

# Agawam Public Schools

## Frequently Asked Questions

Updated: March 17, 2020

***Agawam Public Schools is enacting a closure of school from March 16th - April 6th, 2020 and school-related activities.***

***The information detailed in this document is intended to provide guidance for this period. It is important to note that this is a fluid situation and so this document will be regularly updated and modified and it is recommended that you revisit frequently for the latest updates and information.***

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## Frequently Asked Questions

### Student Learning

<b>Q.</b>	<b>Are the days during the three week closure counted as “school days?”</b>
<b>A.</b>	No. These are non-school days. These days will essentially be considered a three week school closing period (March 16 -April 6). The district will provide enrichment and review learning experiences during this time. It is important to note that the school year will not extend beyond the 185th day (June 25, 2020)
<b>Q.</b>	<b>Are there expectations around Distance and Online Learning Expectations for Students or Teachers?</b>
<b>A.</b>	These are non-school days and so there is only an expectation of continuation of learning.

	<p>All teachers and providers should be contacting their students to ensure a “continuation of learning” as described above.</p> <p>Any teacher who needs assistance in effectively communicating with all of their classes efficiently should contact their CCF, coach, colleague, their building Principal or the IT support desk.</p> <p>These experiences are not mandatory and are not considered instruction. For all students K-12, there will be assignments or additional learning provided by the district and teachers. This is being done in the interest of ensuring a continuation of learning to remain in line with our district core values. Additionally, we are providing digital and remote learning opportunities during this closure intended to keep students connected to learning and skill reinforcement, based on guidance from the MA Commissioner of Education.</p>
<b>Q.</b>	<b>What resources are available for teachers, parents, and students to enrich learning during this period of closure?</b>
<b>A.</b>	<p>We are continuing to compile resources and links for all students and will share that information here.</p> <p>We are encouraging all staff to utilize the resources we have in the district to help facilitate distance learning. This includes the use of Google Apps and Google Classroom. These are the most widely available and accessible tools in the district. Your school leaders will be providing additional resources through a Shared Google Drive called "Distance Learning."</p> <p>For students that do not have access to a device or the internet, the district will be providing options to parents and students. A separate email has gone out to all students and parents with ways to request a device for home use and ways to get internet connection.</p> <p>For staff that require a device to use at home, please click the following link; <a href="https://forms.gle/WxhALvKrapccM79X9">https://forms.gle/WxhALvKrapccM79X9</a></p> <p>We will be providing access to devices to the best of our abilities. The most common device we have available is the Chromebook.</p> <p>We have made Google Hangouts and Google Meet available for everyone with an @<a href="mailto:agawamed.org">agawamed.org</a> account. This will allow additional resources for teachers and students to interact and provide virtual classroom experiences.</p> <p>If you have any questions about software that can be used with our students, please contact the IT department via the support desk. We are trying to consolidate technology resources to not overwhelm students with links and logins.</p>

	<p>The Technology Support System will remain open through any school closures. If you have any questions or concerns, please send an email to <a href="mailto:support@agawamed.org">support@agawamed.org</a> with technology related questions.</p> <p><a href="https://tech.agawamed.org/announcements/distance-learning-updates/">https://tech.agawamed.org/announcements/distance-learning-updates/</a></p>
<b>Q.</b>	<b>Given a three week closure, what happens with the MCAS test for students?</b>
<b>A.</b>	At this time we will not be in school during the previously scheduled MCAS window. We expect to hear more from DESE in the near future on this topic as many schools are in the same position. At this time, the ELA MCAS tests are postponed.
<b>Q.</b>	<b>What is going to happen in regards to graduation?</b>
<b>A.</b>	As this situation is ever changing we will have to wait to make decisions based on the directions provided by the state.
<b>Q.</b>	<b>What are my responsibilities as a special education teacher/related service provider, for the students on my caseload during this three week closure?</b>
<b>A.</b>	<p>The expectation that has been communicated by the Department of Education, is that you are checking in with families during this school closure. This can be done through phone calls and email correspondence. You should use your professional judgment and your knowledge of your students to determine the frequency for which these check ins should occur. For some students, once per week might be appropriate, and for other students, checking in more frequently might be warranted. If you feel as though you need guidance on this, please consult with Antonio Fazio, Director of Special Education at <a href="mailto:afazio@agawamed.org">afazio@agawamed.org</a> or Erin Walsh, Supervisor of Special Services at <a href="mailto:ewalsh@agawamed.org">ewalsh@agawamed.org</a>.</p> <p>The goal is that this communication can help to minimize the disruption for these students to the extent possible. You can also use this time during the closure to complete paperwork, IEP writing, etc, so that these are all set to be sent out upon re-opening of the district.</p>
<b>Q.</b>	<b>I am a related service provider to students on an IEP. What are my responsibilities during this three week closure?</b>
<b>A.</b>	The expectation is that you provide suggested activities that can be done at home for your students, and share this with them through checking in with families. This can be done either by phone or through email.
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## Frequently Asked Questions Special Education

