

# BROOKLINE HIGH SCHOOL

## REMOTE LEARNING COMPONENTS

Brookline High School's approach to this period of school closure is aligned with the broader district's [Remote Learning Guiding Principles and Guidance](#) and the state's [Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's \(DESE\) Remote Learning Recommendations](#). We are planning for a school closure through at least Friday 5/1 and quite possibly until the end of the 2019-20 school year.

Our fundamental priority during this time is the health and safety of students, staff, and families. We also need to connect and engage with our students while acknowledging that everyone needs greater flexibility and different expectations for learning, teaching, support, and school. The Brookline High School experience is difficult to replicate at a distance, and we will continue to offer opportunities for learning, growth, challenge, and support during this closure. As we at BHS continue to adjust individually and collectively, we must pay particular attention to the vulnerable in our school - those we can predict and those who arise within this crisis.

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### Student Support

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The BHS school community continues to prioritize the critical importance of maintaining relationships and connections with students as vital to our learning community – even in times of distance learning and remote student support. While true that this pandemic challenges all community members – students, staff, families – in our stress levels, our patience, and our strength, the ongoing foundation for all BHS students to learn is built on their feeling safe physically and emotionally and connected to key adults in their lives.

To this end, BHS student support teams continue to meet weekly to communicate, coordinate, and brainstorm how best to work together with each other, students, teachers, and administrators during this time. These student support teams include guidance counselors, social workers, deans and program coordinators, BRYT staff, METCO and Steps to Success advisors, school psychologists, and nurses. We continue to utilize a tiered student support structure with counselors and deans serving as the first tier of contact for students, parents, and/or teachers with concerns related to any student's basic needs (housing, food, safety), as well as their social/emotional and academic well-being. The information on each student's support team can be found on [Aspen/X2 Parent Portal](#).

At this time, the BHS student support teams are:

- identifying any BHS students who have had no contact with school staff members since the COVID-19 quarantine started and reaching out to offer engagement and assistance;
- engaging as the BHS Crisis Team to track the range and effect of COVID-19 on the entire BHS community and to prepare various and appropriate responses.
- continuing to connect with and support all students during school closure via email/phone or virtual/telehealth check-ins, offering regular contact if needed;
- reaching out to students' parents-guardians to ensure consent and shared communication is emphasized during this time;
- identifying, connecting with, and helping to students who are struggling with work completion due to anxiety, depression, or unique circumstances;
- if needed, advising and referring students and their caregivers to higher level BHS tiered support for more intensive intervention if available or to Brookline and/or Boston area support resources;
- continuing to provide a Brookline area resource toolbox - [Important Social/emotional Resources for Students and Families](#) - for students/families to access services themselves (more easily accessible than current resource lists on BHS/PSB websites).

BHS student support staff continue to be here for all students, even at a distance but with as much care as ever. No student or family should worry or struggle alone.

### **Academic Goals and Expectations**

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The state has advised Massachusetts schools that the expectation on students' time and output should be approximately half of what normally would be experienced if school were in session as usual. Teachers will offer a combination of directed and self-directed learning experiences with this state recommendation in mind.

- The most important outcomes are for students to feel cared for and supported by their teachers and to engage meaningfully in learning activities for some portion of each day.
- Teachers will provide academic engagement and connections in all subjects to provide thought-provoking and challenging assignments for students. Even though assignments will not be graded in the usual manner, students will receive feedback and comments from teachers.
- There should be approximately 2.5-3 hours per class per week. Students are not expected to complete homework beyond that amount of time. Please note these are approximations; students work at different paces.
- Students can use the United Mind Workers (UMW) Page as a central landing spot for resources and should confirm with their teachers the learning platforms being utilized (e.g., Canvas, Google Meet, Zoom, etc.).
- Brookline High rules concerning [cheating and plagiarism](#) still apply. The school is moving towards an on-line program (turnitin.com) that will examine all submitted work for cheating and plagiarism. Please do your own work.
- Weekly assignments should:
  - be made accessible to students at the beginning of the week or earlier. When appropriate, materials may be presented in a weekly format.
  - include specific assignments, some of which might provide options of possible activities to deepen learning, introduce new learning, or provide review and opportunities for continued practice.

