

COVID-19 SCHOOL CLOSURE FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



1. How will the school closure impact seniors academically?

- a. The Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) has issued the following statement for seniors in the graduating class of 2020.
 - i. "Seniors who are on track to graduate and in good standing as of the third nine weeks reporting period will be considered 'as meeting the graduation requirements' for the state of Alabama."
 - 1. This applies to all seniors, even those on the block schedule.
 - 2. If seniors are in good standing, then they are not expected to complete any online course work through the end of the school year.
 - 3. If seniors are failing graduation requirements, then they should only focus on those remaining graduation requirements.
 - 4. If seniors just began Government or Economics during the fourth nine weeks, the ALSDE has waived this graduation requirement for seniors in the graduating class of 2020 and seniors are not required to finish Government or Economics through e-learning the rest of this school year.

2. Will seniors have a graduation ceremony?

- a. Madison City Schools has every intention of providing a graduation ceremony for the senior class of 2020. The original graduation date is scheduled for May 18. If the COVID-19 health guidelines are still in place for large gatherings, we have scheduled June 29 at the VBC as a back-up graduation date. All of this is subject to change based on COVID-10 health guidelines.

3. Why have you decided not to assign grades for e-learning?

- a. During this unprecedented time, we do not want to add any additional stress to families during this already very stressful time.
- b. Our focus during this time is not to collect grades.
- c. The purpose of e-learning during this time is to close gaps and strengthen the foundation as students work toward mastery of critical skills that are needed in order to move onto the next grade level or course.
- d. Teachers will focus on encouraging all students to participate in the learning to ensure that they have mastered the critical standards.

4. Are standardized assessments still required even though schools have closed?

- a. Based on the current "State of Emergency" due to the COVID-19 health situation, the following required assessments have been waived by the ALSDE or the US Department of Education (USDE):
 - i. ACAP for grades 3-8
 - ii. Grade 3 Cursive Writing Report
 - iii. Alabama Civics Exam requirement for all seniors
 - iv. ACAP alternate for grades 3-8,10 and 11

5. Are you still planning to offer summer school and summer camps?

- a. At this time, we do plan to offer summer school and summer camp programs.
 - i. This could change based on information from the state.
- b. Per the ALSDE, no summer schools or summer camps can begin before June 8.

- c. There is a chance that the state could push the June 8 date back depending on the COVID-19 health situation.
- 6. What should students do if they do not have a device or internet access?**
- a. At this time District Administrators are going to deliver devices to students who have requested them. If you know of a student in need, please notify the helpdesk.
- 7. What is the process for teachers and students/parents to request tech support?**
- a. All Technology personnel have been issued cell phones that are tied to the helpdesk phone number and are checking the helpdesk emails as well. Also, elarninghelp@madisoncity.k12.al.us has been set up for the community to use for help with student issued devices.
- 8. Will summer camps take on a more instructional approach?**
- a. English Learners (EL) camps will shift to begin on June 9th and will offer supplemental academic and enrichment support to targeted active EL students with highest needs, as planned.
 - b. Elementary Summer Day Camps will not have an increased academic focus this summer due to college and high school students working alongside certified staff. There is not enough certified staff to provide academic support to the number of students attending and could leave non-certified staff supervising students without the support of certified staff.
- 9. Is it possible to have a time or schedule for students to come into the classrooms to get their remaining items and/or return library books?**
- a. Not at this time due to COVID-19 health guidelines.
- 10. What will students do if they have a school library book or textbook?**
- a. The expectation is that books be returned once schools are reopened. More information will follow based on the COVID-19 health guidelines.

11. What is the procedure for retrieving textbooks at the end of the year?

- a. All textbooks are tracked through a barcode management system. A detailed process for the collection of textbooks will be provided when schools are allowed to re-open. There will be no penalties for late return of textbooks.

12. What about Dual Enrollment?

- a. Students enrolled in dual enrollment courses will continue in their class and follow the plan/rules governing these courses. The post-secondary school of enrollment will assign grades after completion of the course and the grades will be added to the students' transcript.

13. Can we make a schedule of time for each content to offer online so we are not all trying to do it at the same time and overloading our students? They should not have to choose what teacher to meet with because we scheduled them simultaneously.

- a. The majority of learning will be asynchronous, so that students can work at a time that works best for them and for their families. However, individual schools may build a schedule at the discretion of the school principal.

14. How will final exams work, especially for the high school level courses?

- a. Final exams will not be given.

15. Will paper copy packets be provided for students without technology?

- a. No, all instructional tools and assignments will be uploaded to Google Classroom.
- b. MCS has been providing devices to students who submit a request.

