Continuity of Education Plan

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Goal of Plan

The goal of the ECS distance learning plan is to define an educational experience for students that is consistent, effective, relevant and aligned with the ECS vision and mission. We are a school that believes in the whole child experience, and we expect the support of student learning in a digital context will still hold these values. The phased approach to our plan was intended to provide a consistent road map for educators and families and allow us to take small steps and evolve over time. We aim to continue to hold high expectations for students and ensure equity of access to high-quality, meaningful and authentic learning experiences. We recognize that it is also our job to create the infrastructure for students and caregivers to access the digital platforms and experiences we create. An Instructional Guidance System for Digital Learning was created internally to provide the structures and support to get to the ideal learning experiences we know are best for all students. We continue to try to maintain threads of consistency that feel connective and joyous while also allowing students and families to maintain a sense of hope and security in a time that feels uncertain.

Overview of Plan				
Distance Learning Plan: Phases of Implementation				
Phase 1: Communication & Connection March 18 - 27	Phase 2: Connection & Building Learning Routines March 30 - April 3	Phase 3: Teaching New Content & Explicit Connection April 13 - May 1	Phase 4: Feedback, Assessment, Grading & DLP Evaluation Based on Readiness (April 20-End of Year)	
 Onboarded staff and families to the Distance Learning 	 Continued with review and enrichment 	 Establish weekly lesson structures and teach new 	Provide intentional feedback on	

- Plan "DLP" platform on our website
- Students were asked to complete review and enrichment activities either virtually or with materials at home and reflect on the process with their teachers.
- The expected outcome was to ensure connections remained between school and families

- content through the use of the DLP structure
- Provided recommendations on time and requirements for learning activities for families
- Provided schedules and family supports
- Prioritized content for families and for the next phase of DLPs internally
- The expected outcome was to maintain the connections with students and families and to prepare for the next phase of student work.

- content through required activities
- Plan lessons with instructional best practices
- Begin providing more intentional office hours between teachers and students (morning meetings/social connection or based on academic need)
- Establish clear systems for feedback from students and families
- The expected outcome is to provide experiences for students to continue their academic growth

- explicit instruction and assessment
- Evaluate and improve ECS distance learning plan based on family feedback and culturally responsive practices
- The expected outcome is to provide feedback to students and families on the continued academic growth of students.

Expectations for Teaching and Learning

Throughout our distance learning plan, ECS commits to building in opportunities for interaction, connection and collaboration between students. Learning occurs either synchronously, asynchronously or by using both methods to achieve those ends. We understand there are benefits and challenges to both styles of digital interactions between students and teachers and feel that a mixture of the two allows for increased access for students.

During the first and second phase of distance learning, students interacted with either review or enrichment activities. The activities, developed by our educators, were placed in a Distance Learning Plan (DLP) that was emailed to families and posted on our website. Students and families were able to select activities that they felt best met the needs of their student(s) and their family. Content was selected by educators based on classroom and grade level data collected over the course of the year. Learning activities were specific and followed the chunk, chew and review structure of culturally responsive teaching practices. Educators provided opportunities to learn content, practice skills, apply learning and problem-solve.

During the third phase of distance learning, educators follow best practices listed in our Instructional Guidance System for digital learning, utilizing new standards for the content of their lessons. Essential content is prioritized, covering roughly half of the material that would be covered with in-building lessons. Essential content is described as that which is an enduring understanding of a unit or is a concept or skill that provides the foundation for their next unit of study or grade band. Educators hone in on and prioritize learning experiences (tasks, routines, problems, activities, etc.) that directly meet unit learning objectives. Additionally, educators continue to differentiate in phase 3 of distance learning following the best practices of differentiating content, process and product for students.

In Phase 3, new content is prioritized in each content area

Mathematics - Educators prioritize content not previously covered in their units of study that follow the essential progression of skills leading to middle school algebra understandings.

