



## HIDOE COVID-19 Pandemic Response Frequently Asked Questions

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### Continuity of Learning

***Is student work being assigned and completed during the COVID-19 closures are considered "enrichment" and won't be graded?***

Yes, in place of traditional in-person classroom instruction, teachers are utilizing an instructional enrichment approach that will continue to engage students in a modified approach to learning until school buildings can reopen. This enrichment will involve a mixed methodology approach, such as independent projects, study packets, distance learning, and e-conferencing, with an increased utilization of technology to the extent possible. HIDOE recognizes that some students will need opportunities beyond enrichment to meet graduation or promotion requirements, and guidance has been shared for providing such accommodations.

***How will the loss of instructional time affect students' preparedness and how will HIDOE address that?***

These issues are being discussed by state and complex leadership. More guidance will be provided at a future date as the state moves closer to recovery from the stay-at-home quarantine period. The needed extent of HIDOE actions cannot be fully realized until the length of the school closure period becomes clearer.

***Is the number of students participating in online/distance learning tracked?***

Exact numbers of students participating in enrichment activities are not currently available. HIDOE expects all students to engage in Continuity of Learning plans whether online, via printed materials, or using some combination of both. If parents have questions about distance learning requirements, please contact your school administration.

***How is Continuity of Learning being addressed in rural and hard-to-reach areas?***

School administrators and teachers have been working to get available devices and enrichment packets to students. This need is determined at the school level, where administrators and teachers know what works best to support their individual students and families. The Department's complex and state offices support this effort - whether it is moving extra devices from one office to another or providing technical support.

***What can be done to provide internet access in such areas?***

The Department has been working with various internet service providers who have reached out to offer free or reduced-cost internet service options to students and educators during the COVID-19 pandemic. Offers are available on internet service providers' websites or by calling their support offices. Schools are providing paper-based educational packets to students who do not have technology resources available at home so that they are able to participate and engage in remote learning opportunities.

***What if some students or families cannot be reached during this time?***

Every effort is being made by teachers and administrators to reach all students and families. It remains a priority to ensure that students stay engaged in learning while at home during the quarantine period. This may take time as some families facing hardships may have temporarily relocated or have lost means of communication. Additional HIDOE efforts to distribute enrichment packets to rural areas are being organized and may include pop-up distribution points at remote locations.

***If parents or guardians have not been contacted, what should they do?***

Parents or guardians who have not received enrichment materials for their child, either at school pick-ups or online, are asked to contact their school to make arrangements.

## **Graduation**

***How will the loss of instructional time impact high school graduations?***

The Board of Education (BOE) unanimously approved HIDOE's request to modify high school graduation and commencement requirements under [Board Policy 102-15](#) for the graduating class of 2020. The plan recommends utilizing grades from the third quarter, which ended March 13, 2020, to determine the final grade for student courses. Approximately 90 percent of seniors were projected to graduate on time based on third quarter grades.

***What will happen to students who were below proficiency at the end of the third quarter?***

For students who do not meet proficiency, an extension or other options will be available, and further considerations are being made for students within block or multi-track schedules. The plan also includes additional considerations for academic honors including Advanced Placement (AP) assessments, International Baccalaureate (IB) assessments and dual credit, as well as workforce opportunities like Career and Technical Education and military designations.

### ***How will standardized assessments be impacted?***

The US Department of Education (USDOE) allowed states to apply for flexibility around federal assessment and accountability requirements due to COVID-19 impacts on Mar. 20, 2020. HIDOE's expedited waiver request was approved, allowing for the cancellation of federally required assessments for the remainder of School Year 2019-20. These include Smarter Balanced Assessments in English Language Arts/Literacy and mathematics; Hawaii State Science Assessments and Biology 1 end of course exams; Hawaii State Alternate Assessments; and the Kaiapuni Assessment of Educational Outcomes (KĀ'EO). The BOE unanimously voted to approve the Department's waiver request at its meeting on Apr. 2, 2020.