16. How many assignments can I expect my child to have each week?

- a. Elementary students should work no longer than 2-3 hours per day on school work and secondary students should work no longer than 2-3 hours per week, per class on school work.

17. How long will the school day be?

- a. Elementary students should work no longer than 2-3 hours per day on school work and secondary students should work no longer than 2-3 hours per week, per class on school work.

18. What are the consequences if a student acts inappropriately while on Google hangout / meet / Zoom? Or posts inappropriately via Google Classroom? How can teachers enforce consequences? What role does administration play in this?

- a. Teachers should continue to hold the same expectations and provide the same consequences for students in the virtual classroom as they do in a face-to-face classroom.
 - i. For example, if a student is disruptive in a classroom and the consequence is to contact parents, then if a student is disruptive in a virtual meeting, the teacher should contact parents. If a situation arises when a teacher would contact an administrator in response to a student behavior in a traditional learning environment, then the teacher should contact an administrator.

19. Are students required to be logged in at certain hours? I know some of my students are going to work with their parents right now.

- a. The majority of our students' e-learning will be asynchronous, so students may work from anywhere, at any time. Students will not have set school hours. Teachers may request students join virtual lessons at specific times.

20. When will 3rd Nine Week Progress Reports go out?

- a. Parents will be encouraged to review the third nine weeks' report card in INOW. A document sharing information on how to review a report card in INOW will be shared with parents.

21. Will students still have the opportunity to earn Career Tech Industry Credentials (or CRIs)?

- a. Students will still be able to earn some of the Career Tech Industry Credentials they were working toward. However, some of the credentials require the demonstration of hands-on skills and these will not be able to be earned.
- b. ALSDE is working to provide additional information on this topic.

22. Have we been told officially when this school year will end?

- a. In his March 26, 2020 email, Mr. Terrell indicated, "Our plan is to finish as planned in our current school year calendar [indicating May 21]; however, if we need to move beyond our approved school year calendar, then we will make that decision in the very near future."

23. What is the plan for secondary students at the alternative school?

- a. Students at the Alternative School will receive instruction in the way that all general education students receive instruction. Instruction will come from their general education teachers at their home school.

24. What is the plan for secondary students at the Academy?

- a. Students in the Academy will receive instruction in the way that all general education students receive instruction. Teachers who work in the Academy will use Google Classroom to post weekly lessons, provide feedback to students, and communicate with students / parents.
- b. If students are enrolled in a class to recover a credit, then they will need to continue the class until the credit is recovered. If students are in good standing in their current classes, then their final grade for their current classes will come from the third nine weeks.

25. How will ACCESS Virtual Learning move forward?

- a. ACCESS Virtual Learning classes will continue until 5:00 pm on Friday, May 29.
- b. Students currently enrolled in yearlong or semester ACCESS Virtual Learning courses have two options:
 - i. If students are happy with their current grade, they can withdraw-with-grades at this time and use the grade earned at this point for the final grade.
 - ii. If students are unhappy with their current grade, they can continue in their ACCESS course until completion as usual and use the grade earned when ACCESS courses end at 5:00 pm on Friday, May 29.
- c. Students currently enrolled in a 4th nine week ACCESS Virtual Learning course have two options:
 - i. Students have the option to continue in and complete the course using the final grade earned when ACCESS courses end at 5:00 pm on Friday, May 29.
 - ii. Students may choose to withdraw from the ACCESS course and retake the course during the following school year. In this case, students would be withdrawn from the current course with no credit awarded on the transcript / no grade awarded on the transcript.

26. Will AP exams be given?

- a. AP exams will be given online and students will take AP exams from home, on any device that they have: laptop, tablet, smart phone.
 - i. See the [AP CollegeBoard](#) website for additional information.
- b. MCS strongly encourages students to take AP exams this year.
- c. Graded weights will still apply to all credit-bearing courses (ex. 6.0 GPA weight for AP courses) regardless of whether students take AP exams.
- d. [AP College Board](#) continues to update their website with new information to address the COVID-19 situation.

27. Can student medication still be picked up from the school?

- a. The nurse will notify parents and prepare medications to be picked up.

- b. A pick-up time will be assigned to each parent.

