

Coronavirus & Public Education in NC

Legal Aid of North Carolina, April 2020

****This information is current as of 4/28/20. Because new guidance is regularly being released, please visit <http://www.legalaidnc.org/coronavirus> to find the most updated version of this document****

How long will my student's school be closed?

- Governor Cooper has issued several orders that, together, closed all public schools through the end of the 2019-2020 school year. In his address to the public, the Governor said that closure would stop all “in person instruction.”

What access to education will my student receive while schools are closed?

- For all students, there are **three** options:
 1. Distance learning (for example, online or by phone) that covers new material and/or reviews already-taught material
 2. Providing review work packets. (Districts may also provide both distance learning and review packets.)
 3. No instruction at all
 - It is rare for a school/district to provide no educational access at all.
- For students with disabilities who have IEPs or 504 plans, if districts are providing distance learning and/or review work packets, they should also be following students' IEPs and 504 Plans to the greatest extent possible.
 - **For more information on the rights of students with IEPs during coronavirus closures and tips for making sure their needs are met, see our “Special Education and Coronavirus in NC” parent toolkit.**



GOLD STAR TIP: Parents and guardians should look at the information provided by your school district or charter school about whether/how educational services will be provided.

How will my student receive grades since school is closed?

- The State Board of Education has made significant changes to grading and testing policies for the 2019-2020 school year. Some of the main changes include the following:
 - North Carolina schools are not giving End-of-Grade tests (EOGs) or End-of Course tests (EOCs).
 - **Elementary school students** will not receive final grades but will receive feedback from their teacher(s).
 - **Middle school students** will receive grades of “pass” (PC19) or “withdraw” (WC19). Students who were passing as of March 13th or students who have since raised their grade to a passing grade through remote learning will receive a grade of “pass.” A grade of “withdraw” does not mean that the student failed or will have to repeat the class. Instead, a grade of “withdraw” means the student has not demonstrated mastery of the course's standards.
 - **9th through 11th graders** will have two options for reporting final grades for each current course: (1) choose a numeric grade or (2) choose a “pass” or “withdraw” grade. If the student was passing as of March 13th, they have the option of choosing a “pass” grade or a numeric grade. Students who were failing a course as of March 13th can choose a “withdraw” grade and will not get course credit and may have to retake the class or seek credit recovery options. Students can also work to bring their grade up to passing through remote learning.
 - **High school seniors** will be given a pass or fail grade based on work that they completed through March 13, 2020. If students had a failing grade in a class as of that date, the school will work with the student to try to help them get a passing grade.



GOLD STAR TIP: If you have questions about your student's grades, reach out to their teacher/principal.

What about school meals?

- The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) received a Federal waiver that allows local school districts, charter schools, and specific community agencies to continue providing meals to students while school is closed.
- Parents who need food for their children can text FOODNC to 877-877 to locate nearby free meal sites. The texting service is also available in Spanish by texting COMIDA to 877-877.
 - After entering their address, parents will receive a text with the location and serving times for nearby pick-up and drive-thru free meal sites while schools are closed. Sites have been set up across the state for families with children ages 18 and younger, including preschool children, who rely on free and reduced-price meals at school.
- Parents can also call 2-1-1 to speak with an operator who will help them locate meal sites in their community. The 2-1-1 service is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Services are provided in English, Spanish and many other languages.



GOLD STAR TIP: To find out more about whether and how meals will be provided in your local district or charter school, you should check your district or charter school's website, Facebook page, and Twitter account. No Kid Hungry NC is also maintaining a [statewide list of school meal distribution information](#).

What other resources are available for families during the coronavirus crisis?

- **Online Educational Resources**
 - [NC DPI Remote Learning Support Site](#): A compiled listing of resources for parents/guardians and teachers
 - [Amazing Educational Resources](#): A website with continually updated free online educational resources for students
 - [Virtual Field Trips](#) to locations including the San Diego Zoo, Yellowstone National Park, and more
- **Internet Resources**
 - In response to the COVID-19 crisis, some internet service providers have offered free or reduced-rate internet for families in need. The North Carolina Department of Information Technology has created an [interactive map](#) of free/reduced options for families across North Carolina.
- **Mental Health Resources**
 - [Coping with Stress During Infectious Disease Outbreaks](#)
 - [Stress and Coping](#)
- **Additional Legal Resources**
 - [Legal Aid of NC's Coronavirus Resource Page](#)

Advocates for Children's Services of Legal Aid of North Carolina

For additional resources: www.legalaidnc.org/acs ~ To apply for legal services: 1-866-219-5262



You may want to contact Legal Aid if your student with an IEP is not receiving special education services during school closures. You may also want to call if your student is struggling, you've asked for extra supports, and the school has refused to provide them.

The information included here is not legal advice and does not cover all rights and remedies, or apply in every situation