K: Understand addition as putting together and adding to, and understand subtraction as taking apart and taking from. (Work with numbers 11–19 to gain foundations for place value)

1st: Add & Subtract Bigger Numbers to strengthen students' place value work and conceptual understanding of addition & subtraction

2nd:Length, Money, and Data and Adding & Subtracting Big Numbers to strengthen students' place value work and conceptual understanding of addition & subtraction

3rd: Fractions as Numbers to strengthen students' understanding of fractions as equal partitions of a whole

4th: Equivalent Fractions to build students' understanding of using unit fractions to explore fraction equivalence and extend this work to mixed numbers

5th: Apply and extend previous understandings of multiplication and division to multiply and divide fractions. Geometric measurement: understand concepts of volume and relate volume to multiplication and to addition. Graph points on the coordinate plane to solve real-world and mathematical problems.

6th: Understand ratio concepts and use ratio reasoning to solve problems. Apply and extend previous understandings of multiplication and division to divide fractions by fractions. Apply and extend previous understandings of numbers to the system of rational numbers. Apply and extend previous understandings of arithmetic to algebraic expressions. Reason about and solve one-variable equations and inequalities. Represent and analyze quantitative relationships between dependent and independent variables.

7th:Analyze proportional relationships and use them to solve real-world and mathematical problems. Apply and extend previous understandings of operations with fractions to add, subtract, multiply, and divide rational numbers. Use properties of operations to generate equivalent expressions. Solve real-life and mathematical problems using numerical and algebraic expressions and equations.

8th:Work with radicals and integer exponents. Understand the connections between proportional relationships, lines, and linear equations. Analyze and solve linear equations and pairs of simultaneous linear equations. Define, evaluate, and compare functions. Use functions to model relationships between quantities. Understand congruence and similarity using physical models, transparencies, or geometry software. Understand and apply the Pythagorean Theorem. Additionally, Algebra I content is added as necessary for students.

Literacy - As we move into new content with our distance learning in literacy, we wanted to make sure that we were teaching in a way that moved reading stamina, engagement, and comprehension (both literal and inferential) forward. In grades K-8 content was chosen that allowed for a continued progression of skills and ensured teaching points were applicable across reading levels. All readers from our youngest to our oldest need to do more than simply decode texts. They need to think about all the elements of the story and how those elements interact with each other and the reader.

Content in K-5 includes the following teaching points within a unit focused on story elements

- Readers pay attention to where the story is taking place (setting)
- Readers pay attention to what is happening in the text (plot)
- Readers pay attention to main and secondary characters, who they are, how they change and what they learn (character, theme)
- Readers pay attention to the problem or trouble in stories (problem/conflict)
- Readers pay attention to lessons learned (theme)
- Readers pay attention to author's craft (figurative language, word choice, literary devices)

Readers engage with the teaching point using the following strategies:

- Previewing the text
- predicting/envisioning
- retelling/summarizing
- Creating story mountains or Beginning, Middle, End diagrams
- Thinking about characters and writing/drawing them
- Determining themes
- Comparing and contrasting themes across books
- Commenting on author's craft
- Sharing opinions about books

Content in 6-8 includes the following teaching points within a cross-curricular unit focusing on distinct periods of human history blended with universal themes developed in novels

- Fiction reading teaching points
- Visualize Setting
- Synthesize cause and effect
- Identify conflicts
- Interpret and analyze the main character
- Synthesize character change
- Analyze secondary characters
- Recognize and identify figurative language
- Enhance vocabulary through context and word choice recognition
- Name themes
- Interpret social issues
- Interpret symbols
- Engage in cross-text comparisons
- Non-fiction teaching points
- Identify main ideas and key details
- Retell important events
- Synthesize and infer across a page, section, chapter or book
- Determine importance in support of the main idea

- Compare and contrast key details
- Decipher vocabulary
- Monitor for meaning
- Utilize context to support understanding
- Derive meaning from a variety of text features
- Synthesize features and text

Science and Social Studies - In K-8, content from existing scope and sequences are used for the remainder of the year. Units of study are shortened to include learning experiences (tasks, routines, problems, activities, etc.) that directly meet unit learning objectives. In selecting content educators follow our best practices for their content areas including:

- Integration of sciences and social studies
- Exploration of a driving question
- Inquiry focus
- Outdoor education
- PBL
- Visible Thinking
- 21st century skills
- Authentic Learning

K-5 Specialists will provide a weekly choice board that encourages play, exploration, and curiosity in their specialized areas. These are intended to be brain breaks for students during their home-school day. Specialists also send weekly videos to maintain connections with their students.

