Harford County Public Schools

Digital Teaching and Learning Curriculum and Professional Learning
Summer 2020

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General Information

Harford County Public Schools (HCPS) is dedicated to providing the professional learning and support educators need as we continue to provide high-quality teaching to students in a distance and digital environment in the Fall 2020. This guide provides information about the Digital Teaching and Learning expectations for all educators, as well as the required professional learning every HCPS instructional staff must complete. It also provides information about content and curriculum for the 2020-2021 school year and the on-going support planned for teachers.

After gathering extensive feedback from stakeholders about their experiences through the school closures beginning in March 2020, applying best practices from school districts around the world, and tapping into the expertise of our own teachers and staff, we have created a list of necessary skills and expectations for all educators moving into the upcoming school year. We feel confident these skills will not only help us to respond to the current school closures and the challenges created by COVID-19, but also enhance the digital teaching and learning abilities of all HCPS staff, students, and families.

These skills and expectations guide the creation of critical content maps for all curricular areas and grade levels, and the creation of required asynchronous professional learning modules. All HCPS instructional staff (including building administrators, instructionally-related central office administrators, pupil-personnel workers, teachers, counselors, social workers, psychologists, and related service providers) must complete these professional learning modules by 11:59pm Friday, September 4, 2020 so we may ensure every one of us is prepared for students' virtual arrival on Tuesday, September 8, 2020. To guarantee all staff have access to these modules, they are asynchronous and as such, self-paced and self-directed with built-in assignments and formative assessments. Eligible staff will be compensated $120 for completing the modules and be awarded 1 MSDE credit.

Registration

Registration for the professional learning modules is **not** necessary. To access the professional learning modules, navigate to itslearning, select the course *DIGITAL TEACHING AND LEARNING ESSENTIAL SKILLS*, and begin. If you are new to itslearning, navigate to the HCPS start page, select the itslearning tile, and log in using your HCPS credentials.

One common theme from community feedback around teaching and learning which occurred during the closure in the Spring was the need for consistency. While HCPS strongly believes in and advocates for teacher flexibility and creativity to meet content standards and student needs, consistency around certain aspects of teaching help ensure equitable access to learning as well as staff, student, and family mastery of digital tools. The following list provides key areas of expectations consistent across all grade levels and content areas.

Technology Expectations to Guide Digital Teaching and Learning

- Teachers will consult/access curriculum resources provided through **itslearning Plans**.
- Teachers will implement the 40-week curriculum provided in **itslearning Plans**, specifically in **Overview and Teacher Resources** to design cohesive lessons.
- Teachers will use Student Resources and Learning Experiences to provide student-ready digital resources and activate them as a **Playlist** to provide a consistent experience for all students:
- Teachers will curate student-ready resources (itslearning resources and Vendor Resources) in the platform.
  - All* student-ready resources should be accessed/linked through itslearning.
    - *Content Supervisor will provide direction when third-party resources require otherwise.
  - Productivity tools are integrated within itslearning
  - Live Synchronous meetings should be created and accessed through itslearning.
  - PowerPoint and its multimedia options can be used to extend all learning experiences.
  - HCPS endorsed web tools can be accessed through itslearning to enhance interaction:
    - Padlet
    - Thinglink
    - Flipgrid
- Teachers will use tools within the portal to provide ongoing, specific feedback to students to foster growth.
- Teachers will use HCPS email, Teacher Access Center (TAC), and/or itslearning messaging to facilitate communication with students. Teachers will clearly outline and articulate methods of routine communication using these tools.
  - When using itslearning, teachers should <u>always</u> use the option: **Send Individual Messages to each Course Participant** and avoid **Start Group Conversation**.

As you will recall with the March systemwide closure, content offices assembled very small curriculum teams in order to identify content deemed critical. Those teams took the approved allocation of minutes and backward mapped units of instruction, isolating content that was collectively felt to be the most important and well-suited for at-home learning. Since July, curriculum teams have grown in membership, representing as much diversity as possible. The responsibility of the teams across all content areas include:

- Mapping out 40-weeks of instruction and creating a week-to-week pacing guide,
- Creating three to four lesson experiences per week reflecting both synchronous and asynchronous instruction, and
- Developing other lesson seed ideas and suggestions for synchronous and asynchronous instruction that may be used to supplement teacher's day-to-day work.

