



# DISTANCE LEARNING FAQ



- **What are the hours of the Distance Learning Helpline?** The helpline is active Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
- **Can I still check out or replace a mobile device?** Mobile devices will be available for checkout at designated distribution centers. Please visit <http://covid19.dadeschools.net/> for more information about the distribution sites.
- **What if I don't have internet access at home?** The District is working with different internet providers to open their networks and provide free internet. Xfinity WiFi hotspots across the country are available to anyone who needs them for free – including non-Xfinity Internet subscribers. A map of available hotspots is available [here](#). Once at a hotspot, consumers should select the “xfinitywifi” network name in the list of available hotspots, and then launch a browser. Comcast has also created new educational collections for all grade levels in partnership with Common Sense Media. Customers say “education” into their X1 or Flex voice remote to use. AT&T offers internet access for qualifying limited income households at \$10 a month through their Access from AT&T program. They are also offering new Access from AT&T customers two months of free service. Learn more [here](#). In addition, the District has distributed over 11,000 hotspots/smartphones to high school students. High school students can request a Samsung phone which can be used as a hotspot from their school. The District has just received another 1000 phones for students.
- **How many hours are students expected to work each day?** It is not expected that students work on assignments for an entire school day. Depending on their grade level and other factors, the amount of time students spend doing school work will vary. Considering the fact that under these conditions, student classwork and homework are essentially one and the same, and considering that students lack peer and teacher in-person support, teachers should reduce the volume of work that is customarily assigned to students in relation to the total that they would have otherwise been assigned in a brick and mortar environment.
- **How will daily school attendance be taken during the 4th grading period?** Starting April 6, 2020, students will log into the student portal to be recorded as present in school. Students will receive a confirmation alert when they log in. If a student fails to log into the portal, his or her parents will receive an automated phone call the next day by noon, indicating the student did not log into the portal the day before and was marked absent. Students in grades Pre-K through 2 and students with disabilities, who may be unable to log in by themselves, can be provided with assistance by a parent/guardian. Students are encouraged to log in during their regular scheduled school hours.
- **How can a student or a parent appeal an absence?** Any student/parent requesting to appeal an absence will have a period of 72 hours to submit an appeal/correction request (via email) to the school site administration. The request will need to include supporting evidence that demonstrates the student was engaged/involved with an approved distance learning activity for the day in question. Supporting evidence can include such things as:



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emails with teachers, platform usage with posted date, virtual instructional programs, or any other online educational platform that tracks date/time. Additional justifiable evidence/reasons can be determined by the principal.

- **Will the distance learning work be graded?** Beginning on Monday, April 6, students will receive a minimum of one grade per week per subject. Teachers will allow students to make up any missed work throughout the grading period and upon the reopening of school campuses for the 2019-20 school year. Teachers will contact parents and the school guidance counselor if students are not engaged in the assigned lessons and assignments.
- **How can I contact my child's school?** On the [dadeschools.net](http://dadeschools.net) main page, click on the Schools tab at the top, then on School Information. Once on the school directory page, search your child's school and click on the school's name to access the school's landing page. Finally, click on the email icon next to the school's picture at the top of the page to access the principal's email.
- **How can I communicate with my child's teacher?** The best way to communicate with your child's teacher is via email or the online platform that was indicated in the School Closure Student Checklist during teachers' office hours. Teachers are expected to be available for students no less than three hours per day during these office hours. If you need assistance communicating with your child's teacher, please contact your child's school.
- **Are all teachers using the same online platforms or programs?** Teachers were encouraged to continue using platforms that they and their students were familiar with prior to closure. Absent of an existing platform, teachers were encouraged and trained to use Microsoft Teams.
- **How can parents learn more about online learning and other related topics?** The District's Parent Academy is launching two new Virtual Campus workshops entitled *The Instructional Continuity Plan for Parents* and *Helping Children Cope During Forced Isolation*. Please visit the Parent Academy's Virtual Campus at <https://parentacademymiami.com/> for these and other important workshops addressing issues like: online safety, vaping, Open Educational Resources (OER), anxiety, and mental health. You may also follow the Parent Academy on Twitter at [@FamilySS\\_mdcp](https://twitter.com/FamilySS_mdcp).
- **What has the district done to increase cybersecurity to protect students and families? What can I do as a parent to protect my child?** The district's systems are protected because they are portal-accessed within an ID and password protected network that filters and blocks inappropriate content. Since some teachers are opting to use Zoom as a means to provide video lessons and communicate with students, we have purchased the enterprise version of the program which can now be used in conjunction with Microsoft Teams. Both of these applications are available through the student and teacher portals, which are intrusion-free secure environments. We are urging parents to ensure students



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uninstall any previous versions of Zoom they may have in their devices and install Microsoft Teams from the student portal and access Zoom through Teams. We need to keep in mind that Internet sites beyond our domain require parental supervision and with students being online now more than ever, it is critical for parents to be vigilant to ensure online safety.

