

Parent/Guardian's Frequently Asked Questions

Technology

- **What is the status of technology devices for students and will students be able to continue to use district issued devices at home in the future?**

NMCUSD has been working over the past several years to add additional chromebook carts each year with the goal of a classroom set in each classroom. The district was not yet ready to check out devices for each student as this would require a different set up for home use and a high percentage of families did not have home internet to ensure each student could use the device and access programs online. The district had been working to determine how to support families regarding local options for internet access prior to issuing loaner devices to students to take home. Students will be able to continue to use their assigned loaner device at home next school year and will be required to return the device if they leave the district/school.

The district's technology team worked to convert the classroom Chromebooks to prepare them for home use which would allow students to connect to home internet or hot spots. This also enables the district's content filter, updates to software and remote technology support to be possible. The priority during the first week the schools closed (March 16-21) was to prepare the high school devices. Students in the Dual Enrollment courses (Hartnell College classes) were the first group to check out devices, then all seniors, juniors, sophomores, and freshmen. There were several "additional days" to include students at Central Bay, Independent Study and the middle school. The last chance day for 7-12 students was Wed. April 12. If students were unable to get their Chromebook device, the school will follow up to make arrangements.

Why is the District not providing Chromebooks for kids 3rd grade to 6 grade?

On April 23 and 24th, elementary students in grades 3-6th will be able to check out Chromebooks. The technology team had to unpack the Chromebooks from the carts at each elementary school, take them to the high school to be reformatted for home use, and will use the district's library system to check out loaner devices (Chromebooks) to students. Students in grades TK-2 will not have devices checked out this school year.

- **Have students had practice using the Chromebooks?**

At the middle and high school level, students have had daily practice in many of their classrooms using Chromebooks and the Google Classroom platform for access to assignments and as a means to submit assignments. At the elementary level this past school year, each 1st-6th classroom was provided a dedicated Chromebook cart and the Kindergarten classrooms were provided tablets. Students often had access to Chromebooks or tablets daily within the classroom.

- **What are options for students and families who do not have home internet service?**

There is a local task force that is working, along with the school districts, County Office of Education and Community Colleges to support areas with limited or no internet service. There are several areas within the district that have limited cell coverage and hot spots do not work. There are several free and/or discounted internet services for students/families and this information is available on the district website page or via this link here [Internet Resources for Students](#).

There are options for students to download assignments onto their device, work offline and then upload their work which may include coming to the school to use the school's internet in a "drive up" model. There was a technology survey completed by students in middle/high school that provided some information and additional information has been gathered when students came to check out their device.

Each school worked with their respective staff to contact every family as soon as schools closed. This effort started on March 16th, staff members have been keeping up to date communication logs. After initial contacts were made by the end of the first week, the middle and high school school created educational materials packets and delivered those to every student who was known to have no or limited access to the internet and/or a device and/or who were unable to be reached. Educational Options (Central Bay & Independent Study) made personal phone calls to students/parents to ensure that their needs were addressed. Teachers are providing written assignments to students without internet access and mailing to students' homes.

The elementary schools created educational materials packets for each student, regardless of their internet access and/or ability to have a device at home. Starting on March 16th staff reached out to families asking them specific questions around technology needs. Staff continues to update the information if they become aware that technology needs have changed or if families now have access to the internet at home.

In addition, it has been a focus to also obtain the appropriate Distance Learning consent forms, technology use agreement and device loaner forms which were sent out and are in process of being returned prior to issuing a device and/or having elementary students to participate online.

- **What platforms, programs, software, applications should be used for Distance Learning?**

The platform that the school district uses is Google classroom. Depending upon the grade level and content areas, there are different curriculum programs that students were using within their regular classroom instruction that may be continued at home. Teachers are meeting by grade level and/or course alike (middle/high school level) to create common agreements regarding the weekly lessons and resources, whenever possible.