## Credit, Grades, and Grading Timeline

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### Credit and Grading

- The goal is for students to receive full credit for the year wherever possible and to support students in this challenging and dynamic current context. Learning should be accessible to all of our students.
- There will be 3 grading periods for the 2019-20 school year: Quarter 1, Quarter 2, and Semester 2 (no Quarter 3 or 4.) Semester 2 will cover the period from January 31 to the end of the school year.
- Quarter 1 and Quarter 2 will have letter grades.
- Semester 2 is Pass/Fail only.

### Final Grade for Full Year Classes

- Final grade is either a letter grade (A,B,C), P (Pass), or F (Fail), as below.
- **Scenario 1:** If S2 grade is Pass, and the S1 grade was an A, B, or C, then the final grade is an average of Q1 and Q2.
  - Teachers will consider major assignment and assessment grades from January 31 to March 12 (or permissible make-up work for this period submitted after March 12) in the student's final grade, if the grade helps the student's overall grade.
- **Scenario 2:** If a student passed S1 with an A,B,C, or D, and fails a class in S2, a review process will examine why the student did not pass the class and will determine grade/credit. This is to ensure that each student has every opportunity to have their circumstances thoroughly considered.
- **Scenario 3:** If the S1 grade was a D or E, and the S2 grade is a Pass, then the Final Grade is a P.
- **Scenario 4:** If the S2 grade is an Fail, and the S1 grade is an E, then the final grade will be an F.

Grading Scenario Grid Full Year Classes			
	Semester 1	Semester 2	Final Grade
Scenario 1	A, B, C	Pass	Letter grade based on average of Q1 and Q2, and work from 1/31 - 3/12 if it helps the final grade.
Scenario 2	A, B, C, D	Fail	Automatic Review process determines final grade/credit.
Scenario 3	D or E	Pass	P
Scenario 4	E	Fail	F

### Final Exams

- Final Exams are likely to be cancelled, pending more information from DESE. If school reopens and final exams are administered, then students would take modified exams. There will not be remote learning final exams during the period of school closure.

### Semester-long Classes

We recognize that our extended closure has distinct impacts on students' experiences in semester long courses. The momentum built in the early weeks of a new course was interrupted by a sudden closure and shift to remote learning and we cannot replicate the experience of working in one of our shops, studios, or performance spaces. Teachers continue to modify curriculum and remain committed to providing challenging, meaningful learning experiences to all students.

For these reasons, we will:

- Use a Pass/Fail grading system for all semester courses that provides students with flexibility to make up and revise work that was not completed prior to our closure.
- Allow students who complete a course this semester to either advance to the next course in a sequence of courses or to retake the course in which they are currently enrolled for credit in a future school year
  - Example: A student who is currently enrolled in Woodworking I may either advance to Woodworking II or re-enroll in Woodworking I for credit next year if they want more hands-on experience with tools and equipment that were not available during remote learning.
- Modify the curriculum of Level II classes for the 2021-2022 school year to ensure that students currently enrolled in Level I classes develop the skills that are required to succeed in Level II classes.

### **Timing Guide for Learning**

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Brookline High School faculty members are using a timing guide to coordinate learning for students that avoids conflicts with other subject areas. We are using feedback to improve this tool. We share here the broad components of a remote learning plan recommended by DESE.

- We recommend the following routine and structure for remote learning, recognizing the need for flexibility for individual districts and individual students within them.
- Opportunity to connect with one or more educators multiple times per week. For students who are at higher risk of learning loss, such as students with disabilities or English learners, we recommend that educators provide additional connection opportunities.
- Access to multiple hours per day of academic content directed by educators, which should focus on a balance of reinforcing skills already taught this school year with new learning and content critical to courses.
- Time each day for physical activity based on recommendations from educators.
- Additional daily time for enrichment activities such as the arts (dance, media arts, music, theater, visual arts).

### **School Year Timelines**

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Long-range planning has been challenging in this dynamic environment; nonetheless, these are dates we can share now, knowing we will receive more guidance from the state and district. Of particular importance is how we celebrate our graduating seniors during this time of closure.

- The district has stated that the last day of school will be Tuesday 6/23.
- On Tuesday 4/6, School Committee voted to reclaim the April Break for instruction. Patriots Day (Monday 4/20) remains a state holiday and remote learning will occur Tuesday 4/21 through Friday 4/24.
- Feedback during this remote learning time is especially critical; students and families will be able to access Interim Progress Reports on Thursday 4/30.

