

March 25, 2020

**Re: CHSD Continuity of Education Plan during Pandemic and School Closure**

Dear Cambria Heights School District Community:

Countries across the world have seen firsthand the dangers and impacts of COVID-19. Due to this pandemic, our nation is now facing unprecedented challenges. As your superintendent, I recognize that Pennsylvania's shutdown of schools and non-life-sustaining businesses is impacting our collective community and each of you individually.

At this time, we do not have any idea when we will return to normal operations, therefore families should prepare for an extended shutdown period. In consideration of that possibility, there have been many questions about how we are planning to continue as many educational opportunities as possible for our students. This plan will be ongoing, and is termed the **Cambria Heights School District's Continuity of Education Plan (CEP)**.

Please know that we are taking direction from the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) and their directives may change due to the fluidity of the crisis. Additionally, we only have "life-sustaining" personnel present in our buildings and almost all of the employees will be working remotely from home and through available technology / internet access.

As a district, our staff has been working to develop educational opportunities and systems that support the social, emotional, physical, and educational needs of all students, as while acknowledging and addressing the personal challenges that you may be facing in your family and work lives. Throughout the shutdown, the Cambria Heights SD Board of Directors, teams of administrators, teachers, and support staff have been meeting remotely to create a **Continuity of Education Plan (CEP)** that involves blended learning opportunities (written, online) for all CHSD students.

Due to these efforts and the work that will continue this week, the Cambria Heights School District is prepared to begin our Continuity of Education Plan (CEP) for our students, teachers, support staff and families / caregivers beginning on March 30, 2020, through the time it is deemed safe for our students and staff to return to our schools.

Below is a list of items that should be noted in preparation for blended written and/or online instruction. Please take the time to read this entire list and follow-through with any recommendations. As educators, we are aware of the many challenges ahead as we implement an approach to learning that is new for many teachers, students, and families. Therefore, I encourage ALL of us to practice patience and work collaboratively to educate our students. I am confident that our community will rally together and work to the best of our ability to navigate these uncharted waters. Through March 27th, please contact your building principals with any questions or for further guidance.

Sincerely,

Michael C. Strasser

Superintendent of Schools  
Cambria Heights School District

#### COE Planning Notes:

Cambria Heights SD administrators and technology leaders will be conducting accelerated online professional development for our teachers beginning on March 25th. The support staff will receive formalized training for online learning on March 26th and 27th. Our staff will be ready for the first day of non-traditional instruction on March 30, 2020.

For families that do not have access to enough technology (computers) to support their children's learning or now feel that your student needs a device(s) to support their online learning or internet access, please contact your building principal. If attaining these services is deemed impossible due to where your home is located, alternative arrangements will be coordinated through your teacher(s) and principal.

Students will not physically report to school but will receive attendance credit if they engage in and complete teacher-directed learning activities. Please watch for specific instructions from your principal or teachers on how to connect to Google Classroom, Zoom, and other online learning tools. At this time, students should not worry about retrieving instructional items from their school lockers/desks. If this changes in the future, the District will communicate with families.

The District expects that all students will complete their learning activities and assignments as if they were in school. Because we are counting Continuity of Education Plan days toward our days of instruction, students should expect to engage in rigorous work.

However, teachers recognize and will account for the fact that many parents are working remotely and are not able to provide constant support for their children's educational programming.

An online tutorial will be available for parents and students to assist them in logging into the Google Education tools and how to operate each of the respective tools. Additionally, the technology staff and support personnel will be available to help those families or students experiencing technical difficulties.

Students with Individualized Education Plans (IEP) that attend in-district programs will receive specially-designed instruction from their teachers, in accordance with the learning needs identified in their IEP. Each student's special education teachers/case manager will communicate regularly with their families. Special Education teachers, support staff, specialists, and other staff will be available online to provide individualized intervention and support services. Special education teachers will provide instructions on how to access these services.

Students with an IEP attending an out of district program(s) will receive personal communications from the Cambria Heights School District Special Education Department next week to discuss their child's specialized program and steps moving forward to continue to provide services to your child. Every effort will be made to ensure that your child receives the services outlined in their IEP and Revision.

We encourage families and students to visit their teachers' Google Classroom for their schoolwork and also to communicate with their teacher(s). Our teachers will need time to prepare their lessons and we trust you will grant them the space to do so.

We appreciate in advance the necessity for our parents to take a more active role in the teaching and learning process. While we recognize it may become challenging at times, our teachers and staff will work to assist you to the greatest degree possible. Our teachers will be available during the instructional day via Google Classroom, Zoom, or email.

The Pennsylvania Secretary of Education has canceled all state assessments for the 2019-2020 school year.