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**Subject:** [test] PFT Coronavirus Update 3-19-20: Testing News, Subs, State Update & More

# CORONAVIRUS



## Updates

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Dear Dan:

### **This Just In—NO Testing!**

**At 3:45PM ET today, the Pennsylvania Department of Education announced the cancellation of Statewide Assessments, including PSSA, Keystones and PASA.**

[Read the entire news release here.](#)

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### **That Being Said ...**

We are trying to be in touch with the District as often as possible to get updates—most often, David May-Stein has been the most reliable source of information (see more from Dr. May Stein later).

As we have told you, our primary focus has been to make sure that our members pay and benefits remain interrupted, and we have been successful **except for our Day-to-Day Substitutes.**

[Please click here to see yesterday's update with information](#) on how you could reach out to the Superintendent and Chief Financial Officer to express your displeasure with their utterly disappointing decision to not pay our valuable Subs during this time off.

We need to show our appreciation for our Subs now so that we know that we can count on them when our students return to our classrooms!

Know that we continue to work with **AFTPA President, Art Steinberg** almost daily. They are conducting a state-wide survey on how districts are dealing with their Substitute staffs. We will continue to gather information from AFT—I have a conference call at 6:00 PM this evening on

the coronavirus and how it is affecting our 3500+ locals across the country.

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## **Labor Council Hosts Statewide Conference Call.**

**Allegheny County Labor Council President Darrin Kelly** assembled a terrific conference call this morning to provide the latest information to well over 200 area labor leaders. **Harold Grant, Chris George and I** were all on this very informative call that included **Attorney General Josh Shapiro, Congressman Conor Lamb, State Senator Democratic Chair Jay Costa, and State Representative, Democratic Chair Frank Dermody, the Leads of the Unemployment Department and other Government Agencies.**

**Here is a brief recap of highlights you need to know:**

1. Attorney General Shapiro urged the reporting of price gouging to his office—they have over 1000 tips already to follow up on. Price gouging is normally illegal in Pennsylvania—use this email address to report issues: [pricegouging@attorneygeneral.gov](mailto:pricegouging@attorneygeneral.gov).
2. Record numbers have applied for unemployment in PA—183,00 first time claims over the past 3 days; the previous record was 168,000 in a month!
3. Director Martini from the State Unemployment Office remarked that the phone system is becoming totally overwhelmed, people should avoid phone calls if they can go online. [UC.PA.GOV](http://UC.PA.GOV) has a COVID-19 specific website for unemployment as well.
4. The waiting week is waived, as is the work search requirement is waived. *“You should not be looking for a job, you should be at home.”*

**Here are the Unemployment links again:**

[UC application process specific to COVID-19 claims.](#)

[Click here if you simply want to immediately begin your application.](#)

5. There will be employer relief from charges - individual employers will not be charged higher unemployment insurance costs to cover this, the state will cover it.
6. Also at the state level: Evictions and utility shut-offs have been halted temporarily—and they are working on a stimulus package.
7. Congressman Lamb spoke about expanded unemployment and that it will now be paid 100% Federally—they will immediately be increasing production of things like protective gloves and masks, expanding unemployment insurance—everything centers on workers first!

He also noted a movement toward using WWII style powers to convert some manufacturing plants to build needed medical equipment.

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## **District Update and Answers to Common Questions!**

We continue to get information from the District to make sure that we get information as quickly as we can to you! **Here are the four ways that the District has been reporting to educators, as well as other employees:**

1. Staff email updates are coming out every third day to everyone with a board email
  2. [There is a COVID-19 virus section on the BOE website](#)—this includes the Q & A from the weekly principal conference calls—minus the questions that pertain only to principals and vice-principals. (*See below for an updated list courtesy of Staff Representative Harold Grant.*)
  3. Alert now robo-calls (to everyone who has updated their phones with the BOE—one is coming out tonight)
  4. News releases
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## Your Most Frequently Asked Questions, Answered.

### Work Hours:

#### 1. Who is required to report to work?

At this time, only individuals that are supporting school closure, grab and go meal distribution and managing the COVID-19 operations and communications are required to report to work. This will continue to be assessed.

#### 2. When will we know who essential staff are?

Executive Leadership are reviewing the list of essential staff and will share the list once it is finalized.

#### 3. Will staff being asked to report be penalized if they cannot report?

No, staff will not be penalized.

#### 4. What hours are custodians working?

Custodians are working 7:00 AM to 3:30 PM Monday and Tuesday. Their hours will be modified beginning Wednesday to 10:00 AM to 2:00PM

#### 5. What employees in Human Resources will be working?

A full list of HR employees considered essential for operations will be shared.

### Grab & Go:

#### 6. Are principals and/or assistant principals expected to be on site for Grab & Go?

Principals and Assistant Principals are being asked to show up this week at their school to support the Grab & Go program. Anyone that is unable to be on site due to childcare issues or a health concern or sickness should inform their Assistant Superintendent. This notification is to help make sure all sites are covered this week.

