



# NEWTON COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

April 7, 2020

Dear Newton Students, Families, and Community:

As part of the extended school closure, currently through April 30, 2020, each district is required to determine how we will proceed in offering Continuous Learning during that time. The purpose of this document is to outline Newton CSD's plan to move forward with the Voluntary Educational Enrichment Option. This option will not require students to make up any of the hours missed through April 30<sup>th</sup>. Based on the updated guidance from the Department of Education, specifically allowing teachers to be more engaged in directly supporting learning opportunities, while allowing students and families the flexibility to choose what is most appropriate based on individual situations. Most importantly, we are here for you. During this unprecedented and challenging time the staff at Newton CSD is excited to partner with students and families. Things may look different for a while, but the relationships that have been built over the year will continue to be the foundation of what we do. Our Cardinal Family will get through this together and stronger.

## **Continuous Learning Model**

Newton CSD has chosen the Voluntary Educational Enrichment Opportunities model for continuous learning. This will consist of teachers providing specific learning activities and opportunities for students and families to participate in if they choose to do so. Teachers will be able to provide feedback and continuous support to students and families. No grading will occur and attendance will not be taken. General online resources will remain available for students and parents to access at their discretion, but will not alone be considered continuous learning in this model.

## **Communication of Learning Opportunities**

Teachers will be reaching out over the next week to touch base with students/families and help determine the best way to communicate information moving forward. Teachers will send out learning opportunities to their classes each Tuesday (beginning April 14<sup>th</sup>). This will occur through email and/or the Learning Management System (LMS) used prior to the school closure, such as Schoology or Google Classroom. This may look different at elementary, middle school and high school, and will be appropriate for the students at each level. More specific information about future communication will come from individual buildings and teachers.

## **Teacher Availability**

Teachers will be available to provide support and feedback primarily in two ways. For questions or support that does not need an immediate response students and families can email teachers directly or contact them through the LMS used in class. Teachers will also be holding virtual office hours daily to provide immediate feedback or engage in back-and-forth dialogue through a chat or other feature. Office hours will be shared and posted by each building.



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## Daily Schedules or Recommended Learning Time

Even with our shift to Voluntary Educational Enrichment Opportunities, it is not our intention to recreate learning that would occur in the classroom when school is in session. This includes the amount of time students spend participating in learning opportunities during the school closure. While this is ultimately a decision that should be made by individual families, to best reflect your needs and those of your student(s), here are some general guidelines we can share.

Elementary	Middle School	High School
Approximately 60 minute of learning activities and reading	Approximately 60-90 minutes of learning activities and reading	Will vary by student and schedule of classes.

## Special Services (Special Education, Title I, ELL, TAG)

Teachers providing special services to students will be collaborating with classroom teachers to make sure learning opportunities are as accessible as possible to all students. In addition, they will reach out to individual students as needed to provide additional guidance for enrichment and support. They will also be available to contact by email or during virtual office hours. Specially designed instruction and individual services will not be provided during the Voluntary Educational Enrichment Opportunities approach to Continuous Learning. The goal of our teachers is to support students in making the learning opportunities provided by teachers accessible and appropriate for individual learner needs.

## Access to Technology

At this time, Newton CSD is not able to provide individual devices to families other than those that already went home with students, specifically iPads for high school students. Our buildings have been closed and sterilized in preparation for returning to school after the current closure. Should schools remain closed for a longer period of time we will reevaluate the situation and consider additional options. We understand that there are varied levels of access to devices and internet across the district. Teachers will be providing learning opportunities with this in mind and reaching out to families to provide support in accessing them.

## Event Re-scheduling

At this time all events scheduled during the school closure have been postponed. Additional information on specific events will be communicated when it is available. We continue to monitor state, federal and IDOE guidance to make these decisions.

## Phone Calls

If teachers and/or buildings are not able to reach families through other methods they may reach out by phone. Since almost all staff are working from home at this time, they would possibly have to use a personal cell phone. In order to protect their privacy a function may be used that shows up as Unknown Caller. Please answer if you are able so contact is able to be made.