28. Will High School World Language assessments still occur for spring 2020 for earning the MCS Seal of Biliteracy?

- a. Students who are paid and scheduled to test in spring 2020 for the AAPPL or ALIRA or OPI/WPT exams will be able to take the exams online. Details for this option will be available mid-April. Each of the respective high schools have set up Google Classroom groups to give out directions and news regarding these procedures.
- b. Students should prepare and study:
 - i. AAPPL topics 2020 for grades 9-12 available on the LTI website:
<https://www.languagetesting.com/pub/media/wysiwyg/manuals/AAPPLTopics2020.pdf>
 - ii. For ALIRA testers, here is a link to a sample test:
https://www.languagetesting.com/pub/media/wysiwyg/ALIRA_Sample_Test.pdf
 - iii. For OPI/WPT for Seal of Biliteracy testers, here is the link to the handbook for this exam:
<https://www.languagetesting.com/pub/media/wysiwyg/manuals/opi-wpt-for-the-seal-of-biliteracy-examinee-handbook.pdf>

29. How will awards for the MCS Seal of Biliteracy be distributed?

- a. Once COVID-19 restrictions are lifted, schools will determine how and when awards/medallions/certificates will be disseminated.

30. Will we be enrolling any new students for the remainder of the year?

- a. New students may continue to register in SchoolMint.

31. Are seniors not required to do any online class?

- a. Per the State Superintendent, "Seniors who are on track to graduate and in good standing as of the third nine weeks reporting period will be considered 'as meeting the graduation requirements' for the state of Alabama."
- b. If seniors are in good standing, then they are not expected to complete any online course work through the end of the school year. However, seniors in good standing may still choose to participate in online course work.
- c. If seniors are failing graduation requirements, then they should only focus on those remaining graduation requirements.
- d. If seniors just began Government or Economics during the fourth nine weeks, the ALSDE has waived this graduation requirement for seniors in the graduating class of 2020 and seniors are not required to finish Government or Economics through e-learning the rest of this school year.

32. When will e-learning begin?

- a. E-learning will officially begin on Thursday, April 9.
- b. Teachers will use April 6-8 as virtual work days to prepare for e-learning.

33. Will all students need a laptop or can they be shared among siblings?

- a. Siblings can share a laptop; however, e-learning may be easier to manage if there is more than one device available. MCS has one more device delivery. See the [Madison City Schools website](#) for more information.

34. My kids have laptop at home. Do they still need device from school?

- a. No, students are not required to get a device from school. If students have personal devices, then they can use those devices to participate in e-learning for the remainder of the school year.

35. Will there be lessons for Art, Spanish, Music?

- a. Specialty Area Teachers (Art, Counselors, Music, PE, Spanish, STEAM) will send weekly lessons through the homeroom teacher's Google Classroom (links to video, PowerPoint instructional guides, Google Classroom codes).

36. If my student does not complete assignments or log in daily, what are the consequences?

- a. Teachers are to communicate with parents so that they are aware that students are not completing assignments or participating in classes. This communication should be documented in the required communication log.
- b. Communication between teacher and parents, along with encouragement from both, should help with the participation of many students.

37. How will my child study for an AP test, when will they take and how will they take it?

- a. If students are enrolled in an AP course for the second semester, the class will continue virtually, and teachers will focus on the critical standards that have been identified essential to mastery of the class content.
- b. AP Central is offering free online courses as well, to help students prepare for their AP exams. See [AP Online Course Schedule](#).
- c. AP exams will be given online and students will take AP exams from home, on any device that they have: laptop, tablet, smart phone.
 - i. See the [AP CollegeBoard](#) website for additional information.

38. When will we receive an official transcript showing our senior has graduated?

- a. Transcripts will be available at the end of the school year, as usual.

39. Will students still receive yearbooks that were purchased? I'm assuming this will involve picking them up at the start of the next academic year?

- a. Depending on COVID-19 travel and meeting restrictions, yearbooks will either be picked up by students at a predetermined time (determined by the school) or will be passed out to students when they return to school (2020-21 school year).

40. Can the school plan something special for seniors? Seniors especially can not get this time in their lives back.

- a. Efforts will be made to hold something special for seniors during the summer, based on COVID-19 restrictions.

41. We are a family planning to move out-of-state this summer. How can we obtain copies of my child's school records before we move?

- a. Parents can work with the registrar at the school for electronic copies. Until there is a change in the COVID-19 health guidelines, we will have to delay obtaining paper copies.

42. How can we obtain refunds (i.e. field trips, Extended Day)?

- a. Those seeking a refund should contact the school principal.

43. Is there an option for parents to choose homeschooling during this special time?

- a. Parents choosing to homeschool their child should contact the registrar to withdraw and enroll in homeschool.

44. For children who have parents who will be working outside of their home: Will the teachers work with those students one on one over online video conferencing to help them keep up? Is there anything other parents can do to support those children? Small group chats, etc?

- a. Teachers will hold virtual office hours daily to answer general questions that students and parents may have.
- b. Teachers will be available to students who need additional support and have multiple communication and instruction avenues to do so. In addition, teachers will be flexible with students and remember that the virtual environment is new to everyone and may be more difficult for some students than others.

