

Ascension Public Schools

Continuous Learning Plan

In accordance with BESE policy, school systems shall have a written continuous learning plan for modified operations during school closures. Although the safety of students and staff is of utmost priority, Ascension Public Schools must provide access to continuous learning to limit unfinished learning while maintaining access to instructional programming during modified operations.

*Short-term modified operations: A significant portion of the students/staff are not able to be on campus for 1-2 days for face-to face, direct instruction. Continuous learning expectations may be limited or smaller in scope depending on resource availability (e.g. community is without electricity for two days).

*Medium-term modified operations: A significant portion of the students/staff are not able to be on campus for 3-10 days for face-to face, direct instruction.

*Long-Term Modified Operations: A significant portion of the students/staff are not able to be on campus for more than 10 days for face-to face, direct instruction. Operations should have more consistency and expectations of routines and instruction.

Whether or not we activate continuous learning during a short-term or medium-term emergency interruption of school will be dependent upon access to power, Internet connectivity, safety of students/staff, etc. Once we use this criteria to determine the need for activating continuous learning for short-term and medium-term emergencies, we will use the following modes of communication to inform our stakeholders: district webpage, school webpages, Remind, Google Classroom, district and school social media pages, news media outlets, Schoolmessenger mass phone calls and emails.

This document outlines the implications for students, teachers, parents, and administrators during long-term modifications of traditional school operations.

Continuous Learning

Ascension Public Schools offers equitable access to high quality, individualized education, through distance learning technologies to students in Kindergarten through 12th grade. This virtual environment provides the flexibility of location, and promotes the development of skills, attitudes, and self-discipline necessary to achieve success in the 21st century.

This handbook will provide information and outline the expectations of students, parents and teachers for Virtual Learning. This online handbook will focus specifically on Instructional Expectations, Grading, Support of Students with Disabilities, and Parental Support for students participating in our online program.

Stakeholder Responsibilities & Commitments	
District Commitments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure ALL students engage in meaningful learning experiences every day • Ensure each school develops and communicates thoughtful, adaptable, and accessible virtual learning experiences • Provide instruction in ELA, math, science, and social studies for K-8th grade students • Provide instruction in courses required for graduation for 9-12th grade students • Support schools in planning and implementing virtual learning using high quality instructional resources • Help schools identify and secure needed resources • Be flexible and understanding as stakeholders navigate through virtual instruction
School Commitments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure ALL students engage in meaningful learning experiences every day • Develop, implement and communicate virtual learning plans that meet the needs of ALL students with stakeholders • Provide instruction in ELA, math, science, and social studies for K-8th grade students • Provide instruction in courses required for graduation for 9-12th grade students • Support teachers in planning and implementing virtual learning • Help teachers identify and secure needed resources • Help families find needed resources • Be flexible and understanding as stakeholders navigate through virtual instruction
Teacher Commitments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure ALL students engage in meaningful learning experiences every day • Deliver high quality curriculum- and standards-aligned instruction utilizing best practices • Provide a range of meaningful learning opportunities that meet the needs of all learners; make these activities available in a timely manner • Provide accommodations for diverse learners • Establish and communicate a consistent routine for virtual learning (i.e. designated class times, routines, etc.). This includes posting notifications and announcements. • Support student engagement during virtual instruction • Grade weekly assignments and provide regular feedback to students on progress in a timely manner • Update PowerSchool regularly • Regularly engage in the PLC process/collaboration • Administer assessments online through district platforms <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ For Career & Technical Education (CTE) and other performance-based classes, teachers may need to administer alternate assessments, some of which may require students to report in person. • Consider family/home contexts and students' social emotional needs • Communicate regularly with students, parents, colleagues, and administrators • Be available at scheduled times to answer student/parent/caregiver questions • Engage in ongoing professional development <p>Teachers in specialized roles (i.e. teacher coach, master teacher, SBLC, counselor, librarian, etc.). may be asked to help with core instruction.</p>

