

# Winthrop Public Schools - FAQ's For Remote Learning

## What are the goals during this period of remote learning?

Over the last few weeks, we have been focused on the continuation of learning. When our closure was extended through May 4th, we moved to a more daily based assignment practice. We are now moving to phase three of remote learning. We cannot replicate school at home. We cannot replace the in-person experience of school. However, we plan to reinforce, apply, and deepen skills already taught this year and our learning community has the following goals during this period:

- Provide opportunities for students to connect with their teachers and classmates. The social and emotional wellbeing of our students, will remain our top priority. We believe that in order to do this, it is important for them to maintain their relationships with their teachers and peers.
- Focus on the most essential standards in the content areas that will support movement to the next grade level as well as reinforce previously taught skills and offer opportunities to deepen learning.
- At the elementary and middle school levels, we will focus on going deeper in ELA, math, and science, strengthening our students' level of understanding in the content that was previously taught. Opportunities to engage in the specials of art, music, digital literacy, and wellness are included..
- At the high school level, we will focus on building the specific skills, strategies, and content knowledge that students need in each discipline to continue to the next course or grade level. Educators will prioritize the essential concepts and skills needed to support continual advancement towards the content area standards for the course or grade level.
- In Advanced Placement courses, students will continue to cover the essential content needed to support their upcoming exams.
- Remote learning is not limited to online learning platforms, work packets, large group video or audio conference calls, 1:1 phone or video calls, email, projects, reading lists, and other resources to effectively engage with students. In remote learning, educators may use a variety of instructional strategies, tools, and media to provide equitable and accessible instruction to all students.

## How long should my student be working on remote learning?

- Students should engage in productive and meaningful learning for a minimum of 3 hours each day that school would have been in session.
- This learning is a combination of teacher led and student self-directed learning. The learning includes activities and assignments provided by educators; individual student support, accommodations and modifications; conferencing with teachers and collaborating with other students; exploring additional resources provided by teachers and the district; hands on projects; physical activity; and students' individual pursuit of creative activities that stem from their interests.

- Student experience will vary according to the student's age, individual and family needs, access to remote learning, and the ongoing health of the student, family, and staff.

## **What about confidentiality on video, Zoom, Google Meet/Hangouts?**

In our full Remote Learning Plan the below legal notification outlines the question above:

### **Remote Learning Opportunities - Legal Notification - April 13, 2020**

*Our school district has presently closed its physical school buildings due to the COVID-19 pandemic. During this period of school closure, the District will be providing students with remote learning opportunities, which may include analog materials, telephone calls, video conferencing, pre-recorded lessons, and other online services. Students are expected to participate in these services if possible. Please reach out to your child's teacher or principal if you become aware of any issues with your child accessing the remote opportunities provided by the District.*

*In accordance with state and federal laws, including the Massachusetts Wiretapping Act and FERPA, parents and students must refrain from recording any and all remote lessons. Exceptions may be made on an individual basis due to special circumstances, and only with the consent of everyone involved in the lesson.*

*In addition, while parents/guardians are permitted to observe online instruction in a non-disruptive manner, to the extent that remote learning opportunities provide access to confidential student information, all participants agree, by participating in this remote learning opportunity, to refrain from disseminating any confidential student information about other student participants with any and all third parties. By participating in the remote learning opportunities, consent to this request is hereby provided.*

*Similarly, we ask everyone in our school community to recognize that video conferences and other online services will be taking place in the homes of the educators and students who participate in the calls, and to be mindful of everyone's right to privacy. To that end, we remind our students to dress appropriately and choose an appropriate location in their home from which to participate in any and all remote learning opportunities, particularly those with a video component. Parents/guardians should take all precautions to safeguard personal or private information that they do not wish to be disclosed.*

*Students will be expected to behave in accordance with school rules of conduct while participating in remote instruction. Cyber-bullying, harassment, discrimination, and abuse of the remote learning process will not be tolerated and may result in suspension from remote learning, as well as additional consequences when school resumes. The District also encourages its staff and students alike to limit disruptions to remote lessons to the extent feasible (while also recognizing that sometimes pets, small children, and technical difficulties cannot be prevented from disrupting a lesson that happens at home).*