6-8 Specialists will continue providing learning opportunities to their cohorts by assigning 2 lessons per week, offering choice with each lesson following the scope and sequence of their previously designed courses.

Communication Tools and Strategies

Students and families can expect regular communication from a variety of sources during our time of distance learning. Additionally, families are encouraged to communicate with the various levels of the organization whenever necessary. Families are able to reach out via phone, email, social media or on our website to connect with ECS staff members. Family surveys are also used to gather information about what is working, levels of student and family engagement with the various distance learning activities and what types of activities and support are the best options for continuing throughout the different phases of our distance learning plans.

Outward facing communication is broken down into the following three levels; district, building and classroom/grade level communications.

District Communication:

District communications are available on our social media platforms, on our website, or are sent via

email and Bright Arrow messaging (text and phone) to families. Communications from the district level cover information that is necessary for all families regardless of grade level. Information from the district includes closure status, any changes to our distance learning phases, and any community information that is necessary for the health and safety of our families. Our social media accounts also provide a way for families to stay connected through positive and fun messaging and virtual events.

Building Level Communications:

Building administrators provide a weekly email to families covering topics that are unique to the school building or grade bands within the building. Topics range from grading information, community resource lists, student services information to community building events like spirit week.

Classroom/Grade Level Communications:

Families receive weekly emails from grade level teachers on Sunday night for K-4 families and Monday morning for 5-8 families, regarding the week's assignments. Each grade level's distance learning plan for the week is posted on our website and families can connect to activities on digital platforms such as Schoology, Google Classroom and SeeSaw. Individual emails and phone calls are also provided to allow teachers to stay engaged with individual students and families.

Access (Devices, Platforms, Handouts)

Distance Learning Plans include a balance of online and offline activities and asynchronous and synchronous learning experiences. Students and families access links for the activities and directions for offline activities on the weekly DLP emailed and posted online. Lesson videos and activities are available for K-4 families on the platform Seesaw, are on Google Classroom for 5-6 families and are on Schoology for grades 7-8. There are daily opportunities for students to engage and connect with the teacher and/or classmates through scheduled Zoom sessions or Google Hangouts. Clear and concise instructions are provided on the indicated platform for how to complete each activity (or an example is given), including a suggested timeframe for how long the activity may take to complete. If necessary, any hyperlink on a DLP or within the activity on the digital platform directs a family or student to the appropriate website. All necessary login information to access digital platforms is provided in the weekly email from teachers. During phase one, students in grades 5-8 that indicated a need were given access to a school Chromebook for home use. During phase 3, an additional 100 Chromebooks were deployed to students in K-8 that indicated a need. Additional devices will be handed out as families indicate a need. Educators are reaching out to students and families that are not engaging in the activities provided to determine if any alternative options are necessary. If a family has a need other than the physical device (internet connectivity etc.) our student services department connects with them to offer support in getting the needed service.

Staff General Expectations

General teacher expectations for K-8 include: planning new content to be delivered both synchronously and asynchronously, holding 2 hours a day for virtual meetings/lessons with students and parents, providing feedback to students on assignments weekly, pre-recording lessons or morning meeting messages for daily student consumption, communicating Distance Learning Plans for the week on Sunday night or Monday mornings, communicating with families as needed daily and reaching out to students and families that are not engaging with assignments weekly. Educators are additionally responsible for maintaining any modifications and or accommodations listed on student IEPs or 504 documents. Special education educators continue to be responsible for holding any small group instruction or pull out classes for students as indicated in IEPs through virtual platforms.

