

April 14, 2020

Dear Parents and Guardians,

As we begin another phase of online learning, we have a few reminders for you, as well as a few changes we want you to be aware of that have recently been implemented.

**•Recording Attendance**

Students are reminded of the importance of continuing to record their attendance every day, including on Foxes PAWS Days (see below). Attendance should be recorded here:

<https://bit.ly/FCASDattend>. This link is also available on the district's website at [www.fcasd.edu](http://www.fcasd.edu), under "Online Tools for Extended Closure."

**•District Calendar & Foxes PAWS Days**

Please know that, as we have been doing, we will continue to follow the district calendar in terms of days off or half days for students, clerical days, and professional development days. However, we will also be implementing Foxes PAWS Days every Friday, beginning April 17. This will be a day for all of our students to catch up on work, connect with teachers, and participate in activities that promote social and emotional learning. On these days, our school counselors will provide social and emotional learning opportunities through videos, emails, and other resources. Additionally, on Foxes PAWS Days, teachers will host extended office hours to accommodate students and parents who have questions or concerns. Please be certain your child continues to log his/her attendance on Foxes PAWS Days.

**•Teacher Office Hours**

Teachers will continue to host a one-hour office session in the morning and another one-hour session in the afternoon for students and parents using Google Hangouts/Meets or Zoom Monday through Thursday. These office hours are shared on Google Classroom or Schoology. As indicated above, teachers will host extended office hours on Friday Foxes PAWS Days.

**•Instructional Approach**

We will maintain an asynchronous approach to online education, meaning students do not need to log in at a specific time of day. With the extension of the school closure throughout the rest of the year, staff will be posting some pre-recorded learning experiences each week that are available for students to view at any time of the day.

It is important for parents and guardians to note that, even though our model of education allows for work to be completed at any time of the day, students remain responsible for completing all assignments.

Elementary teachers will continue to use Google Classroom and post new learning on instructional days. Secondary teachers will continue to use Schoology and post new learning on

instructional days. Please know that the district has also enabled all safety features and settings in Google Hangouts/Meet and Zoom to increase student safety.

### •**Evaluation/Grading**

Students in kindergarten-grade 12 will be evaluated on the completion of assignments and understanding of concepts.

Student evaluation will be reflective of the unique circumstances and promote flexibility and sensitivity to the various challenges experienced by students and families. If there are any special circumstances that should be considered, please talk with or email your child's teacher(s). We understand that there will be times that we need to be flexible.

### ***Elementary Evaluation***

Teachers will be checking for understanding of English language arts, math, social studies, and STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, and math) concepts. If students adequately participate in online instruction, we anticipate they will receive an "ME," meaning "Meeting Expectations" at the end of the quarter. Students can also receive an "AE," meaning "Approaching Expectations," or an "I," meaning "Incomplete." Teachers will also be checking for the understanding of concepts related to physical education, art, computer science, library, and music, but students will not be receiving a grade for these subject areas.

### ***Secondary Grading***

Grades will be entered into PowerSchool to show that students are engaged in the online content. Teachers will check for understanding through the completion of posted activities, assignments, and assessments.

### ***Dorseyville Middle School***

All students will receive a minimum grade of 65% during the closure for any and all activities assigned. Final exams will not be administered.

### ***Fox Chapel Area High School***

All students will receive a minimum grade of 65% during the closure for any and all activities assigned, and there will not be any final exams for this semester. During the week of June 1, teachers will conference with students on an individual basis. Through these conferences, students will be able to elect: A) the final percentage earned for the course **OR** B) to opt in to a "Pass (P)/Withdraw-Covid (WC)" option for the course.

- If a student earns a passing grade and elects to take a "P" ("Pass") for the course, the passing grade will not be calculated in the overall QPA, but will be used for credit toward graduation if the student passes the course. Please note that, if a student elects to take a "Pass" for a course, this does not necessarily mean the student has met the prerequisite(s) for future courses. Please refer to the course description guide for more

information about specific prerequisites, and as always, contact your counselor for more information regarding scheduling after the semester ends.

•If a student is unable to successfully demonstrate his/her learning in a course, the student will receive a “WC” (“Withdraw-Covid”) for the course. This grade will then not be calculated in the student’s overall QPA. If the student is a senior and a teacher is concerned that the academic performance is a “WC,” the counselors and administrators will work with the student on an individual basis to meet graduation requirements.

If a student and/or parent/guardian has a question about how a grade will impact a student’s course plan, prerequisites for a course, or QPA, please contact the student’s counselor for more specific information.

**•PSSA & Keystone Exams Canceled**

In case you are not aware, the state has canceled the administration of all Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) tests, as well as the administration of the Keystone Exams for the 2019-2020 school year.

**•End-of-Year Events**

We want to assure you that we understand the importance of the regular end-of-year events and are researching innovative ways to celebrate these milestones. We will be getting back to parents about more specific plans for these events.

**•Additional Information**

Please remember that information is available on the district’s website at [www.fcasd.edu](http://www.fcasd.edu), under “Online Tools for Extended Closure.” Information includes how to reach the Community Help Desk, as well tutorials on how to use the instructional tools being utilized by teachers and students.

Recently, we have heard people say that we are all in this together. Although it’s been said before, it’s very true. We continue to strive for the very best educational experiences for our students.

Sincerely,

David McCommons, Ed.D.  
Deputy Superintendent