*Special education teachers, ELL/SEI teachers, and individual service providers will be in contact with parents/ guardians of students with specialized learning needs regarding necessary*

*modifications to the remote instruction opportunities offered to other members of an individual student's class, as well as to discuss direct and group service provision. Any small group or individual video services are subject to this notice.*

*By accessing these services, the District recognizes that you and your child consent to access online instruction and agree to fully comply with the requirements of this letter.*

*We appreciate your time and attention to this notice.*

*If you have any questions about the contents of this notice, please contact the appropriate building or district administrator.*

## **What are the expectations for students during video meetings?**

As noted above, students are expected to adhere to their grade level code of conduct. The student handbook outlines expectations for the use of technology and social media. Furthermore, teachers should set behavioral norms for meetings, similar to the behavioral norms set in their classrooms.

## **What about grades during remote learning?**

### **Elementary**

At the elementary level, educators will continue to provide feedback on their curriculum and learning progressions and progress toward meeting the standards. In the meantime we will continue to communicate with the MA Department of Education in regards to a possible return date and 3rd trimester decisions will be made at that time.

### **Middle School**

At the middle school:

- Student work will not be graded. Teachers will provide feedback to students and parents as requested or when there is a need for a teacher to inform the parent/student of success or need. **Students will receive “Credit” by actively engaging in student learning opportunities to the best of their abilities. Students who do not participate in activities nor complete assigned work will be issued “No-Credit”.** We will continue to communicate with the MA Department of Education in regards to how the Credit/No-Credit structure will impact grades for the 4th quarter as well as the final grade for the year. A methodology for determining a student's final grade will be developed and shared with students and families if the period for school closure extends further beyond May 4th.
- Student participation includes engaging in the scheduled (daily) learning activity and submitting the work when asked to the best of their ability. Each student who engages to the best of their ability will receive credit.

- Students are responsible for completing their online assignments. Teachers, School Administrators, and/or other staff will contact students who are not participating in their learning activities in order to develop a plan that supports the student's engagement. If a child is unable to consistently participate in the activities and assigned work, please contact Mr. Curley via email at [bcurley@winthrop.k12.ma.us](mailto:bcurley@winthrop.k12.ma.us).
- Quarter 3 ends on Monday, April 6<sup>th</sup>. We are currently in the process of deciding the grading process. We ask that all families are patient as we are amid unprecedented times. Report cards for quarter 3 will become available within the next couple of weeks.
- **Quarter 4 begins on Tuesday, April 7<sup>th</sup>**. Teachers will continue to provide daily learning opportunities. Beginning, Monday April 13, 2020, students will begin to receive feedback from teachers on their assignments and issued *CREDIT* for participating in class activities and completing their work.

### High School

At the high school level:

#### GRADING AND ASSESSMENT - Quarter 3

Q3 grades close on **Friday, April 17<sup>th</sup>**. Students are allowed to make-up any missed assignments from the beginning of Q3 through **March 13<sup>th</sup> (day of school closure)**. Any work that was assigned after **March 13<sup>th</sup>** will NOT be counted toward the Q3 grades *with the exception of (See below)*:

- All Departments/Teachers will offer students (in all of their classes) the opportunity to earn extra credit for Q3 by providing them with assignment(s) that are supplemental to material that predates March 13<sup>th</sup>.
- Hold Harmless Policy - No student will get below 60% for Q3. Due to Hold Harmless student grades can't go down with makeup work, only up.

Q3 Report Cards will be published in Ipass on **Thursday, April 30<sup>th</sup> by 4:00pm**.

#### GRADING AND ASSESSMENT - Quarter 4

All students are graded with credit/no credit. This is the DESE recommendation at this point. A quarter grade of 60% and above = credit, a quarter grade of 59% and below = no credit.