Paraprofessionals and Assistant teachers provide support to both students and teachers by completing tasks that will enrich and/or support the overall academic experience for the students. These staff members support in making videos for students, provide feedback through comments on posts in Seesaw, co-host community meetings/morning meetings/read alouds on Zoom, provide student academic support during office hours, check-in with students that may have not turned in assignments and/or submit any posts in Seesaw and complete parent phone calls to determine support needs for individual students.

Student Expectations

During the week of online learning, an ECS student should plan for about 2 - 4.5 hours of instruction per day, more or less, depending on age.

K-2: 15 - 30 min per activity for a total of 2 hours per day

3-5: 25 - 45 min per activity for a total of 2 - 3 hours per day

6-8: 40 - 60 min per activity for a total of 3 - 4.5 hours per day

Students will engage in a variety of either self paced/directed or teacher led/directed learning experiences across multiple content areas. All learning experiences or assignments indicated as mandatory by each content area teacher in the weekly DLP are turned in on the designated platform by Friday of the week assigned. For teacher-led experiences, we will continue to provide virtual mini-lessons either in real-time or pre-recorded for students. During distance learning, ECS teachers maintain the high quality educational experience our students and families experience inside the classrooms. The following are elements of quality instruction we provide during any virtual mini-lesson.

- Teachers incorporate storytelling, real-world and personal connections
- Learning is framed by making connections to previously learned material and

naming/showing the teaching point

- Thinking is modeled along with any new skills and strategies with examples using (virtual) visual models
- Interactions and collaboration are welcomed and encouraged in virtual lessons
- Lessons are linked to the practice and activities students complete independently
- All lessons include the Chunk, Chew and Review components of Culturally Responsive Teaching practices

Students and families will also engage in office hours throughout the week. These "office hours" are intended to provide an individualized or small group access point for students who would like to ask questions about content or stay connected with adults at school. Students and families should be able to count on a quick reply from staff members during these designated hours.

Office hour examples include:

- Students pre-watch a recorded lesson. They are then invited to either Zoom or Google Hangout office hours to ask questions and get feedback.
- Real-time lessons held at a set time each day through Zoom or Hangouts. Teachers use a
 document camera to model work or use a Pear Deck slideshow to make the lesson more
 interactive for students. When students are working independently, breakout sessions are
 held to check in individually or in a small group.
- Scheduled 20-30 minute time frames for small group instruction with students (especially those in Tier 2 and Tier 3 in MTSS) through Zoom or Hangouts.
- Morning meetings with students used as a time to connect with peers and provide SEL content through Zoom or Hangouts.

Students will also continue to experience learning activities that are ECS mission based. Educators will provide 3-4 options for students to select from throughout the week.

Examples include:

- Hikes related to content practice or unit theme.
- Mindfulness strategies aimed to teach students to regulate their emotional reactivity to stressful stimuli from the environment and to develop the capacity for reflecting on their emotional triggers.
- Activities that would allow all students to explore their creativity and passions including making a video, drawing, being physically active with their families journaling, etc.
- Activities that connect students to their community virtually.

Attendance / Accountability

In ECS' online learning environment grades are not a priority; but learning is. Our goal is to give students every opportunity to be successful. Grades are one way to provide concise feedback to students. In our online environment, students will receive feedback for their completed assignments based upon the guidelines and criteria for the assignment. Grading in this new environment is different than our students have experienced thus far. Consideration is given to the adjustment to online learning, the sharing of devices in some families, and possible issues with Internet connectivity. Students are asked to participate each weekday in provided online learning activities. Teachers will be looking for progress in this regard.

Progression of Feedback in Distance Learning

During Phase 3 of distance learning implementation, we will set-up systems of feedback on our communication platforms. Any artifact or assignment that will be used for assessment will be given feedback. In grades K-4, Seesaw will become a learning portfolio of student artifacts, and a space to provide feedback for academic growth. "The brain needs feedback or it will keep doing the same thing over and over even if that move doesn't result in improved skill or performance." (CRT and the Brain, pg.101-107). The goal of any evaluation and feedback should be to support the learning process, help students understand where they did not meet established standards, and aid them in identifying what they can do better next time. Feedback should guide them toward building new knowledge and increasing their skills.

