

**COMMONWEALTH CHARTER ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL**  
**CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) CONTINUITY OF EDUCATION PLAN**  
**(Updated Monday, April 20, 2020)**

**Background**

Through a series of orders, Governor Tom Wolf ordered that all public K-12 schools, including brick and mortar and cyber charter schools, career and technical centers, and intermediate units close through April 30, 2020, to curb the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19). Pursuant to Act 13 of 2020, Pennsylvania Secretary of Education Pedro A. Rivera, on April 9, 2020, announced that public schools would remain closed through the end of the 2019-20 academic year.

The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) strongly recommends that all schools develop and implement Continuity of Education plans to keep students educationally engaged while schools are closed due to COVID-19. PDE describes Continuity of Education as:

[T]he overarching term for any educational practices that occur in the event of a prolonged school closure. It is important that students have the opportunity to develop and maintain skills while away from the customary school environment. This can be achieved through Planned Instruction, Enrichment and Review, or a combination thereof.

**Overview of CCA's Continuity of Education Plan**

As a public cyber charter school, CCA is prepared to continue to offer Planned Instruction, including a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) to special education students, during a time when students and school staff are staying home as part of the government-recommended social distancing measures and mandated school closure.

During the week of March 16-20, 2020, all in-person services and synchronous instruction were suspended to allow CCA staff to transition to work from home. CCA students had access to asynchronous instruction. Beginning March 23, 2020, synchronous instruction resumed and virtual special education-related services were implemented as described below.

CCA also recognizes that COVID-19 is affecting communities and families in very serious ways (closed businesses, job loss, additional family members at home during the day, illness); therefore, we will adjust posted schoolwork to accommodate students and families while still providing meaningful instruction.

**Access**

CCA utilizes a proprietary relationship management system, edio (education for individualized outcomes), to provide access to courses for students in grades K-12. Edio and our courses are 508 compliant. To ensure continuity of operations and data security, edio operates from servers maintained by CCA, with redundancy existing at an external location.

CCA's courses are designed to allow fully asynchronous learning through posted lessons. Teachers grade assignments following submission and provide support within edio via webmail, chat, or video, as

needed. For students who prefer a synchronous learning experience, teachers use Zoom to guide instruction for each day's posted lesson and additionally reinforce concepts in live class sessions.

All students can access edio from their homes or another location of their choosing. In compliance with the Charter School Law (CSL), CCA provides each student with all instructional materials and equipment (laptop, printer, etc.) needed to access the educational program, as well as reimbursement for internet service.

CCA currently is able to maintain its standard process for shipping computers and materials. In the event of limited access to warehouse facilities or delays in shipping, newly enrolled students will be able to access edio through their own devices until CCA can issue a school laptop.

Families received a quarterly internet reimbursement in March and the final reimbursement will be mailed in June. For families who live in remote areas with limited high-speed internet access, CCA can offer a MiFi mobile hotspot in lieu of the internet reimbursement. The MiFi hotspot provides high-speed internet access using cellular signals.

### **Staff General Expectations**

All CCA staff is working from home, but students, caretakers, and learning coaches can continue to communicate with teachers and CCA staff in edio via webmail, chat, and guided instruction and live class sessions. We also have equipped teachers with tools to make and receive phone calls from home as they would from their assigned Family Service Center. Students, caretakers, and learning coaches should expect the same frequency of phone calls during this time.

Our Technology Services staff also will remain available to families and staff through an existing toll-free telephone number and email. At this time, we do not foresee any interruption in our ability to repair or replace a laptop or other technology required for students to access edio.

### **Student Expectations**

While events that close school buildings do not normally impact how we provide online instruction, we also understand that there will be circumstances in CCA families' home lives, in our communities and across state that must be considered when designing a Continuity of Education plan. In order to allow for families to navigate extenuating circumstances, CCA has instituted a plan to give students time for those priorities without fear of falling behind. In courses with 5 days of instruction (4 posted/guided instruction, 1 live class session), the number of posted lessons/guided instruction days is being reduced from 4 days per week to 2 days per week. Live class sessions will remain intact. This applies to all grade levels. Teachers will use the live session to ensure that students do not miss essential information that had been part of instruction for that week. Currently, assessments are not being administered.

Lessons that are part of CCA's Continuity of Education plan are marked in edio as EXEMPT COVID-19. We want students and caretakers to easily identify the lessons that are included in our Continuity of Education plan. We encourage all students to remain engaged, participate in guided instruction and live class sessions, and complete some or all schoolwork marked EXEMPT COVID-19; however, the work is not required and students will not be penalized if they do not complete the work. Any work that is completed will be counted as long as it positively impacts the student's grade.

While the above modifications are intended to reduce the stress and workload for students and families during this time, a student can forgo these modifications by contacting the student's assistant principal (for grades K-8) or the student's school counselor (for grades 9-12). On a case-by-case basis, lessons and assessments can be returned to the student's workload. There will be no guided instruction for lessons added back to a student's workload, but students can complete this schoolwork asynchronously.

