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State Education Department Offers Statewide Resources to Schools to Continue Instruction During Extended Closure

Harrisburg, PA – Continuing its efforts to provide guidance to schools during the COVID-19 closures, [the Pennsylvania Department of Education \(PDE\) today released a set of statewide resources](#) educators can use to provide continued instruction to students.

“The decision to extend school closures is a difficult one, but we must take the necessary steps to protect the health and safety of all citizens of the commonwealth,” said Secretary of Education Pedro A. Rivera. “These are unprecedented times that call for extraordinary measures. We must do everything we can to create equitable learning environments for our students under these circumstances.

“To meet these needs, the department has developed a collection of educational resources to support schools and students in this new environment,” he said.

The resources secured by PDE are intended to help all schools that want to use them - including those not currently offering online platforms, those requiring additional technology support and those that may rely on traditional methods, such as paper lessons, to continue educating students. These additional resources follow the technical support that was formally initiated last week through the state’s intermediate units.

Beginning today, schools interested in establishing new course offerings or supplementing existing continuity of education programs can subscribe to the online learning platforms Odysseyware and Edgenuity. These online learning platforms, offered through Pennsylvania’s intermediate units, provide access to coursework in English Language Arts, math and many other subjects for students in grades K-5 and 6-12 respectively.

There is no cost to schools or students for these resources. Schools should contact their local intermediate unit to subscribe to the platforms or for more information.

Also, the department is allocating up to \$5 million in state funding for equity grants for schools to purchase computer equipment, such as laptops, tablets and internet hot

spots, or to use towards providing instructional materials such as paper lessons and coursework. The department will also allocate new federal monies to these grants as the federal appropriations become available.

Schools with the highest percentages of students lacking access to resources will be given priority in receiving the grants.

Grant applications will be available on April 6 and must be submitted through the PDE e-Grants system by April 10.

In addition, the department has partnered with Pennsylvania's public television stations to provide instructional programming to students through the seven individual Public Broadcasting System (PBS) member stations in the state. Public television reaches over 12.4 million Pennsylvanians serving large diverse, rural and underserved audiences. These free "Learning at Home" resources are available to families and educators at <https://www.learningathomepa.org>. Additional information will be added as the partnership expands.

"This is new territory for all of us, but we will get through it," said Secretary Rivera. "Our team of dedicated teachers, administrators and staff will make that happen. Parents have stepped up to help us bridge this gap. And students are excited to return to learning and to finish this school year.

"The resources we are making available today to our school communities will help guide us through this difficult time and position us to successfully return for the next school year," he added. "We commend those schools that have already been providing quality instruction for their students during this closure and trust that these additional resources will enhance the conditions under which all schools are supporting students during this unprecedented event."

Since schools were first closed beginning on March 16, the department has been providing ongoing guidance to school communities in the form of FAQs. The guidance information is available at education.pa.gov/COVID19.

Visit the commonwealth's [Responding to COVID-19 Guide](#) for the latest guidance and resources for Pennsylvanians or the [Pennsylvania Department of Health's dedicated coronavirus webpage](#) for the most up-to-date information regarding COVID-19.

For more information about Pennsylvania's education policies and programs please visit the [Department of Education's website](#) or follow PDE on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), or [Pinterest](#).