- DESE will provide guidance on the last day for seniors.
- Graduation is still scheduled for Sunday 6/7.

## **Athletics**

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While there is a chance we will not return to school this school year, we join the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA) in planning for student-athletes to be able to begin the Spring season in early May. The current MIAA plan includes:

- Spring sports would begin Monday 5/4;
- Teams would have seven days of preseason preparation;
- Any competition would end on Saturday 6/27, with Sunday 6/28 a possibility in case of inclement weather.

We understand that some student-athletes use participation on a BHS athletic team to earn Wellness Education credit. See next section for the expectations for spring student-athletes to fulfill this graduation requirement in lieu of participation in Athletics.

## **Wellness Education**

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Student health and wellness is incredibly important in the context of this global pandemic. We want young people to exercise regularly, to reflect on their priorities and experiences, and to have the opportunity to earn credit in their Wellness Education classes.

- Ninth graders taking a second semester Health and Fitness class will continue to do so.
- Tenth through twelfth grade Lifetime Activities classes have a series of reflections and projects from WE teachers that they must complete to earn credit for the spring term.
- Tenth through twelfth grade students on Spring Athletics teams will also need to complete a series of reflections and observations. Details for this will come via Canvas.

## **Special Education Supports**

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Students with disabilities remain entitled to a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE), even during national/state declared emergencies. However, the provision of a FAPE must be “consistent with the need to protect the health and safety of students with disabilities and those individuals providing education, specialized instruction, and related services to these students. As COVID-19 continues to spread and [affect] the health and safety of staff and their families, services may be impacted.”<sup>1</sup>

Communication with students and families and a continued connection with school during this challenging time is of paramount importance to us. Special education teachers have already been contacting students, and are reaching out to parents and caregivers to check in and discuss continued study, learning plans, and how other support services can be provided. They will be collaborating with related service providers, general educators, and others who support students to ensure that recommendations for activities and materials are appropriate and accessible. In light of the laws and existing guidance, as well as practical considerations, we will provide special education supports, services, accommodations, and modifications to students during the school closures to the extent that it is safe and feasible.

During this national emergency, we will not be able to provide services in the same manner that students received them in the past. We will do our best to work with our students, educators, and families.

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<sup>1</sup> “Coronavirus COVID-19 Guidance for Schools and Districts Regarding Special Education,” Stoneman, Chandler & Miller, LLP, April, 2020.

Collaboration will continue during this period of school closure. As always, please do not hesitate to contact your student's liaison and/or Evaluation Team Facilitator (ETF) with any questions or concerns. We are here for you, and we want to support you.

### **General Expectations for BHS Educators**

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Our educators and staff continue to do the most important work of Brookline High School. These are expectations and guidance we have shared with staff to support them and all of our students during this unprecedented period of school closure.

- Consider your health and that of your family before attending to these other responsibilities.
- Attempt to connect with the students (that they teach) at least two times per week via platforms that are clear and accessible to students.
- Contribute to the development of academic opportunities, engagement, and enrichment resources. Teachers will update educational resources weekly via PSB supported platforms and the BHS [United Mind Workers](#) site.
- Collaborate with staff, educators, school administrators, and PSB administrators as necessary, including attending regular department and team meetings.
- Monitor emails from staff, student or family daily and respond to emails from staff, student and family in a timely fashion.
- Be accessible to staff, students, and families via PSB supported electronic communication accounts and conferencing services, or educator preferred forms of communication during school hours.
- Review students' Individualized Educational Plans and consult with appropriate educators, specialists, and families regarding student accommodations, as necessary.

#### **To achieve these ends, we have provided the following guidance for staff:**

- Prioritize relationships and establish paths for connecting with the teacher and class.
- Students should receive weekly communications from each teacher about the assignments and expectations for the week.
- Consult and co-plan with relevant colleagues (e.g., classroom paraprofessionals, general education, special education, teachers of English Language Learners, specialists), understanding that special educators and teachers of ELLs have instructional responsibilities in addition.
- Design assignments that enable students to engage in regular practice and exploration through activities
- Foster critical thinking by integrating media, reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills into multifaceted lessons.