Student Commitments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respond to and engage in daily communication with the virtual teachers • Engage in virtual instruction during designated/scheduled times as communicated by school • Check and read all notifications and announcements daily • Ask clarifying questions when you need help or don't understand • Complete your assigned work by the due date • Complete assessments online through district platforms. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ For CTE and other performance-based classes, students may need to report in person to complete alternate assessments. • Complete assignments and/or assessments on your own so that you can receive authentic feedback from your teacher that will help you progress in your learning. *See Ascension Parish Academic Honesty Contract • Protect learner account by not sharing username and password • Be flexible and understanding as teachers navigate through virtual instruction
Parent/Caregiver Commitments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure student establishes and follows regular daily schedule and routines • Reserve a space that is free from distractions/interruptions for student to complete virtual learning work • Talk to student about their work every day. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Additionally, parents can utilize a variety of avenues to help monitor their student's progress. These include opting to receive regular email updates through their PowerSchool login and requesting teachers send an invitation to receive Google Classroom Guardian email summaries (daily or weekly). • Communicate with teacher any concerns or issues your student may be having • Ensure your student is logging on during the designated instructional time • Ensure student asks the teacher for help when they are struggling • Monitor online assessments to ensure student is taking them on their own without any aids • We encourage help from family, friends, etc. However, when an assignment is scored, we expect the work to be the student's alone so that the score is meaningful and teachers get the information they need to plan further instruction • Be flexible and understanding as we all navigate this virtual platform.

Content Delivery & Instructional Quality

Teachers will determine what essential standards will be prioritized for the duration of remote learning based on the grade-level expectations. Additionally, teachers will develop a plan to address any missed learning opportunities critical for this year's grade-level work. They will identify places in their course's sequence and pacing where it would be best to address these skills and provide opportunities for student academic success.

Instructional Quality

Pre-K: We utilize Tier I curricula and will continue to use these resources in the event of a disrupted learning environment. The Frog Street At Home Online Learning is aligned to the content of the printed curriculum materials used in the classroom

Primary: We utilize Tier I curricula and will continue to use these resources in the event of a disrupted learning environment.

Middle/High: Tier I curricula have already been adopted in each grade level and subject area in which it is available for purchase. These resources will continue to be used in the event of a disrupted learning environment so there will be no disruption to classroom instruction. Administrators and district personnel will continue to support instruction by participating in virtual classes and regularly monitoring the resources teachers are using and the assignments students are given.

Diverse Learners: Where applicable, we will utilize Tier I curricula and will continue to use these resources in the event of a disrupted learning environment. In addition, curricula to address the needs of special learners will be used when necessary.

Content Delivery Expectations

We understand and recognize that remote content delivery can sometimes be a challenging endeavor for educators, and that it involves more than just printing non-digital materials, uploading files, and sharing links to media content. Delivering remote content is a skill that must be developed, and teachers will be provided the support, resources, and professional development needed to accomplish remote learning. Below are best practices across the continuum from printed instructional materials to fully online curricula.

Content Delivery Best Practices

- Be present and fully engaged as the instructor. Let the students see your face during online interactions.
- Work within PLCs to support the development of remote learning. Remote teaching, if not done collaboratively, can become burdensome and tedious. Teachers should be encouraged to leverage the expertise and insight of their PLC members, whether novice or veteran, to fully support the creation of curriculum/standards-aligned, engaging lessons that are effective for all learners.
- Teachers can utilize curricula online platforms, where available, as well as other district-provided virtual platforms.
- Focus on engaging and accessible learning materials and techniques. Prioritize mini-lessons and short mini-lectures to keep students engaged. Incorporate mixed media content, such as television clips, newspapers, maps, political cartoons and interactive web-based, free software tools, etc., to keep students engaged and excited about learning.
- Remain flexible with pacing and student assignments. The focus is learning, not compliance. Students may have non-traditional schedules. The key factor is keeping students engaged, connected, and abreast of learning expectations. This requires assignments and accompanying resources to be available in a timely manner.

Professionalism

- Teachers should conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times. This includes professional dress, use of appropriate language, logging into Google Meet sessions prior to the start of instruction, and ensuring materials are prepared in advance.

Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Connections

Each year, SEL screeners help us identify any student who may benefit from additional interventions or further screenings. If, based on screening results, the school believes a child may benefit from interventions to promote their social, emotional, or behavioral well-being, we will involve parents in this process.

Support for Students with Disabilities

It is the goal of Ascension Public Schools to offer equitable access to high quality, individualized education for all students.

