

CORONA VIRUS

Updates

Dear Dan:

Today, **Bill, Harold and I** met via conference call with the District's Executive Cabinet (Dr. Hamlet, David May-Stein, Errika Fearby-Jones, Ted Dwyer and Bob Harris) at 1pm to discuss the list of questions from members that we submitted to them last week. **You will see that Q&A from the District below.**

Some of the latest questions that we submitted from you were not included because the District did not get to them—they will be included in the next set. *Please continue to submit your questions, because we will continue to dialogue with the District leadership individually, and will continue to conduct conference calls like this one at least once each week.*

We know that you will be disappointed to see that some questions seem to be stuck in a holding pattern as Harrisburg sorts through this unprecedented crisis. It is hard to be patient when we are all anxious to have answers to important questions, but know that we will continue to work with the District, AFTP, the Allegheny County Labor Council and our legislators in both the west and east to push to get your very important questions answered about pensions, make-up days and when we will/can return to work.

Things continue to change—they have even changed since our discussion with the District today. For example, while we were on the phone with the District, came word that the Governor ordered a two-week stay at home order—and an additional two-week school closing across the state.

Guidance will be going out to schools tomorrow (Tuesday) from the state on continuity of education and educational services that districts could offer students during this extended period.

Also, be aware that the District shared that they (the District) will sending out a survey to all employees in the District to assess what they can do to support our students remotely

—possibly as soon as tomorrow.

The District needs to know what their capabilities are remotely for students and staff—and what they have to do next to support students remotely. They did share a draft of the survey itself, and have assured us that it will include an explanatory opening statement and description.

They will also be sending out a survey to parents about their online capabilities in their homes.

**District response to Pittsburgh of Federation of Teachers (PFT) Questions
Monday, March 23, 2020**

The responses below are reflective of the information and direction received by the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE), Governor Wolf and the federal government as of Monday, March 23, 2020. As new information and guidance is received, the District will provide updates.

1. Will teachers have to make up the time even though some may be preparing assignments, evaluating work, etc. during the closure?

The District will follow direction from the Pennsylvania Department of Education and Governor Wolf.

2. What is the likelihood that school will be back in session March 30? Other districts are out until April 15? When will we find out if the district extends the closure?

The District will follow direction from the Pennsylvania Department of Education and Governor Wolf. To date, the District has received no additional information regarding school closure.

3. Will teachers have to work after June 30?

The District will follow direction from the Pennsylvania Department of Education and Governor Wolf. To date, the District has received no additional information.

4. Could teachers take unpaid day if they needed childcare after June 12?

The District will evaluate requests from teachers on a case-by-case basis. Teachers are encouraged to have alternate childcare arrangements should instruction occur after June 12, 2020.

5. Will Summer Dreamers still occur?

This is to be determined. However, the District will follow direction from the Pennsylvania Department of Education and Governor Wolf.

6. If I am on a medical leave, will my sick days be taken while school is not in session?

If an employee is currently on an unpaid leave of absence, he/she will remain on an unpaid leave of absence until his/her predetermined return-to-work provided that the employee's return-to-work medical documentation is submitted and approved.

If an employee is currently on a paid leave of absence, during which time his/her sick days are running concurrently with other leave consistent with District policy, he/she will remain on a paid leave of absence and accrued sick days will continue to run.

Employees are directed to submit leave of absence paperwork including medical return-to-work documentation to both jberr1@pghschools.org and twaskowicz1@pghschools.org. If email is not an option, then documentation should be faxed to 412-622-7981. Email is preferred. Do not send LOA paperwork via regular mail as Administration Building is closed.

7. When will the administration building be open to answer benefit, payroll and leave questions?

While the Administration Building is closed, central office employees in payroll, employee relations, and benefits are responding to employee questions. Employees can submit questions through the District's Support Center (support@pghschools.org) and/or the Let's Talk customer service platform (<https://mypps.sharepoint.com/lets-talk>)

8. Will employees, who were mandated to work during the district closure, receive additional compensation?

The District's labor counsel will be in communication with the PFT's legal counsel to discuss matters related to additional compensation.

9. Will Spring coaches be paid?

No. Since spring sports are unable to occur due to the school closure, spring coaches will not be paid. However, this question will be revisited once there is a determination on the District's ability to hold spring sports.

10. Do you have any information about what the requirement will be for who are out of work due to the COVID-19?

The District will develop procedures that comply with new federal legislation (FMLA Expansion) and state recommendations, including the Center for Disease Control regarding quarantine.

11. Is there a date that we can expect to find out if the district will extend the closure?

The District will follow direction from the Pennsylvania Department of Education and Governor Wolf. To date, the District has received no additional information regarding school closure.

12. Since staff is not required to report as some districts. I saw we will get paid, but does that mean we will be in school until end of June? Making up hours after school? Is there something we can do now to make this up? Online PDs?

The District will follow direction from the Pennsylvania Department of Education and Governor Wolf. To date, the District has received no additional information regarding school closure and the extension of the school year. When the District receives this information, we will share it with all stakeholders as well as a plan to make-up instruction and/or non-instruction days if applicable.

13. Will Spring break be cancelled?

The District is currently not planning to cancel Spring Break. Currently, Spring Break dates will remain the same, April 6 through April 13.

14. Will my PSERS be affected if I do not work 180 days?

This is a decision that falls within the exclusive authority of PSERS. This District has no input on PSERS determinations.

15. Will the deadline for the Pittsburgh Public Schools Scholarships be extended beyond April 3?

Yes

16. Some buildings have been closed due to possible exposures. Being itinerant, I have been in some of the closed buildings in the past weeks. How is the district notifying those who have been exposed and who should seek testing?

The District continues to send out communication via press releases, emails to all staff and robo calls to all staff with information detailing where a potential exposure occurred. As part of the communication, we remind staff of the COVID-19 symptoms and inform them to contact their PCP if they are not feeling well. Please note, given HIPPA regulations, we are unable to share any specific information of a person who tested positive. When such a positive case is identified, the Allegheny County Health Department takes over with any individual investigation/notification and possible testing that may occur.

Four Important Things To Remember When Planning Necessary Trips.

With the increased restrictions placed on the mobility of many Pennsylvanians by Governor Wolf's "stay-at-home" order, we thought it would be helpful to provide some reasonable ways to de-stress and prepare for the times when you do need to venture out for an essential reason.

Click, read and share the link below:

<https://www.cnn.com/2020/03/19/how-to-stay-safe-running-essential-errands-during-covid-19-pandemic.html>

Information Links That Bear Repeating:

Below please find additional links providing helpful information you can bookmark and count on as the COVID-19 situation changes and evolves. *It will do so daily.*

[**AFT/AFTPA Coronavirus Resources & Updates for Members**](#)

[**National Centers for Disease Control \(CDC\) Coronavirus Resources**](#)

[**PPS Coronavirus Resources and Links**](#)

[**PA Department of Health Coronavirus Resources**](#)



Coronavirus Self-Checker

A guide to help you make decisions and seek appropriate medical care

[**Click the image to visit the page--**](#)and be sure to bookmark the CDC as your preferred source for medically sound information.

Please keep in touch—keep sharing your ideas, your questions and your concerns.

In solidarity—

Nina Esposito-Visgitis

Sent via 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](#).