



## **Academics**

### **FAQ for Parents and Guardians**

#### **SCHOOL OPERATING HOURS, COURSES, AND TEACHER ASSIGNMENTS**

##### **What time frames will the school be operating on?**

On October 14, 2020 schools will move from their current hours of operation to the hours of operation which were in place prior to March 13, 2020. This is because the limited number of students returning to school buildings will be using bus transportation. Please see your specific [school's webpage](#) to find their the start and end times of the school day.

##### **Will students keep their current schedule of classes?**

Yes. Students will keep the same courses they are currently enrolled in whether they opt to receive instruction at home or by attending school on the physical campus.

##### **Will teachers be teaching a different curriculum or having different assignments for students at home than in physical classrooms?**

No. All students in a specific class or course will receive the same curriculum, assignments and assessments. All curriculum resources, textbooks, instructional materials, demonstrations, assignments, and assessments will be delivered using distance learning technology. The primary resources are the student's courses in Canvas, the student's Launchpad on Clever, and their specific Microsoft Teams memberships.

##### **Will my student be keeping their same teacher?**

Students will be assigned to the same teacher. However, due to specific, and private, circumstances some teachers may not be able to return to the classroom under the working conditions required during the pandemic. School administrators will inform parents and guardians on any changes to the assigned teacher if such a transition is required.

#### **eLEARNING: PHASE 2**

**What is eLearning: Phase 2?**

In *eLearning: Phase 2*, BCPS will continue to deliver high-quality instruction via Canvas and Microsoft Teams. The difference is that beginning on October 14, a portion of the student population that opts to return to school campuses and comply with physical distancing, facial covering wearing, and other public health safety measures will attend class on school campuses. These students will be present in the classroom while the teacher instructs the entire class of locally and remote attending students. Students in the classroom and at home will be able to simultaneously receive direct instruction, participate in interactive and small group activities, and submit assignments via Canvas. Live instruction by teachers will continue through Teams and Canvas. Again, this affords a level of community and continuity for both eLearning groups, whether they are at home or in the classroom.

### **How does the Phase 2 eLearning experience improve on Phase 1?**

The District's robust distance learning program – Learning Never Closes – helped BCPS be better prepared than most school districts to manage the initial lockdown in March and provide ongoing education to our students. Since then, the District has listened to students and parents and made significant improvements to the structure of the school day, the Canvas platform and the learning applications it offers. We have worked closely with teachers to augment eLearning tools and enhance the student experience. BCPS *eLearning: Phase 2* will continue the successes of this school year in handling student demand, addressing parental concerns regarding eLearning, and strengthening teachers' skills to optimize high quality instruction for students in either attendance setting.

Over the summer, the District took steps to improve the eLearning experience and ensure our students had the tools, devices, and access they need to continue eLearning during Phase 2. The District is prepared for a portion of students to return to their school for face-to-face instruction without disrupting the eLearning experience they've had during the pandemic. All students will follow a regular class schedule, be taught by teachers they are familiar with, and learn alongside their classmates and peers.

### **What are the Phase 2 options?**

In Phase 2, eLearning will remain the instructional platform. The main difference is that your child will now have an option of eLearning at home or in the physical classroom where they attend school through the end of the first semester in January. Both options involve face-to-face instruction by teachers your student is already familiar with, providing a level of continuity and a sense of community that's the hallmark of the BCPS school-linked instruction. The main change is that your child has the option to learn either from home or from the classroom each day.

Parents must commit to one option – eLearning from home or in school - for the remainder of the semester. Any request for changes will be considered by the student's specific school's administration and take classroom physical space constraints, pandemic conditions, and other factors into account. Some schools may not be able to accommodate every student who wishes to physically attend classes at their school.

### **If my child is still using his or her computer to learn, why would they choose to do so in-person?**

Each child is different. And each family has a different set of priorities and needs. BCPS is giving families the option to have their child physically attend school on-campus and learn in the classroom OR stay at home and participate in the same classroom as their peers. The teachers will be the same in both cases, and students in both home and on-campus will follow the same class schedule they have been assigned.