- IEP teams should consider both online learning models and determine the most appropriate delivery for each student.
- All student needs will be considered on a case by case basis in order to provide necessary support for our students in special education. Special Education staff will use all available technology in order to continue to provide services for our students.
- IEP minutes will be delivered by special education staff.

Considerations for IAPs/504 Students

The student's disability will be considered and accommodated to ensure that a student has access to high quality instruction. It will be expected that all students will log into their assigned/scheduled classes during the designated time (similar to what they do within a traditional schedule). Current accommodations *will be used to support the learning of the student.*

Support for English Language Learners

- Accommodations will be provided according to students' individual language needs
- Grading policy for ELs will remain the same according to APSB Pupil Progression
- EL staff will collaborate and co-plan with content teachers to review assignments to provide support as needed

Feedback and Interventions

In an online environment, teachers should survey students about what format and type of feedback is most helpful to them. Feedback should affirm growth and identify focused areas of improvement. We should be careful not to overwhelm students with an exhaustive list of things to correct. Instead, feedback should be academically focused, specific to the learning outcome, and allow the student to be able to clearly identify his/her next steps. Teachers should also provide opportunities for students to self-assess their own learning to determine progress. When teachers notice that students are in need of additional support, short videos can help the teacher connect with, reassure, and provide students with encouragement.

Observations

Observations will follow Louisiana Department of Education Guidelines and BESE policy. In response to the need for online instruction, The National Institute for Excellence in Teaching released a companion tool to the NIET Teaching Standards Rubric. This tool addresses what instructional indicators should look

like and sound like when planning and delivering virtual learning. The tool describes instructional and planning practices for both asynchronous and synchronous learning, as well as additional considerations for synchronous learning.

This tool is designed to be used alongside the NIET K-12 Teaching Standards Rubric, but it could support any teacher or leader to deepen their understanding of high-quality virtual learning instruction. The tool references exemplary practice for every indicator of the NIET rubric, with descriptors included, and it includes specific examples and strategies for how those indicators could be adapted in a virtual setting.

Evaluations

Evaluations will follow Louisiana Department of Education Guidelines and BESE policy. Teachers are evaluated by their principal, assistant principal or other designated supervisor. Ascension Public Schools shall utilize the NIET observation tool to conduct a qualitative assessment of teacher performance. Student learning targets shall be created for each teacher. Both the Student Growth and Professional Practice components contribute to the final evaluation rating. Please note that the Student Growth component of the evaluation varies for VAM teachers versus non-VAM teachers.

Student Behavior Expectations

- The virtual classroom is an extension of the regular classroom in Ascension Parish School System. Students must follow district guidelines and school rules as stated in the Ascension Public Schools Student Handbook as well as the Virtual Learning Student/Parent Agreement.
- The following are strictly prohibited:
 - Posting personally identifiable information
 - Antagonism or prejudice of any kind with respect to race, religion, gender, intelligence, age, orientation, disability, or socioeconomic status
 - Posting material including language, photographs, and videos that are inappropriate
 - Sharing assignments, quizzes, tests, assessments, essays, term papers, questions/answers, or any other action that would violate any code of conduct, expectations, or rules in regards to academic honesty
 - Any unauthorized disruptions that interrupt learning
- Students must dress appropriately for virtual sessions. (*must wear a school appropriate top and bottom when appearing on screen; no inappropriate logos or designs should be visible*). Please refer to your child's school's free dress policy for further clarification. Only the student in the class should be visible and heard in the session

Attendance

- Our expectation is that when the student is home, he/she will log in to their classes at the regularly scheduled time of the course to receive "real-time" virtual learning with their classmates and teacher.
- This will allow for the pace of the course to be close to normal.
- In Virtual Learning students will log in to their regular classes in "real time" to receive live instruction by their teacher.
- Attendance will be taken in each class each day and if the student doesn't login at "real-time", they will be counted absent.

- Just as with onsite instruction, if a student cannot work in their course, the student/caregiver should notify the teacher by email for makeup instructions and/or login to Google Classroom to complete makeup work. Special circumstances should be addressed with the Principal.
- Student attendance will follow the same procedure as face to face with an excuse required to excuse an absence. Please see the Students' Rights and Responsibilities handbook.

