

PRESS RELEASE

KANSAS CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
2901 TROOST AVENUE, KANSAS CITY, MO 64109
816.418.7420 • KCPUBLICSCHOOLS.ORG

NEWS MEDIA ADVISORY

KCPS COVID-19 Response Update: Teaching and Learning *School system prepares to transition to fully digital distance learning*

Kansas City, March 26, 2020: The following update to our COVID-19 pandemic response was sent this evening in English and Spanish to all Kansas City Public Schools parents/guardians:

In Kansas City Public Schools, our goal is always to nourish our students' bodies, minds and hearts. Even though our schools are closed, every member of Team KCPS remains on duty to help our scholars continue to learn and thrive. That team includes teachers, support staff, counselors, social workers, psychologists and school leaders. We want to update you about all the ways we're preparing to ensure that teaching and learning continues throughout our response to the COVID-19 pandemic. As always, this information will be added to our emergency response site: kcpublicschools.org/coronavirus.

KCPS Learning Packets

Our experts in the KCPS Academics Division have been working tirelessly to prepare grade-level learning packets for every student. This material will serve as classroom materials for distance learning through Friday, April 3, 2020. These packets have been printed and are being mailed to your home address that is listed in our Tyler student information system.

If you haven't received your packet or there is an issue with the packet, please contact your child's teacher or school principal. You can also email communications@kcpublicschools.org or call (816) 418-7888.

These learning packets are review materials that are intended to reinforce concepts already taught. Please use these packets as practice through April 3, 2020.

Support for Students and Parents/Guardians

Our teachers are in the process of directly contacting every one of their students and parents/guardians in order to provide Google Voice phone numbers. Teachers and Principals will be available to answer questions and provide other support from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. every day class is in session.

Teachers will be using Google Voice, Google Classroom and Zoom (video conferencing) to facilitate lessons and support students and parents/guardians. Thanks to the work put in by our Digital Learning Team, many of our teachers and students are already familiar with these applications. We will be producing and sharing "how-to" videos and other materials to help you use these digital tools. Please contact your teacher or principal or call (816) 418-7888 if you need additional guidance.

Tailored lessons have been crafted for students who are in the Special Education or English Language Learner programs. Students and parents/guardians who need additional support in these areas can call (816) 406-2959.

Digital Devices and Internet Access

Due to the extension of our school closure through April 24, 2020, we will transition our learning from printed packets to fully digital distance learning. This will require our students to have digital devices and Wi-Fi access.

In order to make this transition, we will be lending district-owned devices (Apple iPads or Google Chromebooks) to our students in grades K-8. Our high school students already have laptop computers that they are allowed to take home. We are also working with Sprint and T-Mobile to invest in and provide Wi-Fi hotspots for students who need them.

We are currently creating a process and timeline for distributing those digital devices and hotspots. Our goal is to get them to students during a window of time after April 6, 2020. We will share details with you when they are finalized.

Please know that this transition to digital distance learning will require flexibility and grace. We are committed to being supportive and flexible during this time. We will navigate this together and are confident we can support each other – families, students and staff collaboratively.

In closing...

We want to close this update by expressing our gratitude for all of our School Board members:

- Board Chair and Member-at-Large Pattie Mansur
- Board Vice Chair and Sub-District 2 Representative Nate Hogan
- Board Treasurer and Sub-District 3 Representative Manny Abarca
- Sub-District 1 Representative Rita Cortés
- Sub-District 4 Representative Marvia Jones
- Sub-District 5 Representative Mark Wasserstrom
- Member-At-Large Jennifer Wolfsie

Working collaboratively with Superintendent Mark Bedell, these Board of Directors are fully dedicated to making sure we continue to meet the needs of all our learning community. Their service is invaluable and their support during this time has been essential to being proactive in our approach to this pandemic.

Thank you for taking time to read this important update and for continuing to engage with us as we push forward. Stay tuned for upcoming communications, including more details about our digital device and hotspot distribution, high school graduations, and social-emotional supports. Stay safe and healthy!