<b>Q.</b>	<b>My child is on an IEP and receives “services only” (i.e. speech/Language counseling etc.). Will my child receive these services during the closure?</b>
<b>A.</b>	Services will not be provided during the closure, consistent with how this is handled on snow days.
<b>Q.</b>	<b>Will my child’s special education liaison, related service provider, and Director of Special Education be available if I have a question during this three week closure?</b>
<b>A.</b>	Yes, special education teachers, related services providers, Supervisor of Special Services and the Director of Special Education will be available to assist with specific questions as needed. The best way to contact them is through email, as most staff will be working remotely. You can expect a “check in” from your child’s liaison, in the form of a phone call or email during this time as well.
<b>Q.</b>	<b>I have made a request for an Initial Evaluation on or after March 16th. What should I expect?</b>
<b>A.</b>	Any timelines associated with an initial evaluation request received on March 16th or during the three week closure, will be processed using day one of the timeline as the date the district re-opens. For example, if the district re-opens on April 7th, that would count as day one associated with the timeline for an initial evaluation request.
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## Frequently Asked Questions

### Activities, Events, and Athletics

**Q.** Are there any athletic, club, or activity events happening during this period of closure?

**A.** No. All school-related events are canceled during this period.

**Q.** Are Spring Sports delayed?

**A.** Yes. After much discussion, the [MIAA BOD](#) decided to **delay the start of the 2020 spring season to April 29, 2020**. Respecting the fluidity of this situation, this decision will be revisited prior to April 29, 2020.

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## Frequently Asked Questions

### General Questions

<b>Q.</b>	<b>How will the days of a three week closure count against school days?</b>
<b>A.</b>	Agawam Public Schools will be in school through June 25, 2020 which is our regularly scheduled 185th day.
<b>Q.</b>	<b>Currently the schools are closed through April 6, 2020. Will this be extended? How will we be notified?</b>
<b>A.</b>	The Agawam Public School District will continue to monitor this fluid situation and will make the best determinations in the best interest of the students and staff. Information will continue to be provided on our website, through email, and on all major news outlets.
<b>Q.</b>	<b>What will happen to April vacation (April 20-24)?</b>
<b>A.</b>	At this time the April vacation week is scheduled as planned. However, given these unexpected school closures we may revisit the need for additional school days and this will be revisited in the near future with all impacted employees.
<b>Q.</b>	<b>Will there be access to any school buildings during the March 17 - April 6, 2020 closure?</b>
<b>A.</b>	At this time all buildings are closed and after that only essential personnel will have access. We are aware of building access requests and we will be communicating accommodations for reasonable requests in the near future.
<b>Q.</b>	<b>How do I build routines at home while schools are closed?</b>
<b>A.</b>	Start by bringing your family together (if you have older students) and asking what they would like to do during this period of social distancing. From those conversations you may work in a time to learn how to play a game that has been sitting on a shelf or read a book together. For younger students, use what you know about their interests to build routines. Simple routines will make the world seem more predictable for young and old alike.
<b>Q.</b>	<b>What things do we have around the house that can be helpful in supporting routines?</b>
<b>A.</b>	Microwave timers can be helpful in order to support younger students in seeing how much time until Mom or Dad is done with their work call. You can also say something to the effect, "After this one TV show we can play the game you like."

	<p>A family calendar can help support a simple routine. Each day could include a family activity that can be noted to take place after dinner, for example. This gives everyone something to look forward to.</p>
<b>Q.</b>	<b>Will food services be available for students that qualify for free and reduced lunch?</b>
<b>A.</b>	<p>We are working on trying to provide grab and go lunches for students in need. We expect to begin distributing lunches on Thursday, March 19th, between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. at the front entrance of the Junior High School.</p>
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## Frequently Asked Questions

### COVID-19 Resources and Support

**Q.** Should everyone be practicing social distancing?

**A.** Yes. “Now, we ask that you do your part. Creating social gatherings during the school outage will minimize the impact of closing school. Carefully consider the necessity of being together. This is not a vacation. It is an extreme measure to allow for social distancing so the virus is not spread. Not being exposed to the virus is the best way not to get sick. Please refer to this CDC webpage for other recommendations to prevent illness: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/prevention.html>”

**Q.** How do I contact the Department of Public Health?

**A.** 413-786-0400 ext, 8721

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