### **Attendance**

During the time period that schools are closed, the legal requirements for compulsory school attendance will not be enforced; however, CCA continues to encourage students to attend school regularly by logging into edio to complete lessons, attend guided instruction and live class sessions, and communicate with teachers. Although compulsory attendance is not enforced, CCA will continue to track logins in edio.

### **Accountability**

#### **General**

Students are not required to complete lessons or assessments posted during the time that CCA is closed, per the Governor's order, and operating under this Continuity of Education plan. No student will be penalized if they do not complete work; however, we strongly encourage all students to remain engaged, participate in guided instruction and live class sessions, and complete some or all schoolwork. Schoolwork that is completed and submitted by students will be graded.

This also may be a good time for students who have overdue lessons or assignments from before March 16, 2020, to complete those lessons and assessments. Those lessons and assignments will be graded.

#### **Final Grades**

With the exception of fourth marking period-only courses, final grades will be calculated based on schoolwork posted through March 13, 2020. The most effective and efficient way for students to improve their grades for the current school year is for them to:

1. Complete overdue lessons and assessments that accumulated on or before March 13, 2020; and/or
2. Repeat any assessment completed for full-year and second semester courses on or before March 13, 2020, in which a low score was received. Students can contact teachers to request to repeat an assessment. Questions about a third marking period-only course should be directed to the student's school counselor.

If a student submitted or submits schoolwork posted after March 13, the work will be considered only if it improves the final course grade.

GPA calculations will not be completed until after the end of the academic year on Wednesday, June 10, 2020. Any schoolwork a student completes during the remainder of this school year can only help raise a student's GPA.

Students enrolled in a course for the fourth marking period, which began after March 13, 2020, will need to choose one of the following options:

1. To earn credit, students will need to opt-in and successfully complete the schoolwork; or
2. Drop the class and take it during Summer School or during the 2020-21 school year.

Students should contact their school counselor for assistance in selecting one of these options.

### High School Credits and Graduation

If a student's projected grade in a course is 60% or higher, the student is guaranteed to earn the credit necessary to successfully complete the course and maintain progression toward graduation. Seniors who have earned enough credits and satisfied other graduation requirements will graduate at the end of the school year. As recommended by the Pennsylvania Department of Education, CCA will provide all reasonable latitude for students to graduate on time.

For special education students planning to graduate on Individualized Education Plan (IEP) goals, the student's special education teacher will contact the student and the student's family to discuss options based on current progress.

### Kindergarten – 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Promotion and Retention

For students in grades K-8, the information available to teachers based on the results of schoolwork and other measurements up to and including March 13, 2020, is sufficient to make recommendations for promotion or retention. Teachers will begin contacting families in May to discuss all available options, including Summer School.

### Services to Special Education Learners and English Learners

Special education and English Learners (EL) supports will continue uninterrupted. Students with Individualized Education Programs (IEP) and EL students will continue to receive supports and specially designed instruction and other modifications through the tools in edio or other means that were already in place.

Many of our special education students were receiving related services through virtual means prior to the Governor's closure order. For those students who had received in-person services, CCA staff has worked with families to transition to virtual services, when available. Based on discussions with the related services providers that offer virtual options, they will be able to accept additional referrals for those students currently served by providers who do not have the capability to convert to virtual services.

Some providers have informed us that services that we expected could only be provided in-person, e.g. physical therapy, can in-fact be offered virtually. We will utilize the service, if appropriate and agreed to by the family. We also recognize that some services cannot be provided virtually, either due to the type of service or the individual student's needs. In those situations, we are documenting the service and, when social distancing measures are relaxed, we will provide the services in addition to the IEP-dictated services provided to the student by CCA while the student remains enrolled in CCA.

We are also providing continuity of education for students who were either: (1) assigned to private placements, all of which have closed in response to the Governor’s orders and social distancing measures; or, (2) receiving in-person Verbal Behavioral Milestone Assessment and Placement Program (VB-MAPP) services. While we remain hopeful these schools and programs will resume operations soon, we also understand they could remain closed for the duration of the school year. A complete suspension of education for these learners could be educationally, socially, and emotionally detrimental. Therefore, we are addressing these situations on an individual basis to establish means to serve each student in edio and CCA’s courses, or in another virtual setting with appropriate supports.

CCA will provide written notice of any changes to instruction or related services to the parent/caretaker of any special education. If a parent/caretaker has concerns or questions regarding the services provided to their student, they may contact the school-level principal or special education assistant director listed in the Contacts section of this plan.

**Contacts**

Although our main administrative office and Family Service Centers are closed, we continue to review and respond to emails, answer phones and return phone messages promptly. If a student or family has any questions or concerns, they are encouraged to contact the student’s teachers or assistant principal. They are willing to help in any way. If a student’s or family’s concerns are not resolved promptly, they may contact their school principal or special education director.

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**Additional Resources**

For the most up-to-date information, follow CCA on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/CommCharterAcad](https://www.twitter.com/CommCharterAcad) and on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/ccacharter](https://www.facebook.com/ccacharter). CCA will also maintain an FAQ document with updates for CCA students and families.