If your student is asked to use a program that may not be compatible with a home personal computer or device, please let the teacher know. Students are not expected to use their own device and should check out a Chromebook to use. If there are programs that are not working on

the Chromebook issued to the student, please let the teacher as well as the site principal know so support can be provided.

NMC High School's Distance online learning is new to both students and teachers. The high school teachers have been encouraged to use the same apps and platforms they were using prior to March 13th, when schools closed. They have been asked to limit the type of "new" apps or platforms they use to provide information to students. If a teacher chooses to use a new application or new format for teaching /learning, they have been guided to spend time with the students showing them how to use the educational learning tool prior to expected work completion. Both teachers and students are finding what virtual learning tools are best for student success - if a student is struggling with using a certain type of virtual learning tool they can call or email Dr. Ozwald (NMC High School Staff) - He is available for technology support.

EdOps - Majority of our students are using the same programs and following the same protocols that they were using prior to the school closure. We have strived for being consistent and not drastically altering the primary method that students have been accustomed to accessing content.

- **What happens if students cannot participate or complete the online assignments/activities?**

The District will provide educational materials packets, as well as Distance Learning support and activities to all students including students with disabilities and those who are English learners who may require alternative ways to demonstrate their learning. Elementary will continue to provide instructional packets to all students, even with online learning, if that is what best meets their needs. NMC High School and NMC Middle School will provide educational materials packets for identified students and per parent request. EdOps will also provide written assignments which will be delivered/mailed to students.

- **Will students be required to take State testing this school year?**

There is no State testing this school year.

Students who are in an Advanced Placement class will be taking the AP test online from home and/or coming to the school to take the AP test on their Chromebook using the school's internet.

Distance Learning Information

- **Is there a schedule for students for Distance Learning and can that schedule be coordinated from the student/parent perspective?**

The schedules have been modified to account for different grade levels working at different times off-line, those students using internet access at home and the ability to check in with teachers in the morning and again in the afternoons.

At the elementary level there are specific agreements of what needs to be in the common grade level packet and each grade level has a recommended daily/weekly schedule for students to follow. Elementary Sample Student Schedule

Sample student schedules were recently created to match the teacher schedule for each level. These will be available on the district website Parent Resource.

- **What are the pick-up and drop-off schedules and options for educational materials?**

Each Monday, there is a scheduled pick-up time for elementary, middle and high school educational materials in addition to meals. There are several locations for meals that include Prunedale Elementary, Castroville Elementary or the NMC High School campus. Instructional materials packets are made for each elementary student in grades TK/K-6. Castroville and Prunedale have packets at their campuses from 8:30-10:00 AM and 11:00 AM-1:00 PM, Echo Valley and Elkhorn Elementary packets are available at the NMC High School campus from 8:30-10:00 AM and 11:00-1:00 PM. Middle and High School packets for identified students are available at the NMC High School campus between 8:30-10:00 AM and 11:00-1:00 PM. All schools have any educational materials not picked up earlier that Monday available for late pick up at NMC High School from 5:00-7:00 PM.

After the designated Monday times for picking up materials, all packets are then taken and delivered to student homes by a group of employees on the following Tuesday/Wednesday. If for some reason the employee is not able to leave the packet the packets are brought back to the site and the families are called to let them know they can come pick up the packet at the site. If the family cannot come to pick up the packe it is mailed to their home. The majority of packets were either picked up or delivered. The first week, it was found that several families had moved but had not notified the school of a change of address. Information has been updated as follow up calls have been made. Ed Options is mailing materials to students.

- **Who is collecting the packets? How are they getting turned in?**

Due to safety measures, most schools are not collecting educational materials from students.

