



URBAN ACADEMY  
— OF GREATER PITTSBURGH CHARTER SCHOOL —

# COVID-19

## CONTINUITY OF EDUCATION PLAN

THE GOAL OF THE URBAN ACADEMY'S CONTINUITY IN EDUCATION PLAN IS TO ESTABLISH A VIRTUAL LEARNING PROGRAM THAT WILL PREVENT ACADEMIC REGRESSION, PROMOTE STUDENT GROWTH, AND CONSTITUTE OUR SCHOOL MISSION AND VISION ON A VIRTUAL PLATFORM.



Dear Urban Academy Community,

During these challenging times, I want you to know that The Urban Academy remains focused and committed to the mission and vision of our school. Over the years, we have made great strides, and we've overcome significant challenges too. So trust me when I say that we will get through this, and we'll be stronger on the other side.

Our students have everything it takes to transcend this moment and be leaders in learning. Of this, I have no doubt. The Faculty, Staff, and Administration of The Urban Academy believe that the children we serve are greatness, and they possess everything they need to reach their dreams. Although the coronavirus health crisis has dramatically disrupted our way of learning, it will not deter us from helping your children grow socially, emotionally, and academically.

On March 9, 2020, in preparation for closure, I tasked the Instructional Leadership Team to design an out-of-school learning program that would support our students and families during the school closure. Under the leadership of Principal & Chief Academic Officer, Angelique Drakeford, they moved quickly and decisively to implement a Virtual Learning Program that is focused on student growth and preventing academic regression.

The teachers and Instructional Leadership Team have been working every day to ensure that the integrity of our instructional philosophy is not compromised. During the school closure, we want our students to receive the best academic support we can offer during this time. The following information is a general outline of how the school intends to continue educating, supporting, and enriching our students during this time. This Continuity of Education Plan (CEP) will remain in place until it is safe for us to return to school.

These are trying times, and I am grateful that our school was prepared, is committed, and has the leadership to move quickly and decisively in the best interest of our students. Although we have no idea when we will return to our physical building, you can trust that with Urban; learning will never stop.

Please take the time to review the information that follows and give me a call if you have any questions. You can reach me at 412.361.1008 ext 222 or by email at [kcspatterson@urbanacademypgh.org](mailto:kcspatterson@urbanacademypgh.org).

Be well,

K. Chase Patterson  
Chief Executive Officer

## ABOUT URBAN ACADEMY

The Urban Academy has a rich legacy as the region's oldest charter school, founded in 1998 by African American community leaders and educators, chief among them being Esther L. Bush of the Urban League of Greater Pittsburgh. The school traditions are deeply rooted in our founders' belief that ALL children, specifically black children, deserved to be immersed in a high-quality, rigorous, and culturally relevant and responsive learning environment. Under the leadership of Dr. Janet Bell, Dr. Gail Edwards, and now K. Chase Patterson and Principal Angelique Drakeford, the school, has become a model of academic excellence for Black students in the greater Pittsburgh region.


## MISSION, VISION, AND GOALS

The mission of the Urban Academy of Greater Pittsburgh Charter School ("Urban") is to provide a superior education that will develop in our students' academic excellence, leadership skills, and social values that will enable them to ultimately become positive contributors to the community in which they live, and society as a whole.

We work daily to deliver instructional and school-based activities that reinforce our students' perception of skill, self-esteem, and self-sufficiency. At the Urban Academy, we have high expectations for our students, and as such we make sure that our students have access to the tools, resources, and support needed to succeed in an environment of high expectations, academic standards, and familiar cultural context.



## PLAN OVERVIEW



*"We will not be distracted or deterred from ensuring that our students have access to quality education during this time. We will continue in our pursuit of academic excellence, by any means necessary."*

-K. Chase Patterson

This CEP is designed to maintain regular and consistent instruction and academic support with the Urban Academy student body. Each day our fifteen (15) homeroom teachers host a morning meeting from 9:00 AM until 10:00 AM. During the morning English Language Arts (ELA) meetings, teacher host 'check-ins' with each participating student, review assignments from Google Classrooms, progress on work packets, and introduce new skills. The homeroom teachers also, lead an afternoon Math meeting from

1:00 PM until 2:00 PM. Each student also has the following classes, at least, once per week for up to an hour; Gym, Art, Science, Black Studies, and Character Education. Our Student Support Services Team is working collaboratively with the instructional staff to help monitor and respond to students who are disrupting the daily meetings and other classes. Additionally, our school Social Worker is maintaining contact with families and students on her caseload to ensure continuity in services.