45. Will this distance learning mean kids will be in online classrooms seeing their teachers instruct them or will parents actually have to find a way to help them learn materials that are put out in google classroom (a self study method)?

- a. The mode of delivery of instruction will vary from teacher to teacher and from day to day. Teachers have been encouraged to and have been provided resources to create videos of direct instruction. In addition, teachers may use other instruction materials to support their students' needs, when learning new concepts.
- b. Teachers will hold virtual office hours daily to answer general questions that students and parents may have.
- c. Teachers will be available to students who need additional support and have multiple communication and instruction avenues to do so. In addition, teachers will be flexible with students and remember that the virtual environment is new to everyone and may be more difficult for some students than others.
- d. Parents are always welcome to provide support for their children and to reach out to their child's teachers for additional help/support.

46. Will first class pre-k still have online learning or is the semester considered over (no further payment due)?

- a. First Class Pre-K students will continue to receive instruction from their teachers. However, tuition is being waived during the period of e-learning.

47. Will the distance learning focus be mainly on key concepts (math/ELA standards)?

- a. SECONDARY: Critical standards will be taught and assessed in every class. These standards were identified for English, math, science, and social studies for grade 6-8 by ALSDE. In all other classes, teachers will identify the critical standards that students need to master in order to succeed in the next class / grade level.
- b. ELEMENTARY: Critical standards will be taught and progressed monitored in every subject area. However, Kindergarten - third grade teachers will focus primarily on the critical standards identified for ELA and math until mastery is demonstrated. Science and social studies will be practiced and reviewed during extension activities. Students in fourth and fifth grades will continue focusing on the critical standards identified in science and social studies for each grade level.

48. For elementary school students, I am concerned with long screen time everyday, which is not healthy for their eyes and for their physical growth. Is it possible to set a time limit for screen time?

- a. Elementary students should spend 2-3 hours, depending on the age of the child, to complete required coursework each day. Assignments are being outlined in a weekly template to allow flexibility to families for determining what will be accomplished each day. If your child is consistently working more than 2-3 hours each day to complete the

teacher assignments for the week, please reach out to your child's teacher to discuss concerns and formulate a plan.

49. Are teachers responsible for providing their own content and assignments or is everything district wide? For example, do all 3rd graders get the same assignments.

- a. SECONDARY: Teachers have the autonomy to create their own lessons and assignments, making sure that they focus on the critical standards in their discipline and grade level. While teachers may choose to collaborate and create lessons and assignments together, they are not required to do so. A comprehensive list of online and content specific resources has been created for teachers to use, but they are not bound to only using the resources that have been provided.
- b. ELEMENTARY: Elementary teachers will be guided by the critical standards set forth by the Alabama State Department of Education for each subject area in each grade level. Teachers will tailor their instruction and student expectations to those standards that have not previously been taught and/or mastered. Each grade level team at each school will collaborate in order to establish similar weekly student expectations.

50. If the teacher's assignments are considerably more time consuming, will there be a way to anonymously report it?

- a. SECONDARY: Parents are encouraged to contact a teacher to let them know if their child is spending more than the maximum of 2-3 hours per class per week, if the teacher's course is taking more time than the maximum of 2-3 hours weekly. Teachers are adjusting to the virtual environment and are adjusting their lessons accordingly and may be unaware that a weekly plan is taking longer than expected. If the situation persists after parents have communicated with the teacher, parents may want to consider contacting the administration.
- b. ELEMENTARY: Parents are encouraged to contact the teacher to let him/her know if their child is spending more than the maximum of 2-3 hours per day to complete the weekly assignments, if the weekly assignments are consistently requiring more time than the maximum of 2-3 hours per day to complete. Teachers are adjusting to the virtual environment and are adjusting their lessons accordingly and may be unaware that a weekly plan is taking longer than expected. If the situation persists after parents have communicated with the teacher, parents may want to consider contacting the administration.

51. Will elementary students still progress to the next grade level since they will not have received the state required instructional hours?

- a. Yes, students will have the opportunity to be promoted to the next grade level at the conclusion of the 2019-2020 academic year. Instruction, although it will look differently, will continue during this period of e-learning. Teachers will be attentive to students' needs and follow-up appropriately to ensure academic progress continues.

52. My child was going to be tested for gifted, how will that work?

- a. Due to the restrictions of face-to-face interactions during this time, gifted testing will pause and will be resumed at the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year.

53. Can we get packets for children that still need to better their writing skills?

- a. Due to the restrictions set forth because of the COVID-19 pandemic, all assignments will be shared with parents via Google Classroom. However, parents are welcome to print assignments out for children to write answers or have students write answers on a separate sheet of paper for handwriting practice.