Students are encouraged to upload their work and/or complete their activities online whenever possible, especially at the middle and high school level. Students are also encouraged to take a photo/scan the completed work and email it to their teachers who will review and provide feedback during a scheduled weekly phone call. If a high school student is not able to digitally turn in or take a photo and send or scan to their teacher, then they can return the packet on Mondays from 8-10am, 11-1pm, and 5-7pm. The high school is taking student work back due to the opportunity for a student to improve their Quarter 3 progress grade. The returned packets will be scanned at the office and emailed via PDF to the teacher(s) for their review and feedback. Teachers should be contacting students who are working via packet to discuss academic progress. Students need to be available to answer a teacher phone call or email to support this process.

Elementary schools are not collecting assignments but if parents want to drop them off when they are picking up their next packet on Mondays, the schools will accept the assignments. Teachers are doing weekly calls to families and they are asking students/parents about the work completion and work difficulty and asking the students and families what supports are needed. Some parents text pictures of work to teachers so that teachers can offer students feedback.

EdOps (Central Bay & Independent Studies) use various methods to include students uploading completed assignments to Google classroom; taking photos and text/scan to teacher, teacher calls students and reviews assignments/progress with students; many students their work on the online programs that they were utilizing prior to the Shelter in Place Order and teachers monitor their progress remotely, check in via phone; work is reviewed during Zoom conferences held for

students that have Distant Learning form on file; and teachers review student progress via a verbal formative assessment process to assess if a student is understanding content and progressing.

- **How will grades and final report cards be handled? How will parents/guardians know how students are doing?**

Due to the sudden closure of schools, the students in high school can improve their grade they had as of March 13th (3rd quarter progress grade) but they cannot lower their grade. Students who pass the class will earn credit and high school students will be considered “fulfilling” the college prerequisite for an A-G course. Students are assigned ways to practice what has been taught regarding essential standards and skills from their course. High schools have identified students who were passing with a “C” or better at the 3rd quarter with options to improve their final grade and for those who had a D or F at the 3rd quarter, an Individual Learning Plan will be developed to determine how a student can pass the class. High schools are sending out the “Do No Harm” Grading and Individual Learning plan information to families on Monday, April 20th.

Middle school students also have the opportunity to improve and will earn either a pass or no pass grade for the 4th quarter grade. If a student has a C or better for their 3rd quarter grade and they continue to participate in Distance Learning, they will be eligible for a pass grade. If a student had a D or F grade for the 3rd quarter grade, they will be able to follow an Individual Learning Plan to improve their grade to earn a “pass.”

EdOps is also following the Hold Harmless Grading guidelines recently approved by our school board. Our Central Bay teacher team and NMCCIS teachers are reviewing student progress and exploring the best options for individual students. Student/parent conferences will be held as needed virtually or via phone conference.

Elementary students have a standards based report card which will reflect the students progress towards proficiency in essential standards and skills based upon what was demonstrated through March 12th and any additional evidence through Distance Learning review and reflections.

- **If my student needs help or tutoring to complete their assignments, what are the options for getting support?**

Students can get assistance with their assignments during office hours with their teacher(s), by calling the high school’s Tech help line if the issue is related to Google Classroom, or by calling the district’s Support Helpline.

The elementary educational materials packet has a reflection sheet for parents. They can answer and return to the school/teacher. They can also reach out to the school/teacher for help. In addition to sharing reflection forms we receive from parents (mainly dropped off on Monday pick-ups) teachers are calling to ask the parents and students about the work and offering support directly to the students.

EdOps teachers are available to assist students. They communicate regularly with students and are available to support as needed via phone, email, google classroom. Majority of our students are using the same programs and following the same protocols that they were using prior to the school closure.

- **What supports are available for students who have special needs and/or an individual learning plan that requires coordination with a resource teacher, a special education teacher and/or a counselor?**

During the school closure, the District is working to provide supports and activities to all students, including students with disabilities which include:

- ❖ Teacher/Case Manager contact and follow-up
- ❖ Access to educational activities via online programs and other activities

In addition to the above, the District will provide the following comparable supports and services to students with disabilities:

- ❖ Instructional telephone/virtual calls, to the extent available
- ❖ Support with access to technology device, as appropriate
- ❖ Resources and referral to support parents in helping their children at home during the school closure

Elementary special education teachers (Case Manager) and Support Providers are providing individual instructional materials packets for each student. The work in the packet is based on the students' IEP goals. Staff is also reaching out to families to answer any questions they may have about the work or other needs. The special education teacher is also connecting with each student's general education teacher so they can support the students with their individualized work.

