



## Pasadena Unified School District OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ACADEMIC OFFICER

April 26, 2020

Dear PUSD Families,

I hope that you and your family are staying healthy and safe.

Our teachers, principals, administrators, and staff are working to continuously improve the way we deliver remote learning. I know that balancing family, work, and remote learning is not easy for you as we all honor public health directives, and I appreciate all that you are doing to support your children at home.

In addition to Superintendent Brian McDonald's messages, I would like to provide information regarding Academic updates in response to many questions that have been presented to PUSD staff.

### **Extended Distance Learning**

Please remember to have your students log-in to the [PowerSchool Learning](#) every day to ensure that students are accessing resources and instruction, and allows us to observe and identify any areas where they may need additional support. Time spent on tasks in remote learning are not the same as in-person classes. Students are encouraged to explore, play, and have personal balance. The CIPD researched best practices for Distance learning, as a reminder the please refer to the [chart with recommended instructional minutes per grade level](#).

### **Grading Policy**

To ensure that students and staff are equitably supported for success and in accordance with the California Department of Education's guidance that "no student should be harmed through grading during COVID-19 and extended distance learning," PUSD has altered its grading policy, in collaboration with the United Teachers of Pasadena (UTP). March 13, 2020 was the last day that students were physically in classrooms. Beginning on March 16, 2020 and ending on May 28, 2020,

- **Elementary School:** students in grades K-5 will receive Pass/No Pass grades for Trimester 3 grading period only.
- **Middle and High School:** Middle and High School students will receive grades from A-D only during marking periods 7 and 8, and the final semester grade. Student grades marked on March 13, 2020 are the lowest grade any student can receive during this time. Students who received an "F" as of March 13 will be given additional opportunities to increase their grade if afforded access to their classes and teachers. Students will not be assigned "incomplete," "F" or "NG" grades if they are unable to increase their grade during the Extended Distance Learning time due to their inability to access their education for technology and/or social emotional reasons.
- **Rose City High School:** March 13 was the last day of Quarter 3 at Rose City High School, a model continuation school. Remote learning began on March 16, the same day as the school's start of Quarter 4. Rose City High School students will receive a grade no lower than "C" for this Quarter, and receive five full credits per course.

### **English Learner Reclassification**

We continue to wait for guidance regarding reclassification from the California Department of Education. Our Language Assessment and Development Department (LADD) is in weekly communication with the Los Angeles County Office of Education and we will be considering all opportunities to reclassify eligible students based on their recommendations.

### **Advanced Placement Testing**

The College Board will be emailing students with directions on AP testing. We are working with ITs to ensure students will receive these emails soon. Students should continue to monitor news and participate in the College Board's AP classroom.

Our Children. Learning Today. Leading Tomorrow.

351 South Hudson Ave., Room 218 • Pasadena, California 91109 • (626) 396-3600 ext. 88087 • FAX (626) 795-5309

### **Graduation Requirements and Graduate Defense**

In support of our seniors the PUSD graduation requirements for the class of 2020 have been slightly modified.

- The completion of 40 community service/work-based learning hours has been suspended for those seniors who had not submitted all 40 hours by March 16, 2020.
- Seniors are still required to present a summary of their educational journey and plans for their future through the Graduate Defense. Teachers and defense coordinators are working with students to help ensure they successfully complete their Defense through a live Google Meet or through a prerecorded video. Accommodations will be honored as necessary including timeline extension for graded Reflection Papers, Research & Creativity Artifacts. Special circumstances will be handled on a case by case basis, with considerations similar to our revised grading policy that no harm will be caused to students.

### **Graduation Ceremonies/Seniorbrations/Celebrations**

Graduations ceremonies are one of the most memorable rites of passage, and PUSD is committed to honoring our graduates and their families even during these challenging times. At the same time, we must adhere to public health directives on social distancing. We are completing a survey of our seniors. We are working with school principals to explore possible options to safely celebrate graduation ceremonies and other "Seniorbrations". We are also looking at ways to celebrate middle and elementary school awards, promotions, and transitions.

### **Summer Internships**

The College & Career Department is still preparing students for Summer Internships and are in the process of interviewing all 268 applicants with the help of our business partners. Although we do not yet know what the summer internship will look like we want to make sure our students are prepared to begin working.

### **Summer Learning**

Governor Newsom has indicated that schools should plan for remote learning this summer. We are planning PUSD summer learning activities, credit recovery and Extended School Year (ESY) along two possible paths: in-person and virtual, although at this time it seems more likely that PUSD summer programs will be held in a virtual environment. We will keep sending updates as the plans progress.

### **Technology Support for Students**

PUSD's ITS Division is providing tech support directly to students. While logged into their PUSD accounts, students can submit their own tickets for direct support for PUSD-managed devices and applications by visiting [gopUSD.com/helpdesk](http://gopUSD.com/helpdesk). Families can also reach the Helpdesk at 626-396-3699 in order to get real time support.

In PUSD schools, our work is guided by our mission to provide a caring, engaging, and challenging education to every child, every day. I am inspired every day by the courage and perseverance of our students, educators, caregivers and families.

"You have to accept whatever comes, and the only important thing is that you meet it with the best you have to give." Eleanor Roosevelt

Sincerely,



Elizabeth Blanco, Ed.D.  
Chief Academic Officer  
& The Academics Division Team