Final grades will still be calculated using our current formula:

**Q1 - 20%, Q2 - 20%, MYE -10%, Q3 - 20%, Q4 - 20%, FEx - 10%**

Here is how we will assign Q4 and FEx grades at the end of the school year:

*A student who receives "credit" for the course - The Q4 grade will be either their Semester 1 Average or a 75% - whichever is higher. The FEx grade will either be their Semester 1 Average or their Q3 Grade - whichever is higher.*

*A student who receives “no credit” for the course - The Q4 grade will be 50% and the FEx grade will be 50%.*

**\*Note:** *Reciprocal communication and multiple opportunities to complete assessments/alternative assessments are required before issuing “no credit”*

**NOTE: April 20-24 (Vacation Week) Teachers will not be available for consultation however suggested learning activities will still be posted for the week.**

## **What about my student on a 504 or an IEP?**

During school closure, students with disabilities are entitled accommodations and services outlined in their Section 504 plan or Individualized Education Program (IEP) consistent with the need to protect the health and safety of students with disabilities. Consistent with guidance from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, the district is not required to fully implement the active Section 504 plan or the active IEP. The services provided will look different during this period of school closure, but the district will be making every effort to use creative strategies to provide special education and services to the extent feasible.

Parents/guardians will be contacted regarding a remote learning plan specific to individual student’s accepted IEP. The plan is intended to be a temporary plan for the period of school closure and does not alter or amend the student’s current accepted IEP. Individual remote learning plans, outlining remote learning services relative to students’ individual needs will be communicated directly to families of students with disabilities currently being serviced through an IEP.

### **Special Education Service Provisions**

- Ongoing enrichment activities relative to the goals and objectives in the IEP
- Regular communication and check-in with families

You are encouraged to reach out to both your child’s General Education and Special Education teachers with questions and/or support. Special education teachers will still provide progress reports as required by students’ Individualized Educational Plans. Special Education Coordinators will work with families on scheduling virtual IEP meetings, as feasible.

## **What if my student is an English Language Learner(EL)?**

English Learners Elementary ESL teachers will create support for students at the lowest proficiency levels (WIDA levels 1-3) to support their continued literacy development across the four domains of reading, writing, listening and speaking. For students in higher proficiency levels, ESL teachers can support students completion of classroom assignments specific to reading and writing.

At the secondary level, the ESL teacher will continue to provide opportunities for continued literacy development across the four domains dependent on the students’ needs based on their WIDA proficiency levels.

## Will my child have to repeat the grade?

We are waiting for guidance from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. However, we believe that all students will progress to the next grade level next year. All schools throughout the state will have to adjust instruction and curriculum to support students after the prolonged school closure. However, any high school student who is in danger of failing will need to have individual conversations with their guidance counselor and assistant principal to determine next steps to determine their course sequence for the coming school year.

## What about MCAS?

The federal government has provided states waivers from required testing. There is currently a bill in the state legislature to provide a waiver from state law for the administration of MCAS this year.

## What is the schedule for posting of assignments?

### Elementary

At the elementary level:

We have built these school-based websites ([Arthur T. Cummings School](#), [William P. Gorman Fort Banks School](#)) as a one-stop learning center for families. This is where families will access our remote learning platform. Every Monday morning new plans will be posted. If you click on your child's grade level you will find specifically designed daily lessons for your child(ren).

**NOTE: April 20-24 (Vacation Week) Teachers will not be available for consultation however suggested learning activities will still be posted for the week.**

### Middle School

At the middle school level:

**Students will need to visit our remote learning site on a daily basis** to see the scheduled assignments. The site can be found on our school website titled "Home Learning" at the top of the page or you may scroll down and find the link listed under "WMS Announcements". You may also find the link by clicking **HERE** directly.

Winthrop Middle School will publish a grade-specific schedule of "office hours" to students and families for each upcoming week . This schedule is subject to change each week based on recommendations by MA Department of Elementary & Secondary Education.

**NOTE: April 20-24 (Vacation Week) Teachers will not be available for consultation however suggested learning activities will still be posted for the week.**

## High School

At the High School Level:

Teachers will be providing a lesson for each class period during the scheduled time (on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays) using either google classroom, Schoology, or Zoom (Zoom lessons will be in the form of a live video conference). Teachers will create a virtual classroom by posting the link and password to the class on their online platform (schoology, google classroom etc). They will also email zoom meeting invitations to student gmail accounts.

### **Scheduled Remote Learning will begin the week of Monday, April 13th:**

The first day of scheduled remote learning at WHS will be **Tuesday, April 14th**. This will be **DAY 1** of the cycle. Please note that this week is still considered to be **Q3**.