Grading

Teachers shall be responsible for evaluating each student's achievement/performance in all subject areas in accordance with the policies and procedures of the Ascension Parish Pupil Progression Plan. Our Virtual Learning program will follow the same grading policy as our Ascension Public Schools.

Grades 1-4: a minimum of seven grades dispersed throughout the grading period will be used in averaging grades, with daily, weekly, and unit evaluation forming the basis for the nine-week grades. Grades may include tests, written papers, reports, oral recitations, projects, experiments, and scores on mastery and unit tests, etc. Only one grade per grading period may reflect a combination of homework and class participation. Interim grades may not be counted as one of the minimum of seven grades required per grading period.

Grades 5-8: a minimum of nine grades dispersed throughout the grading period will be used in averaging grades, with daily, weekly, and unit evaluation forming the basis for the nine-week grades. Grades may include tests, written papers, reports, oral recitations, projects, experiments, and scores on mastery and unit tests, etc. Only one grade per grading period may reflect a combination of homework and class participation. Interim grades may not be counted as one of the minimum of seven grades required per grading period. High school courses offered in middle school shall follow the grading policy for grades 9-12.

Grades 9-12: a minimum of eight grades dispersed throughout the grading period and a comprehensive exam. On the block schedule, each full-credit course shall consist of two nine-week grading periods. Each ½ credit course shall consist of one nine-week period. Each teacher shall have a minimum of eight grades per grading period, and a comprehensive exam (midterm or final).-Interim reports will be issued a minimum of one time during each grading period at some point designated by the principal to report progress to students and parents for that grading period. Interim report dates will be communicated to parents and students at the beginning of the school year. In averaging the grades for the grading period, all grades awarded before the exam shall comprise 80% of the total grade with no one grade equaling more than 10% of the total grade and the exam will comprise 20% of the total grade. Students enrolled in a course for which there is a LEAP test, must take the LEAP test, and it shall count as 15% of the final course grade. LEAP scores can be "banked" and used for credit in courses that have to be repeated. Grades may include tests, written papers, reports, oral recitation, projects, class work, experiments, and scores on mastery and unit tests, etc. Interim grades may not be counted as one of the minimum number of grades required per grading period.

Parents' Role in Virtual Learning

We encourage communication between students and teachers. Your child can reach out to their teacher if they have any questions or concerns or need any extra help. Students can ask questions in two ways. 1) Students can pose questions during their designated instructional time. 2) Students/Parents can email questions to the teacher. The teacher will respond by the next business day.

Digital Tools

Pre-K: Students will need access to a computer or tablet and possibly a “hot spot” for those families without internet access in order to utilize the online resources. If a child does not have access to technology within their home, the Early Childhood Office is fully committed to ensuring equitable access to learning resources for all students. To address this concern, our teachers will be provided with guidance to communicate with our Pre-K families. This guidance will include suggestions for utilizing household items to supplement and reinforce the content taught during remote learning sessions. Our goal is to ensure every child has the opportunity to engage in meaningful learning experiences, regardless of their access to technology.

Primary: Students will need their one to one devices and possibly a “hot spot” for those families without internet access.

Middle/High: Students will need their one to one devices and a hot spot will be provided for those families without internet access. Teachers will also need their device along with internet access and access to their Tier I curriculum virtually. Teachers in need of internet access will also be provided with a hot spot.

Diverse Learners: Students will need their one to one devices and a hot spot will be provided for those families without internet access. Teachers will also need their device along with internet access and access to their Tier I curriculum virtually. Teachers in need of internet access will also be provided with a hot spot.

Note: Teachers will support students via Google Classroom and other digital platforms based upon student need.

Computing Devices

Student computing device repair issues should be reported to the teacher. If the device cannot be repaired, the device will be swapped out with a working device.

Internet Access for Students and Hotspots

Students who do not have access to the internet should contact their school. The request for internet assistance will go through each student's school. There will be a questionnaire to determine the need. Internet access will be exclusive to the student device only. This hotspot is loaned to you for school-related purposes. It is important that you keep up with the items that are included. When you are done with it, please return it, with all parts (hotspot, charger, cable), to where you received it. A fee of \$50 will be assessed for any lost hotspots. If your hotspot is lost or stolen, please contact your school librarian or principal for the proper protocol for reporting lost/stolen equipment.