



Birmingham

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

GRADING AND CREDIT DURING PROLONGED CLOSURE

During this unprecedented period, the connectedness and care for our students remains our first priority as we maintain our students' continuity of learning. Our plans for feedback, grading, and credit below are based upon the principle that no educational harm should come to any child through a reasonable approach to these important subjects. This pandemic and the statewide suspension of in-person instruction has impacted our entire society in enormous ways. The emphasis for schoolwork now is on continuous learning, supported by monitoring and feedback, not traditional grades. In this crisis it is important for our students to focus on achieving essential outcomes and skills without the potential negative impact that this forced, online environment and crisis may cause them. Yet, we must establish an expectation that learning will continue, and its pursuit will help our students prepare for the next level while helping them navigate this environment with the sense of community from a distance that it will provide.

HIGH SCHOOL

CONTINUITY OF LEARNING PLAN COMPONENTS

- Students will engage in learning and instruction that advances our curriculum and address essential learning standards and units with an expectation of participation for the rest of this year.
- Students will receive, complete, and submit assignments through Google Classrooms or other means that are specific to their class, teacher or course. Teachers will provide regular and helpful feedback to students on the work they complete.
- Students will have the opportunity to participate in assigned Google chats, text exchanges, in live Google documents or in virtual meetings with their teachers. Teachers will provide students and parents with a schedule of these meetings. Depending on grade-level, sessions will be for the purpose of morning meetings, learning or to offer support through question-and-answer sessions. High school students will participate in X-Block virtual sessions on an as needed basis. These sessions are not required.
- Students will be provided continued social-emotional supports, and we will remain focused on their well-being throughout this closure.

TEACHER FLEXIBILITY

Even while establishing an expectation of participation and performance, our teachers have and will continue to demonstrate flexibility and provide accommodations for students and families given the crisis at hand. They understand that family work commitments, pressure, anxiety, illness and loss of loved ones are all factors that must be considered during this global health emergency.

GRADING AND CREDIT

Traditional letter grades will not be assigned at the end of the course. We will make every attempt possible to assist and help students be successful and earn credit for course completion. Transcripts will reflect the following:

Credit/Pass, No Letter Grade 'G' - Students meeting the participation and performance standards outlined in the performance expectations section below will be given a 'G' grade that will provide credit without a grade. This will convey that students met standards during this crisis without penalty to their overall GPA. Clarification of this grade will be provided to colleges, universities, the military, and employers via transcripts.

No Credit/No Pass, No Letter Grade 'I' - Students not meeting the performance expectations outlined in the performance expectation section below will not receive a grade at the end of the trimester but will instead receive an 'I' grade, which currently stands for "incomplete." This will not harm their GPA yet not convey credit. Clarification of this grade will be provided to colleges, universities, the military, and employers via transcripts. In these cases, BPS will create future opportunities during the summer, future summers, after school, on weekends or during breaks for students to earn credit. Such options will be provided for students at little to no cost.

COURSE PARTICIPATION EXPECTATION

Teachers at the grade level and in departments will establish the essential learning standards, skills and units to be covered during the prolonged closure. Class assignments and assessments will vary across the different classes and departments. Assignments might include readings with responses, essays, problem sets, analysis or other activities similar to what might be assigned in a traditional classroom. In order to receive credit for participation and performance in a course, students must successfully complete 70% of work assigned to them. In collaboration with their department head, department colleagues and assigned building administrator, teachers will determine the standard for completion for assignments. Assignments will be posted regularly to ensure that students have ample time to complete. Teachers may exempt students from assignment expectations as they see fit, and those assignments will not count toward the expected completion percentage. Additionally, the 70% standard of completion may be modified due to special circumstances by the teacher with the approval of a building administrator. Any student with an IEP may be amended or exempted from assignments as directed by their caseload educator. Students with 504 accommodation plans may be amended or exempted from assignments by their teacher if appropriate.

WORK COMPLETION TO STANDARD

Each item of work assigned to a student has a purpose(s) for its completion. Teachers (with department head, colleagues and building administrator) will be determining a reasonable, baseline of performance for each assignment based on its purpose(s). If a student cannot submit work on time or experiences challenge with an activity, the teacher will be able to amend an activity for a student, perhaps after guidance and direction, in order to provide the student an opportunity for completion. This process will help accommodate unique family situations while also permitting our instructors to establish appropriate levels of performance for each assignment.

TEACHER FEEDBACK

Students will receive feedback on participation and class assignments from teachers in a timely fashion and in a variety of ways. Both students and parents will be able to monitor student performance based on the feedback provided. While letter grades will not be assigned, corrections and guidance relative to assessments, papers, problem sets, or any other type of assignment will be provided by teachers at their discretion and posted in PowerSchool as “completed.” Again, teachers will be encouraged to provide accommodations to all students during this public health emergency.

MIDDLE SCHOOL

CONTINUITY OF LEARNING PLAN COMPONENTS

The components of the middle school continuity of learning plan are similar to the high school with the exception of the exact schedule and the grading. Middle school students are expected to engage in learning online, complete and submit assignments as expected, and participate in assigned virtual meeting and exchanges as assigned by the teacher. Students will be provided continued social-emotional supports as we focus on their well-being.

GRADING AND FEEDBACK

Students are expected to participate and perform in continued online learning to prepare themselves appropriately for high school, especially those students in the 8th grade. Teachers will monitor student participation through the submission of completed assignments and will provide meaningful feedback to help students understand how well they are progressing. These assignments can include formative assessments, problem solving, written papers, responses to readings, or other assignments and activities. Students will receive a ‘G’ grade, due to our priority on balancing learning and well-being during the prolonged closure. Their ongoing work will be monitored so students are prepared to move to the next level of learning in the fall.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

CONTINUITY OF LEARNING PLAN COMPONENTS

The components of the elementary school continuity of learning plan fit the unique needs of elementary aged students with lessons provided by classroom teachers along with unified arts instructors. We would like students to participate and will be balancing their development with a keen focus on their social-emotional well-being during this period of time.

GRADING AND FEEDBACK

Teachers will monitor student participation through the submission of completed assignments and will provide meaningful feedback to help students understand how well they are progressing. These assignments can include formative assessments, problem solving, written papers, responses to readings, or other engaging activities. While students will not receive standards-based report cards, their ongoing work will be monitored, to be sure students are prepared for the next level of learning. Students will progress to the next grade level in the fall if they were on track prior to the closure of schools.