

Dear Grace Academy Families,

Earlier today many local public schools sent out communications stating that, despite their earlier communications, they will no longer be requiring their K-12 students to do any instructional work at home during this two-week mandatory school closure period. Some schools went as far as to say that they are not permitted to offer education during this time, nor use any FID (flexible instruction days) because Governor Wolf mandated the school closure. This has caused some confusion among parents of non-public school students because they are wondering why their students are having to do work at home. Therefore, I would like to provide some clarity for you regarding this confusion. Here is a [link](#) to the Pennsylvania Department of Education page where the Secretary of that department provides daily updates/clarifications on these matters so you can verify for yourself what I share below:

- Schools will not be penalized if they do not meet the 180-day/hour requirement resulting from the COVID-19 situation.
- Schools are not required to provide any type of instruction during the closure of schools due to the COVID-19 response efforts.
 1. **Although not required, many schools have plans, or are creating plans, to provide continuity of education.**
- For school entities considering continuity of education, here are some options available for them to do so:
 1. Flexible Instruction Days for districts/schools with approved plans
 - **Districts have a limited number of these days so they may not want to use them yet. Nonetheless, they do have the following two options that would allow them to provide continuity of education during this mandatory school closure.**
 2. Online/digital learning opportunities
 3. Non-digital learning opportunities (e.g., materials sent home with students)

Many non-public schools, like Grace Academy, do not have an online option. Therefore, many of us have elected to go with option #3 – providing non-digital learning opportunities. Public schools could utilize #2 or #3 above during this time schools are closed by decree of the governor. Though it is not my place to speculate as to why they have chosen not to do so, it is my place to state why we are providing continuity for learning during this closure period:

1. **Parents are paying for private education.** We will do our best to ensure that you are getting what you paid for.
2. **Continuity of learning** – Though the modified instructional plans that you are overseeing at home differs from the educational experience in the classroom, these plans will help ensure continuity of learning and better position students for continued learning in the classroom upon their return.
3. **Achievement Testing (1st -5th grade)** – Achievement testing is scheduled for March 31 – April 2. If we are able to re-open school that week, it would be very helpful for our students to have continued academic work prior to achievement testing.

I hope you hear my heart in that I am not meaning to speak negatively with regard to any other school, public or non-public, who chooses to offer no learning opportunities for these two weeks. I'm simply providing you with the facts so you are informed, and so that you understand that my desire is to do all that we can to ensure your children receive the best possible education, regardless of the circumstances.

I hope this provided some clarity for you. I will continue to keep you as up-to-date as possible. Keep your eyes on the Lord for He alone is our Shepherd who is able to bring us through the "dark valleys" of life. (Ps. 23)