Educators will follow the Elements of Effective Feedback:

- Provide Feedback that Advances Learning: The educator provides feedback that is specific, instructive, and timely.
 - State or restate the learning target and what meeting the target looks like
 - Show the student where he/she is in relationship to the target
 - Provide focused, specific suggestions OR pose questions or prompts that advance student learning of content.
 - Maintain the cognitive demand of the work.
- Listen: The educator creates space for the student to react to the feedback and share how he or she feels about it.
- Encourage and Affirm: The educator offers emotional encouragement and restates his or her belief in the student's capacity to implement the feedback and achieve the learning target.
- Follow-Up: The educator and student set a plan to check-in on progress

For reporting in Quarter 4:

We have modified the calendar, so that the third quarter has an end date of April 13, 2020. Students will have every opportunity to send teachers assignments that are necessary to close out Quarter 3. All new student assignments will be recorded in Quarter 4 and grading according to the scale below.

Primary (K-2):

Primary students will receive a **Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory** grade for quarter 4. A "**Satisfactory**" would represent earning a 2 or better in the standardized grading system. An "**Unsatisfactory**" would represent earning a 1 or lower in the standardized grading system.

Intermediate/Middle School (3-8):

Intermediate and Middle school students will receive a **Pass/Fail** for quarter 4. A **"Pass"** would represent earning a 60% or better in the final calculation of quarter grades. A **"Fail"** would represent earning a 59% or lower in the final calculation of quarter grades.

Good Faith Efforts for Access and Equity for All Students

The week of March 9th, families and students in grades 5-8 were surveyed to determine access to computers at home. On March 13th, Chromebooks were sent home with any student in grades 5-8 that indicated a need. Additionally, families in K-4 that were in need of books, journals, or other physical materials were mailed a packet of materials on March 13th.

During the month of March, teachers, counselors and administrators in grades K-8 reached out (via email and phone) to all families to determine access to technology, internet and any other basic needs. Students who needed access to internet services were connected through our social worker to companies providing free or no cost internet. Students with basic needs were supported through our social worker.

The week of April 14th an additional 100 Chromebooks were prepared for families in K-8 that noted an additional need for devices. On Friday, April 17th, a survey will go home to identify any additional families that were missed with the first two device deployment sessions. Additional devices will be prepared for those families for distribution the week of April 20th.

In April, families will be surveyed for non-technology needs, specifically hard copies of books. The school along with our parent community organization will raise funds and schedule delivery of up to 5 books per student to homes in need.

Special Education Supports

Students continue to receive special education support during online instruction. Beginning with phase 1 of our implementation, special education educators reached out to all of the families on their caseloads to reinforce our commitment to special education and have families agree to the new temporary online instruction program. Any services, modifications or accommodations that could be provided in the same way virtually, continue to occur. If any support required modification for virtual learning on a student's IEP, families were notified, an IEP revision meeting was held virtually. Students receiving related services such as Speech, OT, vision, counseling, and PT now receive those minutes

virtually with their service provider. General educators continue to support students through modifications and accommodations to their weekly DLP based on individual student IEPs. General education teachers also touch base with special education families weekly to ensure supports are meeting student needs. Additionally, our MTSS program continues to occur virtually. Students in Tier 3 receive one or two check-ins weekly with phone calls, office hours or small group sessions to reteach essential skills. Tier 3 students receive differentiated lessons based on collaborative efforts between our general and special educators and continue to receive pull-out sessions independent of their general education classes. Any modifications for Tier 2 or 3 students that are necessary are done by the general educator in all settings in either content, process or product.

