



Prince William County
PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Providing A World-Class Education

August 29, 2020

Dear PWCS Special Education Team,

I recognize the dual priorities of IEPs and first-day readiness is a near-term heavy burden. I greatly appreciate the enormous amount of time and energy it is taking to be as ready as possible for the first day of school. I also understand you are all dedicated professionals who want to deliver a *World-Class Education* for every child, every day. To help perhaps reduce your stress some, and in order to better clarify expectations for the first day of school, please note the primary concern is to deliver instruction in a manner that meets each child's needs. This will mean different priorities for different teachers and related service providers.

The most critical thing for special education teachers providing in-person instruction is to be focused on the students in front of them while they are in school. Canvas needs can be met over the next few weeks and additional support and training will be made available. The Canvas presence does not need to be fully developed for September 8. Instead, all that is needed is something similar to a class homepage with basic contact information for families to be able to communicate with their teacher (as has been our practice for a number of years on teacher webpages) – in other words, a class homepage with basic contact information for families to be able to communicate with their teacher would be the minimum expectation.

For those teachers with students all virtual, or in a hybrid classroom, having at least an instructional plan for the students and parents/guardians at home to understand how to get resources such as Zoom or Teach Town links is recommended. Canvas is desired as that central point, but if impossible in near term, students or families for that specific educational classroom could be provided such resources via email or Hub messages.

For our related service providers, we recognize that Canvas may support your work or may not be necessary. Again, we recommend a basic Canvas page be established similar to a class homepage. We will be working to showcase peer exemplars in using Canvas for related service providers (SLPs for example) as soon as possible. As I mentioned earlier, the focus needs to be delivery of student needs in the near-term, and we will refine the use of the Canvas platform moving forward over time.

We also recognize that your parents/guardians may have questions about how to access Zoom or Canvas and the following is a suggested paragraph you may use as needed to help communicate:

- This fall PWCS will be using new tools to help students learning remotely. The primary tools are Zoom and Canvas, as well StudentVUE and ParentVUE. You and your student may wish to become familiar with these tools before school starts. PWCS is offering [parent training](#) and tips; support and instructional videos are available at <https://www.pwcs.edu/parents>. If you need technology assistance such as logging-in, visit [pwcs.edu/helpdesk](https://www.pwcs.edu/helpdesk).

Lastly, if you need additional support, please be sure your school building administrator, supervisor, or cluster support lead is aware of your needs. We acknowledge this is a difficult challenge, and we know that everyone is working hard to make the school year successful for every student and family. I know that Associate Superintendent Denise Huebner and Special Education Director Michelle Roper are working with you and your administrators to support you. Thank you again for your dedication and service.

Sincerely,

Steven L. Walts
Superintendent of Schools

DR. STEVEN L. WALT'S
Superintendent of Schools