# EXPECTATIONS FOR TEACHING & LEARNING

TOTAL STAFF

56

TEACHERS, CO-TEACHERS, &  
SPECIALISTS

40

STUDENTS

314

The Urban Academy's philosophy is 'Excellence Without Compromise,' and although the coronavirus is challenging that thought, we will not allow it to succeed. Our community of teachers, students, families, and those of us who support them are too committed to our academic success to enable the coronavirus to stop our progress and commitment to learning.

Specialists, Lead Teachers, Specials Teachers, Co-Teachers, and Americorps Members are available Monday through Thursday from 8:00 AM until 4:00 PM for planned instruction, intervention, coaching, and enrichment. Fridays are for teacher planning, professional development, and grade-level meetings.

The Student Support Services Team is working each day to support the school's Virtual Learning Program (VLP) through disruption management, PBIS, and Family Support Services.

The Administrative Support and Operations Teams will continue to focus on maintaining consistency in all of the school's back-office, custodial, food service, and administrative operations.



# COMMUNICATION TOOLS & STRATEGIES



PHONE



DOJO &amp; EMAIL



FIRST CLASS MAIL

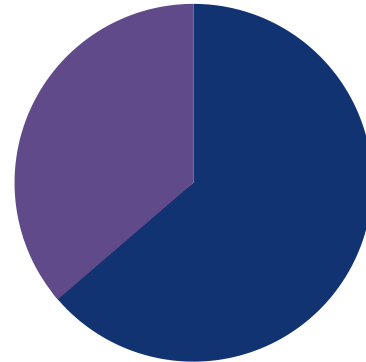
The Urban Academy has used the following tools: Class Dojo (94% parent participation rate), first class mail (for work packets and other important information), school messenger calls (all active phone numbers for families), emails, and direct phone calls. Our strategy is to communicate often with regular updates on student learning, participation, engagement, and services.

## ACCESS

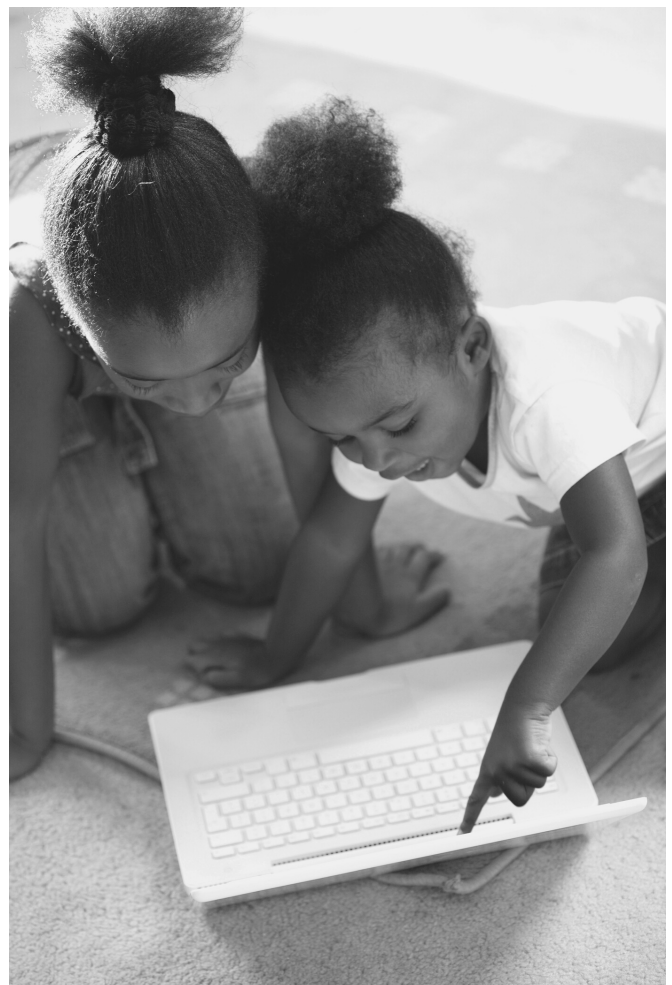
100% of the Urban Academy staff has a laptop provided by the school. 100% of our student body has access to a Chromebook or Android tablet. The school released a Family Technology Questionnaire to determine what barriers may exist that would prevent a student from participating in the Virtual Learning Program. In response to families who were without technology, we established a Chromebook Loaner Program and, to date, have loaned more than 200 Chromebooks to students to help them continue with virtual learning. Families provided a Chromebook must sign a loaner agreement for remote learning. The Urban Academy has established a distribution schedule that adheres to emergency guidelines for social distancing. During this time of mandated school closure, school email accounts for students are activate. Student email accounts allow Google Classroom updates, Google Hangouts invitations, and teacher communications.

