way necessary, unconditionally.

We understand the stress this unprecedented global crisis has put on families. Jefferson County Schools supports our families and community through donating 3D printers for producing masks, making cleaning tools to emergency responders, distributing 10,000 meals per week, making thousands of phone calls, conducting hundreds of teleclasses and distributing videos of care and love to our kids. We are all part of the solution and we commit to being in this with you... for you.... whatever it takes.