Each team is basing the 40-week pacing guide on current unit sequences and curriculum maps for each course. As instruction begins in September, it is the expectation every teacher follow the 40-week pacing guide as presented. Teachers will have the flexibility to use their professional judgement to alter the provided lesson experiences in a manner to meet the needs of their specific students, while building important student-teacher relationships. However, there is not flexibility in how content is sequenced within the pacing guide and unit. This unified expectation for every HCPS content area is to provide maximum predictability to teachers and families as we maneuver another prolonged systemwide closure. Content supervisors will adjust accordingly throughout the school year should the pacing guides need to be modified in any manner to meet the needs of the students whom we serve.

We are certain you want to see the pacing guides and lessons under development sooner rather than later. The 40-week pacing guides, along with the first four weeks of lessons, will be released through itslearning in early August, following a timeline established for all HCPS content areas and grade levels. Given ever-changing conditions and multiple unknowns, our curriculum teams are working to be as flexible and as responsive as possible to student needs.

Electives and Advanced Placement Courses

The Office of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment is currently revising all curriculum materials for the 2020-21 School Year, with the exception of Advanced Placement (AP) and Elective Courses. These courses are unique in nature and implemented differently from school to school. As such, we request that teachers of these courses follow the guidelines listed below. Teachers will be paid up to 8 hours at the negotiated rate of pay to map out the curriculum for the year.

- All AP and Elective teachers need to map out their curriculum for the school year using a 40-week pacing guide provided by the content supervisor. Teachers need to reduce the content by approximately 20%, while focusing on critical content for student success.
- Teachers must build all course content, including the 40-week pacing guides, in itslearning **Plans** for the coming school year since these courses are typically implemented differently from school to school. Individual teachers will need to **"activate"** this content and share with students as a **Playlist** by setting the date in Plans.
- Payroll for teachers will be submitted after the appropriate content supervisor has received the 40-week pacing guide and syllabus as applicable.

Specifically, for AP teachers:
- As in prior years, all AP teachers must remit their syllabus, which should match the 40-week pacing guide, through the College Board website once completed.
- AP teachers should be mindful of critical content and the 40-week pacing guide for student success should a student decide to sit for the corresponding AP assessment in May 2021.
- As a reminder, teachers can take advantage of College Board's resources as they build their yearly and daily lesson plans. As of now, AP testing will resume to a face-to-face process in the Spring of 2021. Each school's College and Career Readiness Coordinator will contact teachers to establish classes and to assist with registering students in the platform in the fall.

Specifically, for teachers of singleton and elective courses:
- Create a 40-week pacing guide for your students for the year and **submit this map to your content supervisor**. As you build your 40-week pacing guide, curate your work in your individual itslearning course(s).

Please contact the appropriate content supervisor should you have any questions/comments regarding these courses.

Digital Teaching and Learning

HCPS

<u>Required Professional Learning –Teacher and Instructional Administrators and Supervisors</u>
HCPS wants to ensure all staff can continue the tradition of high-quality teaching and learning as we prepare to welcome students back in a distance and digital environment this fall. All HCPS instructional staff, including building administrators, instructionally-related central office administrators, teachers, counselors, social workers, psychologists, and related service providers, must participate in and complete the following professional learning modules by 11:59pm on Friday, September 4, 2020 to meet HCPS expectations for both distance and digital teaching and learning for the 2020-21 School Year.
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While the learning is asynchronous, self-paced, and self-directed, live Office Hours will be offered for any individual needing assistance on the following days and times:

- August 10 – 20, Monday through Thursday between the hours of 7am – 4pm
- August 24 – 28, Monday through Friday between the hours of 7am – 4pm

Office Hours can be accessed using the internal Microsoft Teams link.

HCPS can open these modules to every staff member since they are asynchronous, self-paced, and self-directed. Each section of the module includes a formative assessment or task which will be submitted via itslearning within the course itself. Successful completion of each assessment and/or task is required by 11:59pm on September 4, 2020. Eligible instructional staff will be paid $120 for completion of all the modules and awarded 1 MSDE credit. In addition, all instructional staff and administrators/supervisors will earn a Digital Teaching and Learning Level 1 Badge upon successful completion of these modules.