Additionally, the school is referring families to discounted or free wifi and internet programs, if they need access to an internet connection at home. We will loan hotspots for families who are unable to participate in discounted or free internet programs. The school is using Google Classrooms, Google Hangouts, Wonders Reading Online, and Envision Math Online, among other virtual resources. The school has produced several YouTube tutorials for families and students to help them access all of the platforms, which is on our website.

Avg None Participation  
36.3%



Avg Daily Participation  
63.7%



## STUDENT EXPECTATIONS ATTENDANCE & ACCOUNTABILITY

Students who are able to participate in the Virtual Learning Program are encouraged to complete weekly learning objectives, including watching live and/or recorded lessons, completing assignments, projects, and other activities as described by the teachers. All students are required to complete the work packets that have been mailed home and to return those packets within three (3) days of our return to school.

Attendance with Virtual Learning Program is strongly encouraged but not required. Student attendance is documented for participation rates and to determine which families the school needs to further engage to determine if technology barriers exist that are preventing their student's participation.

## STAFF GENERAL EXPECTATIONS

All members of the Urban Academy staff are available from 8:00 AM until 4:00 PM Monday through Friday. The Instructional Team, which includes the Program for Students with Exceptionalities /Special Education(PSE), focuses on academics, instruction, and planning. Fridays are planning and professional development days for instructional staff. Therefore there is no virtual instruction on Friday. The Support Services Team is monitoring student behavior during virtual instruction, engaging parent support, planning student activities for 2020-2021, conducting one-on-one and group sessions, and overseeing the school's mentoring program, which is now virtual as well. The Administrative Support Team is continuing to field parent concerns and questions, tracking daily participation in our virtual program, and managing admissions and enrollment for the 2020-2021 school year.



## GOOD FAITH EFFORTS FOR ACCESS & EQUITY FOR ALL STUDENTS

TOTAL PSE STUDENTS

54

TOTAL PSE PARTICIPATION

98%

*"Equity is at the center of who we are as a learning institution. This health crisis has magnified the fact that the inequities that exist in education disproportionately harm students of color and students with disabilities. This plan is an adulterated approach to combat inequity for our students."*

-Angelique Drakeford

We have used every means of communication at our disposal to engage ALL Urban Academy families and students. To ensure equity for all students, lessons are recorded and posted to Google Classroom so that students may access the lesson when it is most convenient for their remote learning environment and overall, to support asynchronous learning and work. Recordings of lessons are available after the lesson is first introduced so that students may complete assignments in the designated time frame and make steady academic progress.

Teachers are responsible for maintaining regular contact with students and their families throughout the school closure. The Instructional Leadership Team and Administration make specific follow up calls when necessary to ensure students are receiving the support they need to be successful during this time. The Instructional Leadership Team developed and will continue leveled small group interventions. The small groups will support students with fluency, reading, writing, phonics, and other critical foundational skills such as early numeracy. Specifically, to Special Education, the PSE teachers have made direct contact with every PSE student and their family.

# **SPECIAL EDUCATION SUPPORTS, ENGLISH LEARNERS SUPPORTS, & GIFTED EDUCATION**

The Urban Academy refers to our Special Education department as the Program for Students with Exceptionalities (PSE). Our PSE team has thoroughly reviewed the PSE caseload, contacted families, engaged service contractors and devised continuity in IEPs and GIEPs for each student in PSE.

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caseload, contacted families, engaged service contractors and devised continuity in IEPs and GIEPs for each student in PSE. Student IEPs will be reviewed for their continued applicability in a remote learning environment. Once the CEP is implemented, IEP goals and specially designed instruction (SDIs) will be assessed. When changes to the IEP are indicated an Emergency or Interim IEP will be developed with the input of parents/guardians. Learning Support teachers play an active role throughout the CoE for their assigned students and evaluations when possible will continue to be offered by the School Psychologist. Families will be contacted through email and/or phone to review students' plans on a case by case basis. For continued programming, efforts will be made to conduct a virtual team meeting to review and revise a student's IEP. If this is not possible, the IEP and SDIs will be reviewed with as many members of the team as

The school does not currently have any English Learner students and, given it does not have sufficient resources available to enroll new students during this period of mandatory closure, Urban Academy does not anticipate any EL students enrolling during this time.

## RESOURCE LINKS

During the school closure students and their families are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the following resources.



PEARSON

[www.pearsonrealize.com](http://www.pearsonrealize.com)



WONDERS READING

[www.connected.mcgraw-hill.com](http://www.connected.mcgraw-hill.com)



XTRA MATCH

[www.xtramath.org](http://www.xtramath.org)



LALILO

[www.lalilo.com](http://www.lalilo.com)



ZEARN

[www.zearn.org](http://www.zearn.org)



KIDS A - Z

[www.kidsa-z.com](http://www.kidsa-z.com)

## BUILDING LEVEL CONTACTS

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#WeAreUrban