Middle and high school special education teachers and paraprofessionals are working to co-teach with teachers and follow up with students as the case carrier to provide support. EdOps - The special education teacher is checking in with all students on her caseload to provide support and also connecting with each student's general education teacher so they can support the students with their individualized work.

- **What are options for students who need additional support and is there a phone number to call?**

Continuing through the time of the school closure (except for school breaks), the District has provided work packets, as well as Distance Learning supports and activities to all students including students with disabilities. Plans for serving students with IEPs will be communicated directly to parents/guardians through your child's Case Manager. Case Managers will ensure that Distance Learning modalities and work packets are aligned with the students' IEP goals and appropriate instructional accommodations are provided.

Teachers are making every effort to contact all parents to answer questions and provide support for students. Packets with resources from service providers have been provided to students. There is a Support Helpline with a phone number to call and many support staff helping parents and students. The Family Resource Center is also available to provide support to families. Elementary teachers and Support Providers are reaching out to families to answer any questions that they may have. Teachers' emails and school number is listed on the cover page of the instructional packet.

NMC High School has an online learning support number. It is posted on the high school's website and in the student's Grade Level Google Classroom. All special education students have access to their support staff, including Special Education Teachers, Resource Specialists Teachers, and instructional aides, para-professionals, and tutors.

EdOps - has a Tech HELP line staffed by two teachers, which includes a bilingual teacher, that are available to support our parents and students with any tech issues/programs that may arise.

Our RSP teacher has also reached out and is available to support students.

- **Speech and other types of therapy. What is the status of this?**

The services that will be provided may not be the exact duration and frequency of services outlined in a child's IEP. The child will receive the special education and related services identified in their IEP, to the greatest extent feasible, delivered in an alternative manner. In addition related service providers have sent home calendars with differentiated activities for students.

Support Providers are also including work that is based on the students' IEP goals in the instructional packet that is going home weekly. Staff is reaching out to families to answer any questions they may have or provide other support if needed.

Communication

- **What are the ways parents/guardians can communicate with the school, teachers and other support for students?**

Parents are encouraged to email teachers; however, they also have the option of calling the school office to leave a message. Designated staff are checking voicemails daily and returning phone calls as soon as possible. Middle and high school students/ parents are also encouraged to email both the teacher and school counselor so that the counselor can also assist.

Elementary teachers are checking emails daily and their contact information can be found in their weekly letter found in the educational materials packet. If parents are having a difficult time reaching a teacher, please call the school office and the office staff will inform the teacher to reach out to the student/parent to answer any questions or concerns. Office staff are coming in daily to answer phones and/or calling in to access and listen to voicemail messages and follow up.

EdOps mailed to parents the teacher contact information (email, Google voice phone #) was mailed and this information is also located on the weekly assignment sheet that students receive weekly from the teachers. Teachers are maintaining a weekly contact log that reflects all contacts made with students and parents. This is monitored to ensure that there are no gaps in communication.

- **What can parents expect from a return phone call by the teacher or school?**

Teachers may be calling parents from their Google account using their internet and therefore there is no caller identification. Teachers are able to leave a voicemail message if the parent has a voicemail set up and it's not full. However, teachers do not have a voicemail system when working remotely from home. Please contact the school office and let them know the best time and phone number to have the teacher(s) return your call.

Teachers will refer any names of students they can't reach to the office and the office staff will follow up from the school. The office staff work to support teachers to ensure that ongoing communication is happening and provide Spanish language translation support as needed.