Section	Description	Course Link
Part 1: Demonstration Distance Teaching *Available after 2:00pm on August 3, 2020**	• Select one of two demonstration lessons to see examples of essential digital teaching and learning skills in action. • Reflect on the application of the skills through prompts and resources.	Digital Teaching and Learning Professional Development Course

Section	Description	Course Link
Part 2: **Reflection** *Available after 2:00pm on August 3, 2020**	After watching the skills come to life via the demonstration lesson: • Read the *HCPS Digital Teaching and Learning Guide* to understand the vision of both distance and digital education in Harford County. • Take the *Self-Assessment* to reflect on your own understanding and use of the skills. • Set personal goals for continued learning and growth around digital teaching and learning.	[Digital Teaching and Learning Professional Development Course](#)
Part 3: **Digital Teaching and Learning Skills** *Available after 2:00pm on August 10, 2020**	• Engage with learning modules around key essential skills, necessary for all HCPS instructional staff to meet the expectations for Fall 2020. • Apply your learning to your own courses which will be available to you at the same time these modules are released.	[Digital Teaching and Learning Professional Development Course](#)

*Newly Hired Staff
Teachers, counselors, psychologists, social workers, and related service providers in their <u>first year with HCPS</u> will have access to the three parts of the learning modules *after 2:00pm on August 10, 2020. This group will not be able to access any modules prior to this date and time due to the technology integration processes.* Newly hired staff will need their HCPS credentials to log onto the itslearning course.

Additional Support

Throughout July and August 2020, all HCPS administrators, identified teacher specialists, and teacher leaders participated in professional learning around all aspects of digital teaching and learning. These leaders serve as support for other HCPS employees as we all build our expertise in teaching in a distance and digital environment.

Building Administrators, Central Office Administrators, including Content Supervisors, Content Curriculum Specialists, Special Education Teacher Specialists, Title I Specialists, Instructional Coaches, Librarians, the Teacher of the Year Finalists from the past two years, Harford Glen teachers, and Instructional Technology Teacher Specialists are great resources as you navigate the required professional learning and apply the essential skills and expectations to your own work.

HCPS will provide professional learning opportunities related to teaching in the distance and digital environment on the September 25, 2020 early dismissal day, and a variety of session choices related to digital teaching and learning will be accessible to all instructional staff on the October 16, 2020 systemwide professional learning day.

Paraprofessionals

Paraeducators and Inclusion Helpers play an essential role in the teaching and learning of HCPS students. As such, HCPS will provide a device to each paraprofessional with training options scheduled prior to the opening of the 2020-21 School Year. These trainings are designed to acquaint paraprofessionals with the various tools and capabilities of their device, so they are prepared to support students as they use itslearning to learn virtually with their assigned classroom teacher(s).

Session 1: Getting to Know Your Laptop
This asynchronous, self-paced course acquaints users to the various features of their new laptop. Navigating through the course allows participants to practice the most often used elements that enhance productivity and collaboration. Participants are often surprised at the capabilities and efficient ways to operate their new device.

Session 2: Supporting Student Use of itslearning
It is helpful for paraprofessionals to know key elements of how courses and playlists are designed as they support students in learning using the itslearning platform, as well as how students move through content and resources. This asynchronous, self-paced course familiarizes participants with what a student experiences when learning through itslearning and equips participants with the knowledge they need to answer questions, redirect students, and facilitate individual learning.

Paraeducators are required to complete these two modules between August 31, 2020 and September 4, 2020 within their scheduled duty days.

Paraeducators, Inclusion Helpers and staff involved in supporting the HCPS Learning Support Centers will receive training during the pre-school professional development days.

Technology Support for Stakeholders

HCPS knows that educating our students is not done only by formal HCPS-employed teachers. Many different people serve, and support Harford County's students and we are indebted to the parents, families, childcare partners, and community groups who serve in these roles. Multiple offices within HCPS collaborated to create resources to help various stakeholder groups successfully navigate the technology and content required by distance and digital teaching to ensure all our partners in teaching and learning have the information and support needed to continue in this important work.