### ***Will all public high school graduations be cancelled?***

There will be no traditional graduation ceremonies this school year. This was an emotional decision because we understand the importance of this milestone to our seniors. The safety of our community, however, is paramount and alternative graduation celebrations are being planned instead. Schools will work within strict safety parameters to design celebrations that best reflect their communities while meeting critical social distancing rules. Administrators will work with student leaders and faculties to develop these. Each high school will announce their celebration date to be held in the month of May, and their unique approach with their graduates beginning the week of Apr. 20. Please call or visit the website of your respective school for details.

## **Summer School & Initiatives**

### ***Will summer school be in-person in a traditional classroom setting?***

Due to social distancing constraints, in-person learning will be made available to a limited number of students and focus on those with high needs or those that are hard to reach. There are also opportunities for credit recovery, accelerating or advancing learning and credit attainment particularly for vulnerable learners within technology-rich learning environments. HIDOE's 2020 summer learning comprises five main program areas: statewide credit recovery, statewide credit acceleration, official summer school, E-School, and school-based opportunities. [Click here for details on each focused category.](#)

### ***What is being done to help students in remote communities who may have limited online connectivity?***

Mobile learning labs that provide WiFi access will be launched in four pilot locations in early June to assist students who were not fully proficient at the end of the 2019-20 school year toward advancement to their next grade level. Delivered learning will focus on English language arts/reading, mathematics, social studies and science. Pilot locations will focus on rural communities including Ka'ū on Hawaii Island, Hāna on Maui, Molokai and Kauai, where connectivity and access are a challenge.

***What is being done to engage homeless children and hard-to-reach families?***

HIDOE's Education for Homeless Children and Youth office will pilot the YES Project on Oahu. The program will launch in mid-June with a bus that will travel to each district on Oahu once a week: Honolulu, Central, Leeward and Windward. This initiative will engage hard-to-reach students and families, provide basic necessities such as food and hygiene supplies, and deliver fun educational activities. It is meant to assess needs, gather data and serve as a bridge between schools and communities.

***How will HIDOE help recent high school graduates during this difficult period?***

To support graduating seniors who might typically be participating in extracurricular activities, community-based learning, or part-time employment, HIDOE is working to provide a variety of summer internship opportunities within its state offices. The internships will provide a paid learning experience for recent graduates that are tied into Career and Technical Education areas of focus. Additional information will become available in the coming weeks and internships are expected to start in June.

***Do students have health-related resources available during this time?***

HIDOE students and families will have access to a new health hotline and telehealth services provided by the Hawai'i Keiki: Healthy and Ready to Learn Program to deliver equitable access to health resources and care for HIDOE students using mobile devices and interactive technology. The health hotline can be reached at (844) 436-3888 (toll free) Mon. through Fri. from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., excluding holidays. [Click here for more details.](#)

## **Grab-and-Go School Meals**

***Who can receive a Grab-and-Go school meal?***

All children ages 18 and younger can receive one school meal each for breakfast and one each for lunch daily. The children do not have to be enrolled at the school site and do not have to be public school students.

***Where can I take my children or where can they go to receive a school meal?***

[Click here for a list of summer meal site locations and dates when changes will take place.](#)

***My child does not attend public school, can he/she receive a school meal?***

All children ages 18 and younger can receive a school meal. They do not have to attend the school where meals are being served. Meals are being provided to children regardless of if they attend public, charter, private or home-based schools. The goal of the program is to ensure that all children receive nutritious meals during the school closure period.

### ***Does my child need to be present to receive a school meal?***

Student meals may be picked up without children present, but parents and guardians must provide one of the following verification documents:

- Official letter or email from school listing child(ren) enrolled
- Recent student report card(s)
- Attendance record(s) from parent portals of school websites
- Birth certificate(s) of child(ren)
- Student ID card(s)
- Driver's permit/license(s) for high school students
- State-issued ID of the student

### ***Are any exceptions allowed?***

Students with special needs or disabilities ages 18 to 22 may receive meals. Parents and guardians of children with special needs or disabilities can call the school location to make arrangements prior to arrival or bring any of the verification documents listed above.