Students who choose to return to the campus setting will be required to self-assess at home each day to ensure they have no COVID-19 symptoms, be transported to the school in a safe environment that does not expose them to the COVID virus, and once they get to their school, maintain physical distancing protocols, wear a face covering, and practice other important mitigation strategies to limit the spread of the illness to other students and teachers. In addition to keeping six feet minimum of distance and wearing a mask in all settings on school premises, students will be reminded continuously to wash their hands repeatedly, avoid touching their eyes, nose or face, and ensure their facial coverings are properly fitted to their face. Hallways and stairs will have signage directing movement protocols, students will be carefully monitored to ensure physical distancing is maintained indoors, and masks will be required in classrooms and when changing from room to room. Between classes, classroom desks will be wiped down and sterilized.

## **SUPPORTS FOR PARENTS AND STUDENTS**

### **What is [Parent University](#) and how can I find it?**

In an effort to support parents with the challenge of helping their students in the eLearning environment, the District created training tools, programs and webinars, including Parent University, an introduction to eLearning for parents with four distinct modules – parents of primary school students, secondary school students, ESE students and ELL. The first set of webinars were held in August, with more than 20,000 parents and guardians participating, and over 195,000 site visitors accessing the modules online.

In September, the Parent Community Involvement Task Force and District staff designed another Parent University webinar series. The new webinars will provide the entire school community – parents, teachers and administrators – an opportunity to reflect, gather resources and discuss best practices for continuing eLearning. At three distinct webinar sessions divided by grade level, parents heard directly from teachers and principals, as well as from other parents, about best practices that have been proven effective in supporting eLearning with children. These includes how to structure the eLearning day and ways parents and guardians can improve student engagement while eLearning from home.

Again, all webinars are available for parents to view at [Parent University](#).

Going forward, Parent University will continue to be updated to address opportunities and challenges related to Phase 2 eLearning given that will combine students learning from home and at school. New questions are likely to come up around etiquette and disruptive behavior during class for example, and Phase 2 will allow the District to provide additional context on how the combined interaction will occur and best support each student's specific needs.

### **Does the District provide tutoring for students on subjects like Math and Science?**

Yes. The District provides free online tutoring and homework help through its new program, *Ask BRIA*, which is available Monday thru Thursday from 3 p.m. through 9 p.m.



### **What's Ask BRIA?**

BRIA stands for *Broward Remote Instructional Assistant*. Ask BRIA is a homework support and tutoring service available free of charge, exclusively for K-12 students daily from 3 pm - 9 pm. It is staffed by the District's certified teachers, administrators, staff, and subject experts.

BRIA is easy to use. Students submit a simple form when they click on the Ask BRIA icon that indicates which subject they need help with. They are matched with a subject expert who contacts the student via Microsoft Teams (which must be open for BRIA to work.)

Elementary students get a call from the teacher via Teams who provides one-on-one homework support.

Secondary students are assigned to group Teams meetings on their specific topic. During the Teams meeting, students can ask questions, hear fellow students' ideas, and get the answers or advice they need.

### **How is my child protected from viewing any offensive, sexual, or violent content on their device while engaged in eLearning?**

The Information and Technology department manages an internet browser filter that restricts access to offensive content for District issued devices at all times and for any device, District issued or personal, while the device is connected to the District's network.

### **What is CANVAS?**

Canvas is a Learning Management System, providing course assignments and the digital tools teachers and students use in application. With Canvas, students can:

- receive course announcements
- manage upcoming assignments for all courses in one calendar
- submit assignments
- take quizzes
- receive feedback about course work
- communicate with teachers (and other students)

Students access Canvas through their [Single-Sign-On Clever Launch Pad](#).

### **What's the difference between "distance learning," "virtual learning" and eLearning?**

These phrases are often used interchangeably as there is hardly any difference between these education modalities. All conduct classes remotely, deliver course studies digitally online, and can involve both live and recorded instruction. For K-12, eLearning at BCPS is school-linked, providing students both social and learning continuity. *Broward Virtual* is a separate school entity managed by the District that involves transferring the school-based connection your child has established with the neighborhood school. Distance learning and eLearning are interchangeable terms that mean the same thing.

### **Where can I find more information on academic concerns?**

The District maintains a website with further detail and resources at [www.browardschools.com/learningnevercloses](http://www.browardschools.com/learningnevercloses).