#### 7. Are all administrative staff required to be on site for Grab & Go?

Principals and assistant principals are being asked to show up this week at their school to

Principals and assistant principals are being asked to show up this week at their school to support the Grab & Go program. Only one administrator needs to be onsite.

**8. Can Oakhill Market and Jubilee Kitchen be added to the Hill District?**

Yes, this can be arranged. Food distribution will continue at Weil based on the number of students that showed up today.

**9. Can bus drivers deliver food to bus stops?**

No, this is not possible.

**Compensation:**

**10. Will day to day substitutes be paid?**

Payment for all time worked through Friday that has been entered by a timekeeper will be paid on the next pay date of March 31, 2020. Any time that was not entered will be paid after normal operations resume at the District. There will be no additional pay days beyond March 31, 2020 until normal operations resume at the District.

**11. Will long-term substitutes be paid?**

Yes. Long-term subs will be paid their regular salary.

**12. Will substitutes that are still working towards their 40 days, be able to count the days we off towards their total?**

No. No additional days will be added until the substitute returns to work.

**13. How will principals and assistant principals be compensated for their time?**

The District is evaluating principal and assistant principal compensation at this time. Please expect details to be shared in the near future.

**14. Will school tutors be paid?**

Payment for all time worked through Friday that has been entered by the timekeeper will be paid on the next pay date of March 31, 2020. For the time remaining in the pay period until March 31, 2020 five (5) standard hours will be paid to you.

**15. Will school playground monitors be paid?**

No.

## **Hiring:**

### **16. What will happen for the hiring process for next school year?**

The hiring process has been suspended.

## **Operations:**

### **17. Will the purchasing ordering deadline be extended?**

Mr. Joseph will consult with this team and communicate any new expectations.

### **18. What are custodian's roles and responsibilities while they are working?**

Custodians have been directed to support clean up with Grab & Go meals, take out garbage, and clean out refrigerators. They will also support regular maintenance required to keep district facilities operational.

### **19. When will school cleaning occur?**

Operations has a pre-closing, closed and re-opening plan. Cleaning will occur as a part of the re-opening plan.

## **Academics:**

### **20. How will the district manage students that need to meet graduation requirements?**

We are working with the PA Department of Education to understand our next steps in regards graduation requirements.

### **21. How will credit recovery be handled?**

At this time credit recovery is suspended.

### **22. Are teachers permitted to post assignments on class dojo, homework help?**

No, because there is no guarantee this is done equitably to comply with Free and Appropriate Education

### **23. Can teachers unlock assignments for students?**

No, because there is no guarantee this is done equitably to comply with Free and Appropriate Education.

### **24. Can we disable Edgenuity accounts?**

We will determine if this is possible.

### **25. Can we post a message on Edgenuity about it being disabled?**

We will determine if this is possible.

**26. Are students permitted to complete online classes if they take college in high school courses at Pitt? Pitt said they can.**

We will investigate and get back to you.

**27. Can Advanced Placement specific content be sent to students?**

Yes, but none of the content can be collected or graded.

### **End of Year Events – Graduation & Prom:**

**28. Will graduation be held?**

It is too early to make this decision.

**29. Will schools hold prom?**

It is too early to make this decision.

### **Extended School Year (ESY) Summer School:**

**30. Will there be an extension for end of year paperwork for ESY?**

Yes. All paperwork deadlines will be extended.

### **Special Education:**

**31. How will IEPs/Re-evaluations/GEIPs be handled?**

The Program for Students with Exceptionalities (PSE) is evaluating all deadlines and is working on a plan to meet all deadlines when school is back in session. At this time all deadlines will be extended due to the closure.

**32. Will the District send a notice to families whose child's IEP requires updating on a date during the closure?**

No. The District will add a notification to the FAQ on the website.

### **Construction:**

**35. Will construction continue at buildings?**

We are discussing our options with the legal department since we have obligations based on our contract.

### **Clearances:**

**36. Will staff still be expected to update their clearances on the same timeline?**

Staff will receive notification by mail in the next few weeks requesting them to update their clearances. The deadline for completion will be extended. This item will be added to the website FAQ.

**Updates to this information are made as new information becomes available--bookmark this page: <https://www.pghschools.org/Page/5345>**

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**Once again, please send any and all questions or concerns that you have to us so that we can answer them or get the answers from David May Stein.**

**We will be emailing him a list of additional questions tomorrow, and we have a conference call with him again on Monday, March 23 at 1:00pm.**

**Don't be out there wondering—now that pay questions are getting resolved, the District is moving ahead to answer other issues.**

**And if there are additional questions you need answers for--resources, union questions, resources for parents, etc.—please don't hesitate to ask!**

**In Solidarity---**  
**Nina EV**

**PS: NINA'S NOTES Coming Tomorrow in a Special Friday Edition!**

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Sent via [ActionNetwork.org](https://www.actionnetwork.org). To update your email address, change your name or address, or to stop receiving emails from Pittsburgh Federation of Teachers, please [click here](#).