- **What accommodations are being made for students who do not speak English?** English Language Learners are receiving the same services as students proficient in English, but they may be using different platforms that have built-in translators. Teachers will continue to use ESOL strategies to support learning of English Language Learner Students.
- **What modifications are being made for students with special needs?** The District has adapted content to be accessible for students with special needs. For example, students with Visual Impairments have been provided information on how to access applications for text to speech, access to a library of audiobooks, and braille services for supplementary lessons for those students requiring braille. Sign Language Interpreters will be working with teachers using Microsoft Teams. Counseling and other IEP-related services will be provided virtually to the extent practicable. Additional instructional resources have also been added to the Instructional Continuity Plan to provide support to teachers of students with disabilities. Teachers of students with disabilities who are severely impaired and are not able to navigate online learning platforms will prepare alternate lessons with guidance from ESE Department staff.
- **What if my child was in the process of being evaluated to determine eligibility for specialized services (Gifted or ESE)?** Pending screenings, assessments, psycho-educational evaluations, Individual Educational Plans (IEP), Individual Family Support Plans (IFSP), Educational Plans (EP), and Section 504 Plan will be completed via telephone or virtually to the extent practical. If there is a significant delay, the nature and extent of the delay and a plan to move as quickly as possible to prevent further delay will be related to parents by the appropriate district staff.
- **What will happen to magnet applications for the 2020-2021 school year?** Notifications will begin on Monday, March 30. Parents/guardians have until April 15<sup>th</sup> to accept offers of admission. If parents/legal guardians applied online or with a paper application, and provided a valid email address, they will receive an e-mail notification and can accept their seat online on or before April 15<sup>th</sup>. If parents/legal guardians applied with a paper application and did not provide a valid email address, they will receive the notification via US mail and can accept their seat by calling the HELP desk at 305-995-HELP on or before April 15<sup>th</sup>. If parents/legal guardians have questions regarding the Magnet acceptance process, they can call the M-DCPS help desk at 305-995-HELP.
- **What will happen to FSA testing?** The State has cancelled all assessments for the year.



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- **What will happen to SAT testing?** The College Board is canceling the May 2, 2020 SAT and SAT Subject Test administration. Students who already registered for May, whose March test centers were closed, or who do not receive March scores because of any irregularities will receive refunds. In the coming days, College Board will share additional information and details directly with registered students and test centers. College Board will provide future additional SAT testing opportunities for students as soon as possible in place of canceled administrations. They have not yet canceled the June 6, 2020 SAT and SAT Subject Test administration and will continue to assess its status. They are also exploring the possibility of adding an international SAT administration later this school year. Please click [here](#) for more information.
- **What will happen to AP courses and testing?** The College Board is providing instructional support via a [YouTube channel](#) providing free, live AP reviews for AP Courses. The channel can be accessed [here](#). The College Board has also announced a new, at-home testing option for Advanced Placement (AP) students. Traditional face-to-face exam administrations will not take place. Students will take a 45-minute online free-response exam at home. For each AP subject, there will be 2 different testing dates. The full exam schedule, specific free-response question types that will be on each AP Exam, and additional testing details will be available by April 3. We want to encourage all registered AP students to take the 2020 AP exam from home. For more information, please click [here](#).
- **What will happen to Cambridge Exams?** Cambridge International has decided not to run their May/June 2020 examination series. This includes Cambridge IGCSE, Cambridge O Level, Cambridge International AS & A Level, Cambridge AICE Diploma and Cambridge Pre-U. We recognize that students have been working very hard towards these exams. We will be working with schools to assess students' achievements using the best available evidence. Students will receive a grade and a certificate from Cambridge International, given the knowledge and skills they have acquired in their programs of study. This will ensure students do not face disadvantage as a result of these extraordinary circumstances. For additional information, please click [here](#).
- **What about International Baccalaureate Exams?** The May 2020 examinations scheduled between April 30 and May 22 for Diploma Programme (DP) and Career-related Programme (CP) candidates will no longer be held. Depending on what they registered for, the student will be awarded a Diploma or a Course Certificate which reflects their standard of work. This is based on student's coursework and the established assessment expertise, rigor and quality control already built into the programs. Please click [here](#) for more information.
- **What will happen to Dual Enrollment (DE) courses?** All DE students are strongly encouraged to communicate directly with college professors or the M-DCPS credentialed DE teacher. DE credentialed teachers have lessons and resources available on their educational websites and other electronic platforms. A flyer that provides additional



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information is available at <http://distancelearning.dadeschools.net/> under Student Resources.

- **What about internship or apprentice courses?** All internships have been cancelled. Students will have access to Odysseyware and my CareerShines to complete career exploration modules and work-based learning courses. Please visit <http://dcte.dadeschools.net> for additional details.
- **I'm a high school senior, will I be eligible to graduate this year?** High school seniors who earn the required course credits AND earn a cumulative GPA of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale will be able to graduate even if they have not passed the Grade 10 English Language Arts Assessment or the Algebra I EOC since all statewide testing has been cancelled this year. Students in the Class of 2020 (seniors) will be receiving an email with additional information and a Frequently Asked Questions for Seniors. Be sure to check your dadeschools.net email.
- **What if I have not yet completed a community service project and I am a graduating senior?** Given the current need to socially isolate and stay home, any 2019-2020 graduating senior who still has to submit a Community Service Project to meet the graduation requirement stated in School Board Policy 5410 and referenced in the Student Progression Plan should consider researching a local, state, national, or global issue of interest and concern and write a letter to their local, state, or national representative explaining why they feel it is important for government to take action regarding the issue researched. School site personnel charged with approving students Community Service Projects are encouraged to be as flexible as possible while still meeting the mission of the Community Service graduation requirement.
- **Will students be able to request transcripts for college applications or scholarships?** Unofficial transcripts can be accessed via the Student Portal. Official transcripts may be ordered via the school's website, fax, or by contacting the school directly. Order options may vary by school.