**Q4** will begin on **Monday April 27th**.

*Weekly Schedule:*

#### ***Monday - Planning Day***

- Teachers will create plans/assignments for the week and post scope of work for the week on google classroom or schoology.
- Students will log-in to their online platforms to plan out their week and work on necessary assignments.

#### ***Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays - WHS Virtual School***

- Students will engage in remote learning by following the 7 DAY WHS schedule with abbreviated class periods. See schedule below.

#### ***WHS Virtual School Schedule (T, W, Th):***

Block 1: 9a - 9:30a

Block 2: 9:35a - 10:05a

Block 3: 10:10a - 10:40a

*20 minute Break*

Block 4: 11:00a - 11:30a

Block 5 11:35a - 12:05p

#### ***Friday - Wrap Up Day***

- Teachers are available to students via scheduled virtual office hours
- Teachers conduct check-ins with students and help them plan for the following week
- Teachers work with Admin to address student issues (low engagement and/or work completion)

## What are the expectations for students during remote learning?

### Elementary

At the elementary level:

- Students are asked to check the remote learning web pages each day for assignments.  
[Arthur T. Cummings School](#) - [William P. Gorman Fort Banks School](#)
- Complete assignments during the week, students should be completing a minimum of 3 hours worth of work a day. It is **NOT** recommended that this time be all at once.
- Communicate with teachers for feedback and support.
- Take breaks when needed
- Be active and participate in play each day.

### Middle School

At the middle school level:

- While Middle School students are not required to log-in at a specific time, **they are responsible for approximately 30 minutes of academic work in each of the classes.** For example, students should engage in all four core subjects and choose two of their current specials each day. Please note, this is subject to change based on feedback from the MA Department of Elementary & Secondary Education.
- Students will have an opportunity to attend a Google Meet session that will be offered by their teachers. This is designed to help support students as needed. **We are currently developing a system for students to request help and teachers will determine if the support can be provided through email, posted video, or through a Google Meet with other students present.**
- Students should be **communicating with their teachers regularly.** Examples include but not limited to email, Google Classroom discussions, Google Meet gathering, etc.
- **Students will need to visit our [remote learning site](#) on a daily basis** to see the scheduled assignments. The site can be found on our school website titled "Home Learning" at the top of the page or you may scroll down and find the link listed under "WMS Announcements". You may also find the link by clicking [HERE](#) directly.
- The WPS Technology Policy applies while attending the classroom. Students should be mindful of when participating in digital learning. The teacher may, at their discretion, remove a student from a video conference if the student is acting inappropriately or creating a disturbance to the online learning environment.
- **Students will be held accountable for completing their online work.**
- WMS 2019-2020 Student Handbook outlines behavior expectations for students. **Students are expected to adhere to the conduct expectations in the remote environment as they would at school.**

## **High School**

At the High School Level:

- Students are expected to log in to Google Classroom/Schoology daily.
- Complete assignments during the week, students should be completing a minimum of 3 hours worth of work a day.
- Communicate with teachers for feedback and support.
- Take breaks when needed
- Be active and use your own creative outlets daily.

## **What are the expectations for parents/caregivers during remote learning?**

- Assist your child(ren) in establishing a routine and schedule for remote learning.
- To the best of your ability, help to set up a study space for your child.
- Ask for help from teachers if needed to support your child.
- Check in with your child about assignments.
- Make sure to take breaks and get physical activity.

## **What are the expectations for teachers during this period of remote learning?**

- For the purposes of communication, educators should establish “office hours” at least once a week during school hours. Office hours can take various forms--virtual, phone, email, Google Classroom, Class Dojo. The educator should share their office hours with students and families weekly.
- Set a schedule for yourselves for when you are available for each task and obligation you have during the day, students, colleagues, staff meetings, IEP meetings, etc.
- Collaborate with Common Planning Teams or Grade-Level teams, directors, coaches, principals, and students to create common lessons and assignments to support the advancement of learning. Lessons should be common at the elementary and middle school levels by grade and building. At the secondary level, each course should be common. Staff might also collaborate across grades and specialists if they wish.
- At the high school level teachers will be providing a lesson for each class period during the scheduled time (on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays) using either google classroom, Schoology, or Zoom (Zoom lessons will be in the form of a live video conference). Teachers will create a virtual classroom by posting the link and password to the class on their online platform (schoology, google classroom etc). They will also email zoom meeting invitations to student gmail accounts.