### ***When will new meal distribution sites open?***

New school sites will be announced after supplies, transportation and staffing are coordinated. [Click here for a list of summer meal site locations and dates when changes will take place.](#)

### ***What's the procedure for receiving a meal?***

Each distribution site will have a drive-thru line. All drivers and children are asked to remain in their vehicles and to follow staff instructions. Some sites will have an additional walk-up line. Everyone on or near campuses are asked to follow proper social distancing measures and health guidelines to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

### ***My child has a special dietary restriction, how can I make arrangements for meals?***

For special diet accommodations, please send an email to [specialdiets@k12.hi.us](mailto:specialdiets@k12.hi.us) with as much detail as possible.

### ***Will meals still be served after the end of the school year on May 28?***

On May 29, some school meal sites will stop serving meals during the summer break. Meals will be extended at select sites beyond the end of the school year on May 28 and transition to the summer meal program which runs through July 17. Kauai school sites will stop serving on May 29 and restart on Jun. 8. [Click here for a list of summer meal site locations and dates when changes will take place.](#)

[Sponsor sites at public agencies, churches and nonprofit organizations](#) are also serving meals to children at additional locations in communities to support keiki.

### ***What meal sites are closing after May 28?***

[Click here for a list of summer meal site locations](#) that will see changes beginning May 28. Parents are urged to check the revised site list as the Grab-and-Go sites they currently visit may be closing.

### ***Why are some meal sites closing for summer break?***

Grab-and-Go sites have been staffed on an emergency basis by cafeteria workers preparing meals and a mix of employees including administrators, educational assistants and teachers handling distribution. Many of these staff work on 10-month contracts which end at the close of the school year on May 28. Sites without adequate staffing or trained personnel are not able to continue operations. HIDOE is working on staffing to open new distribution sites where possible. Parents and guardians are asked to refer to this [list of summer meal sites](#), use the nearest available location and bookmark the page for future updates.

[Sponsor sites at public agencies, churches and nonprofit organizations](#) are also serving meals to children at additional locations in communities to support keiki.

## **Keeping Schools Safe**

### ***What health and safety measures are being taken on school campuses?***

Only essential school staff are allowed on campus and only in limited locations. All students, teachers and other staff are complying with the statewide stay-at-home order issued by Governor Ige on Mar. 23. Essential workers are complying with safety measures to stop the spread of COVID-19 including wearing masks, social distancing, thorough cleaning and ensuring that hands are frequently washed.

### ***Are school facilities like cafeterias available for public use?***

Permits for rental use of school facilities are temporarily suspended during the school closure period. Only essential school staff are allowed on school campuses at this time. The permit system will be reinstated at a future date to be determined, but only after the current health situation has ended.

### ***Can I jog, run or walk on school grounds for exercise?***

No. Only essential school staff are allowed on school campuses at this time. All others are asked not to enter school grounds, including parking areas, playcourts, tracks and all areas of campus, for the health and safety of students and staff.

## **Community Support & Feedback**

### ***How can the community make donations to help support schools, such as supplies for meals or masks for staff?***

Community donations are very much appreciated. While many donations, gifts, and collaboration opportunities may be accepted and/or stewarded by the HIDOE, the Department must exercise due diligence to maintain compliance with federal and state laws, as well as internal policies. To inquire about making a donation or gift, please contact the Community Engagement Branch at 808-305-0691 or email [dolly.wong@k12.hi.us](mailto:dolly.wong@k12.hi.us). For smaller donations to specific schools, contact the school administration.

### ***How can the parents and teachers give feedback on what's worked and what needs improvement?***

The Department launched a multi-phase distance learning survey for teachers, secondary students and families to learn more about the progression of distance learning and areas of need across the state. Surveys were distributed to all HIDOE teachers and eligible secondary students to provide input. Family surveys will be available in early June. Survey results will inform the Department of needed training, resources and support as schools plan for reopening.