Family and Student Orientation
Families and students at every level will be provided with recorded training around using the HCPS-issued device, itslearning, and Microsoft Teams. These trainings will remain available so families can revisit them whenever needed. HCPS will also provide live user support available during regularly scheduled school hours through the first semester of the 2020-2021 school year. Additional information on the training and live user support will be shared later in August.

Learning Support Center Assistants
The assistants supporting students who access a Learning Support Center will receive specialized training in CDC safety guidelines, including the use of face coverings and physical distancing. This group will also receive technology training to provide in-the-moment support to students as they engage with their teacher via itslearning. These trainings will be held during the week of August 31, 2020 within HCPS school buildings following CDC guidelines and state mandates regarding COVID-19 safety.

Childcare Partners
Our childcare partners, both formal facilities and licensed in-home centers, will be provided with recorded trainings around using the HCPS-issued device, itslearning, and Microsoft Teams. In addition, these groups will have access to technology training to provide in-the-moment support to students as they engage with their teacher via itslearning and other HCPS-vetted collaboration tools.

Overview of Pre-school Professional Development Days

SafeSchools Mandatory Courses

The Office of Risk Management has worked with the office of Organizational Development to streamline SafeSchools training courses to be issued to all employees with an effective date of August 3 and a due date of September 28, 2020.

- Mandated Course (All Employees): Bloodborne Pathogens
- Mandated Course (School- Based Employees): Child Abuse: Mandatory Reporting, Students Experiencing Homelessness, Youth Suicide Awareness, Sexual Misconduct: Staff to Student
- Optional Course (All Employees): Coronavirus: Managing Stress and Anxiety

Employees may receive additional courses, such as Responsible Use Procedures, during this time or targeted courses specific to certain jobs. The Office of Risk Management will also continue to utilize SafeSchools to send out custom COVID-19 training for supervisors. In December, additional courses will be assigned, such a Health Emergencies and Service Animals. For SafeSchools questions, please contact Katie Ridgway, Katie.Ridgway@hcps.org

Newly Hired Instructional Staff

Teachers, counselors, psychologists, social workers, and related service providers in their first year with HCPS have access to synchronous, online professional learning ahead of the start of the school year for all staff. Below is an overview of each of these five days of professional learning and collaboration.

Monday, August 24: Conditionally certified teachers will learn about the certification process, develop a strong vision for teaching, and engage in practical activities around lesson design and creating a positive classroom culture.

Tuesday, August 25 – Wednesday, August 26: All newly hired teachers, counselors, psychologists, social workers, and related service providers will engage in a variety of online choice sessions to build their content knowledge, their understanding of the digital teaching and learning tools employed by HCPS, and their ability to ensure all of their students are learning and growing.

Thursday, August 27 – Friday, August 28: All newly hired teachers, counselors, psychologists, social workers, and related service providers will attend synchronous online sessions on professional conduct, content, and digital teaching and learning. In addition, these first year HCPS staff members will have virtual time with their building principal(s).

Returning Instructional Staff

In addition to the various summer opportunities for teachers, counselors, psychologists, social workers, and related service providers, returning HCPS staff will have one full week of virtual professional learning and collaboration to prepare for the return of students. School administrators will have some flexibility to schedule the various sessions across the work week, as well as schedule staff to support the deployment of technology and other learning materials to students/families. Topics include: School-based topics, Digital Teaching and Learning/Distance Learning, Social Emotional Wellness, SafeSchools Modules, the HCPS System Kick-off, and 9 hours of Negotiated Professional Development.

*It is important to note that the required itslearning course needs to be completed by 11:59p.m., Friday September 4, 2020. This is in addition to the professional learning topics noted above.

Professional learning time will be dedicated to Content and Cultural Proficiency in September.

If you have further questions related to the content and curriculum aspects of digital teaching and learning, you may email HCPSCurriculumInstruction@hcps.org. Questions regarding professional learning around digital teaching and learning can be sent to HCPSprofessionallearning@hcps.org.

Harford County Public Schools Nondiscrimination Statement
The Board of Education of Harford County does not discriminate on the basis of age, ancestry/national origin, color, disability, pregnancy, gender identity/expression, marital status, race, religion, sex, or sexual orientation in matters affecting employment or in providing access to programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups.