

Guidance for Families: Extended Closure for COVID-19

We regret we had to close school for even longer. We hope the batch of resources we sent home served you well during the initial leg of our closure. Below are some refreshed resources teachers, librarians, principals, and counselors gathered for students to continue to use while we are at home, as well as information about decisions made by the district and next steps. We hope you are balancing these new changes well, and we are here to help in any way we can. We miss our students and can't wait to see them again soon!

De Soto #73 Approach to Instructional Continuity Over the Closure

Below is the approach De Soto #73 will use to address learning while our students are at home.

What is the district saying about learning while students are at home?

Our district's approach is not to try to replicate the normal classroom setting at home. We are not asking teachers to become remote/online instructors overnight, nor are we asking parents to become classroom teachers in their homes.

Our approach is to use technology and other methods to safely and efficiently deliver information and learning resources for our students to use while they are temporarily at home. It's about reinforcing connections to previously taught priority standards and maintaining previously learned information.

What types of materials will be shared?

Through this extended closure, we will not use remote learning for the delivery of any **new** learning material. Instead, we will focus on reinforcing priority standards from Quarter 1-Quarter 3, with the goal of being able to conclude Q3 grading by the extended date of April 16.

What if families have an internet connection issue?

We know that connectivity can be an issue, and we will work with our students and families as creatively as we possibly can during this time. We encourage our teachers to touch base with each family regarding their accessibility needs, and we have data from those families who completed the online survey about accessibility and connectivity. (If you have not completed this survey yet, this is very helpful information to have as a school district during this time. bit.ly/D73AccessSurvey.)

How much time should my student be spending on at-home learning?

We encourage a healthy dose of balance, reality, and practicality during this challenging time. Some helpful guidelines are below:

- Grades K-6: It is recommended to offer students no more than 15 minutes of work per subject area per day.
- Grades 7-12: It is recommended to devote no more than 90 minutes of at-home work per course per week.
- We encourage you to try to integrate real-life activities into learning (walking the dog, cooking, real-life literacy/numeracy in the kitchen and the household, etc.) We encourage you to think simple and out of the box when transforming your home into a learning environment.

Is this work graded?

Our goal as a district is to use this time to offer our students an opportunity to *improve* their grade and receive *feedback* on their progress toward our identified priority standards. The only grades to be entered into SIS are those which help the student, not harm their class grade. Students are encouraged to resubmit work earning low grades or complete any missing work for Quarter 3 in an effort to do

whatever we can to help them maximize grading opportunities.

Because we cannot ensure equity and access for all students in such varied learning environments, nor have we had time to prepare ourselves, our learners, and our families, we will not hold students accountable in a way that has a negative impact on them. Here is where we rely heavily on the relationships we've built with our students and you, our families. We will continue to provide learning opportunities for our students, and we appreciate you helping them access these at home.

How can you connect the classroom to home?

Teachers will be communicating directly with resources, but this is also a great opportunity for students to share what they do during the school day. Below are a few questions which might help you start to identify and dig into resources students are already comfortable with:

- Does your teacher use Class Dojo (younger students) or Google Classroom? Can you show me how to get around on this website?
- Do you have a list of all of your technology logins? Let's write those down now.
- Do you have an online textbook for this class/subject? Let's login and you can show me around.
- Does your teacher have a YouTube channel?
- How does your day progress? What do you do first at school, then after that, and so? We should build a scaled down version of that schedule and set times for each activity.

Where to access learner resources

We will be making these resources accessible to our learners and families in a variety of ways.

Use this link to our district COVID-19 Information webpage (bit.ly/2WjxOgx). It has a link to all of our remote learning resources (both from the first round of resources we sent, as well as this second round).

Your classroom teachers will also be sending a grade-level/course cover sheet, along with any digital copies/links to you via their regular communication methods (ie, email, Google Classroom, Class Dojo, or Remind). Please reach out to your classroom teacher if you are unable to access these materials.

Mailed hard copies will only be sent to students who have communicated they are unable to access virtual resources. We are doing this to respect the stay at home order and maintain the safety of our staff and security of our district campuses. We appreciate you being flexible in adapting digital resources at home.

If you don't have access to hard copies, but can access online tools for viewing, there are some ways you can still use these materials without having to print all of them:

1. Have students display the activity on one tab/screen (if another device or split monitor is available) and have a Google Doc open on the other. Students can type their answers on a numbered list. (Google Docs can be accessed offline. Directions are here: <https://bit.ly/FamilyTechTutorials>)
2. Students could open the activity on a mobile device or tablet and write their answers/replicate the activity on paper. You can even snap a picture of it to send to the teacher.
3. You can create your own version of the activity that is similar using what you have around the house.

Online Tools We Use

As a district, we have a bank of online tools available for teachers to use. Depending on what is most appropriate to grade-level and content, teachers might use a combination of the tools available. Students have this login information, but if you need it, please email the teacher. Please, be patient as we might be receiving a lot of requests in a short amount of time or have limited online access at home.

Programs might include:

- [SIS Parent Portal \(https://sis.desoto.k12.mo.us/DS360x3/login\)](https://sis.desoto.k12.mo.us/DS360x3/login) Please contact Lisa Mira with student name, grade, parent name(s), email, address, and phone number for access: mira.lisa@desoto.k12.mo.us
- [Google \(https://teachfromhome.google/intl/en/\)](https://teachfromhome.google/intl/en/) Docs/Sheets/Slides; Drive; Classroom; Forms; Gmail
- [ThinkCentral \(https://www-k6.thinkcentral.com/ePC/start.do\)](https://www-k6.thinkcentral.com/ePC/start.do) K-6 GoMath!
- [MyHRW \(https://my.hrw.com/\)](https://my.hrw.com/) 7-8 GoMath!, French
- [ConnectEd \(https://connected.mcgraw-hill.com/connected/login.do\)](https://connected.mcgraw-hill.com/connected/login.do) K-8 Math, K-8 Social Studies, 7-8 ELA, K-4 Title I
- [ConnectEd \(https://connected.mcgraw-hill.com/connected/login.do\)](https://connected.mcgraw-hill.com/connected/login.do) 9-12 (Math, Social Studies, ELA, Bus/FACS/Health)
- [Istation \(https://www.istation.com/\)](https://www.istation.com/) (ISIP testing has been turned on for home during the closure)
- [MobyMax \(https://www.mobymax.com/\)](https://www.mobymax.com/)
- [Discovery Education \(https://app.discoveryeducation.com/learn/signin\)](https://app.discoveryeducation.com/learn/signin)
- [USA TestPrep \(9-12\) \(https://www.usatestprep.com/member-login\)](https://www.usatestprep.com/member-login)
- [Learning A-Z \(https://www.learninga-z.com/\)](https://www.learninga-z.com/) Includes RAZ Kids and Headsprout for a limited time)

Here are some helpful tutorials for using these tools:

<https://bit.ly/FamilyTechTutorials>

Students in grades 4-8 can email teachers and other students within our school's domain (this means if they cannot email someone without a De Soto School District account). Students in grade 9-12 can email outside of our domain.

Special Education

We are implementing plans to support our special education students, as well as continue any evaluation processes we can safely and effectively conduct remotely.

Case managers will still be collaborating with teachers and families on how to implement accommodations remotely.

Some often-used accommodations that can still be done virtually/remotely:

- Read aloud material with student
- Use visuals to help with complex content
- Give directions in several ways
- Brainstorm what learners already know about the topic before reviewing it
- Chunk material into smaller, easier to digest portions
- Go over material in a variety of formats (written, visual, video)
- Set a purpose for the activity/reading/viewing

Case managers and service providers will continue to stay in touch regarding unique student needs, and we encourage you to be open and direct in your communication with these teachers and support staff.

Ongoing Communication

To stay connected, we will use the following communication tools. If you have not connected to these tools, please contact your classroom teacher.

We have recommended our teachers continue to utilize the same communication methods they did during the school year; however, we also have staff members with the same access and connection issues many of our families face. Please reach out if you have not heard from your teacher by April 10, and we will help get everyone connected.

You can stay connected to *district* and *building* information using the methods below:

- The district has created a page on our website with information, resources, and previously sent communications regarding COVID-19. You can access this page at bit.ly/2WjxOgx
- You can connect to district social media accounts: Facebook (@DeSoto73Schools) and Twitter (@DeSoto73). From here, you can also locate building pages/accounts.

Direct phone numbers for building principals are below. They will be working away from the building but can access their voicemail from home.

Nancy Schmitz, ECC 586-1045

Ron Farrow, AES 586-1021

Josh Phipps, DJHS 586-1033

Alex Mahn, VES 586-1011

John Daniels, DHS 243-2613

Other Important Information

This closure will affect different groups of students, so please review the list of possible impacts below for those which are applicable to your families. We will continue to provide updates as additional guidance and direction from the various educational decision-making groups.

Students in college and virtual courses

At this time, college and virtual courses are continuing. These are decisions we must comply with through the college and virtual service provider. If a student runs into issues during this closure, please communicate with the professor/teacher directly.

State and National Testing

Many students would be getting ready to start MAP (GLA/EOC) testing, preparing to take the ACT, or studying for the required US and MO Constitution tests. Those tests have been cancelled for this school year, so those do not need to be a worry for our families or teachers at this time. ACT is working to possibly reschedule for June, but that will be dependent on when it is safe to resume normal activity. We will continue to update you on guidance and decision-making by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE).

A+ Eligibility

The Algebra I EOC A+ Requirement is waived for all 2020 high school seniors (only), including those who have already taken the exam but did not meet the requirement, as well as those who have not yet taken the exam. All other students will have the opportunity to take the Algebra I EOC, whether as part of their school's regular testing or solely for A+ purposes, before they graduate high school.

Summer School

We are currently discussing the possibility of offering a virtual-only session in June for students entering grades 7-12. This would help students cover missed concepts from this year, as well as earn necessary credits to remain on track for graduation. We would then try to plan a late summer session for students entering K-6. We will have to await direction from local and state health and education officials to determine future timelines. We will continue to update you on those developments.