- We can neither replicate school at home nor deliver the full scope and sequence of curriculum and instruction as it would be provided at school. Be flexible and identify key skills and strategies that can support students as they participate in remote learning.

## **How do students get feedback about their progress?**

Teachers will use Google Classroom, Class Dojo, Email and Virtual means to provide feedback on completion of assignments to the extent practicable.

## **How will parents and caregivers get feedback about their child's progress?**

Teachers will monitor student participation in the assigned work frequently and will provide students with feedback on their assignments when practicable. Teachers will contact parents/caregivers if students are not completing assignments outlined in the weekly learning plans. Additionally, parents/caregivers are always welcome to contact their child's teachers via email with questions about their child's progress.

## **Why am I not getting information?**

Parents should make sure to have updated email and phone information on record at their school(s) as this will be the primary method of communicating with families. If you believe your information may be incorrect please email the correct information to your building Principal(s).

GFB - [ipearson@winthrop.k12.ma.us](mailto:ipearson@winthrop.k12.ma.us)

ATC - [ngrimes@winthrop.k12.ma.us](mailto:ngrimes@winthrop.k12.ma.us)

WMS - [bcurley@winthrop.k12.ma.us](mailto:bcurley@winthrop.k12.ma.us)

WHS - [mcrombie@winthrop.k12.ma.us](mailto:mcrombie@winthrop.k12.ma.us)

## **What should I do if my child is unable (due to sickness or other reasons) to complete their daily work?**

If a student is unable to participate in their remote learning for the day, we kindly ask that the following actions are taken:

- First, communicate with your child's teacher to alert them of the inability to complete assignments.
- If a student has extended illness and is not able to complete classwork, please email the school principal so we can see if we can better support them when they are well again.

## **How often should my child be checking in on assignments during remote learning?**

Students/Parents should be checking the Remote Learning web page of their school daily in grades PreK thru 8.

Students in grades 9 - 12 should be checking their teachers Google Classroom or Schoology platform daily.

## **What if a student is not completing work?**

Teachers will first reach out to the student and families via email and/or phone if the student is not completing assignments. If there is no response, teachers can seek support from the principal and/or assistant principals. Principal or assistant principals will then contact the families to reach out to the families to discuss concerns and challenges the family may be experiencing.

## **Does my child need to log in to watch her teacher present live lessons?**

We will be employing a blended approach to online instruction. Class Dojo, Google Classroom, Schoology, Zoom and Google Meets along with the Remote Learning web pages are the starting point for all students to determine expectations for each course. Class content will be made available so that students can participate asynchronously (content can be accessed at any point throughout the day). Teachers may choose to host optional video chats to check in with students, answer questions or provide a review of content.

## **Will report cards still be sent home/posted?**

### **Elementary**

At the elementary school level: 2nd Term report cards were mailed home on March 26th. We will await further direction from the MA DESE before making any additional decisions at this time.

### **Middle School**

At the middle school level:

- Quarter 3 ended on Monday, April 6<sup>th</sup>. We are currently in the process of developing our grading strategy. We ask that all families are patient as we are amid unprecedented times. Report cards for quarter 3 will become available within the next couple of weeks.

## High School

At the high school level:

- Q3 grades close on **Friday, April 17th**. Students are allowed to make-up any missed assignments from the beginning of Q3 through **March 13th (day of school closure)**. Any work that was assigned after **March 13th** will NOT be counted toward the Q3 grades *with the exception of (See below)*:
- All Departments/Teachers will offer students (in all of their classes) the opportunity to earn extra credit for Q3 by providing them with assignment(s) that are supplemental to material that predates March 13th.
- Hold Harmless Policy - No student will get below 60% for Q3. Due to Hold Harmless student grades can't go down with makeup work, only up.

Q3 Report Cards will be published in Ipass on **Thursday, April 30th by 4:00pm**.

## **My student is having trouble with technology. Where can they get help?**

If a student is having trouble with technology or accessing any of the platforms, you should reach out directly to the teacher first, if they are unable to resolve the issue they will forward it onto the building Principal.