August 20, 2020

GCPS Provides Clarification on Frequently Asked Questions

What if my child cannot get on the Internet during the time the teacher is delivering the live lesson?

A student will not be penalized if he or she cannot participate during the “live” session of the day. We will be counting attendance each day, so students do need to stay engaged in their own learning. But, each live session will be housed in Schoology and teachers will record attendance based on students participating in the session either live or recorded. We are continuing to refine our attendance procedures during this “Modified Red” phase. There will be certain "real-time" lessons in which students (and parents) can participate during the school day. These lessons will be recorded and housed in our new learning management system, Schoology. So, if students are not able to participate during the day, the work can be done in the evening. We understand the burden this will put on working families. We are doing everything we can to mitigate that and make it a little easier.

What if we do not have any Internet or have poor Internet in our home?

We are working on a number of solutions for those families who have connectivity problems or have no Internet access at all. We have begun to collect applications for in-home Wi-Fi hotspots. As we examine the benefits and effectiveness of placing the hotspots in homes, we will evaluate the specific student populations who will be phased in to in-person learning. This may include students who have no Internet or insufficient Internet, even with the in home hotspots.

What if our cellular service is so bad in our home that a hotspot won’t work?

We are aware of the infrastructure issues that make virtual learning so difficult for some of our families and we are working with local and state representatives to find Internet solutions throughout Garrett County.

Some schools will be kept open later in the evening for families to come in and use the Internet. Inside areas can be utilized in order to access the GCPS Wi-Fi. Families who have exhausted all avenues for Internet service may be asked to send students for in-person learning under the “selected students” population. Families will work with principals at each school to identify a timeline and students who will best benefit. However, we are asking that each family try the in-home hotspot first. If you have not signed up to receive an in-home hotspot, applications are still being accepted. To apply online, please fill out this form. Click here: Cellular Hotspot Application

If you have trouble accessing the form, you may apply via phone, toll-free at 1-888-285-7254. If you have any questions, please email hotspot@garrettcoutryschools.org