Special Educators reached out to families in need of behavior accommodations and provided the following suggestions and support:

- Create a daily schedule to implement structure
- Provide frequent breaks every 15 to 60 minutes, based on age and stamina
- Create a checklist of 3-5 things and once it's complete, take a break
- Have a daily reward your child can earn once all tasks are completed
- Give your child a "Break Card" that they can use when they'd like to take a break
- Sandwich difficult tasks between easy tasks (for example, coloring activity, writing task, academic game)
- Allow the child to have a choice in the order in which they complete activities
- Provide positive reinforcement for work completion
- Use nonverbals to prompt your child back to task (pointing, tapping on the next questions, etc.)

EL Supports

Our English learners continue to receive support from the ESL educator, Rachel Lendyak-Peters. Any small group instruction or pull-out services occur virtually with an educator and any accommodations or modifications to the weekly DLP are provided to the student through the necessary digital platform by either Ms. Lendyak-Peters or their content area educator.

Any family that has questions or concerns about support for English learners can reach out to our ESL/ELL educator, Rachel Lendyak-Peters (rachel.peters@ecspgh.org) or our Chief Student Services Officer, Dwight Laufman (dwight.laugman@ecspgh.org).

Gifted Education

Students continue to receive gifted services in our distance learning environment. On our digital learning website, our gifted educator has developed a section devoted to providing enrichment for all students. As a continuation of our commitment to inclusive education, any student, with or without a gifted identification, who would like to engage in enrichment activities listed on the website may choose to do so.

Students with a GIEP continue to be monitored and receive services by both our general educators and our gifted educator. Classroom teachers provide extension and differentiation in the weekly DLP. In ELA, students will continue to choose books and engage with the texts at their level. In math, the lesson components are differentiated to meet the needs and pace of the learner, supplemented with extension activities. In Primary and Intermediate, the gifted educator has created enrichment choice boards, weekly challenges, and provides feedback to student's classroom work. In middle school, students will be given an opportunity to participate in a Choose your Own Adventure Project, a self-paced, inquiry-driven, passion-based project of their own choosing or creation. This project will be offered to all middle school students and occurs both synchronously and asynchronously.

How to Support Your Gifted Child During Covid-19 and Cultivating Calm Amidst a Storm, were shared with families to help support the emotional and mental well being of gifted students during this time.

Any family that has questions or concerns about support for gifted students can reach out to our gifted educator, Rachel Lendyak-Peters (rachel.peters@ecspgh.org) or our Chief Student Services Officer, Dwight Laufman (dwight.laufman@ecspgh.org).

Building/Grade Level Contacts

ECS Primary School: Ashley Bergman, Principal, <u>ashley.bergman@ecspgh.org</u>

ECS Intermediate School: Laura Williams, Principal, <u>laura.williams@ecspgh.org</u>

ECS Middle School: Jaleah Robinson, Principal, <u>jaleah.robinson@ecspgh.org</u>

Chief Academic Officer for K-8: Mandy Cribbs, amanda.cribbs@ecspgh.org

Resource Links

All of our resources for students and families are listed on the Distance Learning Plan section of our school's website https://sites.google.com/ecspgh.org/ecsdlp/home?authuser=0. The resources include grade level weekly plans for students, office hour times for individual teachers, videos created by our community, additional community resources, counseling resources, information from our Extended-Day team and much more.

For our educators, we offer a variety of online resources used for planning and instruction. In order to vet resources, we think about whether or not the tool will enhance or extend learning goals, engage students in learning, build connections amongst the community, or empower students to create.

In Phase 1 of our implementation we focused on digital tools that supported skill practice (i.e. No Red Ink, IXL, Newsela). As we move into Phase 3 of our distance learning implementation, we considered ways to elevate our lessons even more. The digital tools listed below are tools that staff at ECS have had success with, or are tools that support an increase in interaction and engagement.

Zoom Education Guide: Getting Started on Zoom

Flipgrid More About Flipgrid

Padlet More About Padlet

Pear Deck<u>Distance Learning with Pear Deck</u> Book Creator <u>More About Book Creator</u>

Kahoot <u>Kahoot Distance Learning Guide</u>

Edpuzzle More About Edpuzzle