Most teachers leave voicemail messages (when possible), send texts, and emails to parents and a several teachers use other communication tools that were established with parents before schools closed such as the REMIND app to text and communicate with parents/students.

If parents don't know how to communicate using email or other programs teachers are using. Parents can always reach out to the school office and let the office staff know how best to support the parents. There is now also a Support Helpline available to parents by calling between 7 AM-9 AM or between 4:30-7:00 PM when the school offices are closed.

It is encouraged that parents also download the District app and check the school's website announcements for up-to-date information. In addition, many communications are sent to parents via the Blackboard notification system which goes out using parent's preference and the latest contact information provided to the school office. If parents are not getting messages or information, please contact the school office and/or Support Helpline.

- **How can parents/guardians learn more about Distance Learning and how to use the online learning tools?**

All elementary grades have a common weekly learning guide for parents in English and Spanish that outlines the weekly assignments and how to connect with the teachers with email and phone numbers. Included on the cover sheet (Spanish and English) of the weekly packets is the school phone number and teachers' emails are listed. In addition, each packet includes a weekly schedule which includes the approximate number of minutes to be spent on each activity.

The district has launched a Support Helpline that can assist parents and students with information, tools and other resources. Staff responding to the Support Helpline can also work with the school site principals to ensure communication is improved and parents feel supported. Additional parent help guidelines and resources can be found on the district website under the tab "Parent" and the "Parent Resources." Also on the district website home page there is some basic information on Distance Learning found in both English and Spanish.

- **What are ways parents/guardians can get training and support in how to best help their student(s) at home?**

There is now a Support Helpline that is in place with a phone number to call and many support staff helping parents and students. The Family Resource Center is also available to provide support to families.

All communication that goes out to families encourages parents to reach out either directly to teachers or to the school office for support. Each elementary grade level team has worked together to provide a Spanish speaking contact person for families of teachers who only speak English.

EdOps and the NMC High School have a Tech HELP line staffed by two teachers, which includes a bilingual staff member, who are available to support parents and students with any tech issues/programs that may arise.

- **How can the school and teachers work with parents/guardians to coordinate a pattern for communication and check-ins that is more streamlined and consistent?**

Parents are encouraged to provide feedback and communicate what their needs and struggles are. Please contact the school office let the principal know. There is also a Support Helpline that many support staff respond to in order to help parents and students.

- **What are the different ways a parent/guardian or student can check what their assignments are and how they are doing on those assignments?**

The NMC High School has information posted on their website page for parents to access not only the Illuminate Parent Portal but also Google Classroom information.

The elementary provides handouts to each student weekly along with information in both English and Spanish for parents.

- **What can parents/guardians or students do if they feel like they are having trouble keeping up with the amount or type of assignment or maybe they do not feel challenged with the assignments?**

If students and/or parents believe the amount or type of work is either too much or not enough, or it's difficult and they require support, it is highly encouraged that students/parents contact the teacher and/or the school office. The parent or student can also contact the district Support Helpline for assistance.

NMC High School is working to balance work assigned and help teachers to communicate clearly what tasks are considered review from 3rd Quarter and what are considered extended learning tasks offered to support a student in preparing them for next year's classes. Students are encouraged to communicate with their teacher(s) and counselor.

- **How can students access counseling services?**

Mental Health counselors are providing phone check in/therapy sessions with students who were receiving services prior to the closure and they will continue to support students and parents. Students and/or parents can self-refer for mental health counseling services through the Family Resource Center and/or request the school principal complete a referral. In addition, the Parent Resource packet #1 (April 6) and packet #3 (April 20) have information and resources regarding Mental Health. Students require a tele-therapy consent form and a distance learning form to be completed.

- **Are services available via online access?**

Related Special Education Services will be provided to the extent possible via video and online learning and telephone check-ins. Service providers will develop communication logs to track student progress during the implementation of Distance Learning.