

Steel Center Continuity of Education Plan “Distance Learning”

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

How long will Steel Center be providing “Distance Learning” for our students? For the remainder of the school year. All students are expected to continue participating in Steel Center’s Distance Learning activities until the last day their member school district school requires them to participate in their high school distance learning, or Friday, June 5, 2020 (whichever occurs first). Students, whose member school district last day of school ends prior to June 5, have the option of continuing to participate up until June 5, if they choose to.

Do students have to participate in “Distance Learning”? Yes, students will receive grades at the end of the 4th marking period based on their performance. Assignments will be graded and added into the school’s grading system, ESD. Parents will be able to check their child’s grades in ESD just as they have always done. These assignments will count towards a student’s overall grade and GPA. Steel Center teachers and staff will extend appropriate flexibility to **ALL** students and work with you and your families to ensure that you are successful. It is important that each student and their families communicate to their teacher when flexibility is needed due to circumstances that create barriers to getting your work/assignments done. The three guiding principles of our “Distance Learning” plan are **Trust, Flexibility, and Support**. Students and families can expect all three of these from Steel Center faculty and staff while we get through this together.

How can I participate in distance learning if I do not have a computer or internet access? Steel Center is an extension of each student’s high school curriculum. As such, we understand that all of our member school districts are providing varying levels of support for their students regarding both technology devices as well as resources to connect to the internet. However, if a student cannot access adequate technology for ANY reason, in order to participate in our “Distance Learning” activities, Steel Center will provide hardcopy packets of instructional materials through the mail.

What if I have technical issues or my device(s) doesn’t work? Students should inform their CTE program teacher of this as soon as possible. They will then inform the appropriate Steel Center support team members to assist. Technology questions can also be directed to our Assistant Director for Curriculum and Technology, Mrs. White at rwhite@steelcentertech.com.

Will there be a Senior Recognition Ceremony this year? YES! Providing our graduating seniors and their loved ones with a special ceremony to celebrate the beginning of the next chapter in their life is a priority. Since the Governor’s announcement that schools will be closed for the remainder of the year, we are going to be creative in how we organize this year’s event. The original Senior Recognition Ceremony was scheduled to take place at CCAC South Campus on Tuesday, May 19, 2020 from 7:00-8:00

PM. That “live event” at the Community College has been canceled. We would like to keep that date however, an UPDATE about the 2020 Senior Recognition Ceremony will be provide by April 30, 2020.

What about the end of the year trip to Cedar Point? Unfortunately, this event had to be cancelled. Students/parents will be able to receive a 100% refund for whatever they may have paid. Direct any questions about this to Assistant Director/Principal Dr. Bob Frioni rfrioni@steelcentertech.com.

Has the school calendar changed? Yes, the updated 2019-2020 school calendar has been posted to our website. Due to the closure of schools, and in compliance with Act 13, the number of student instructional days was reduced from 181 to 176. The following dates were adjusted to serve as make-up dates: April 9, 13, and 28 and June 4 and 5.

How can a student get his/her personal belongings? Pennsylvania remains under a “STAY AT HOME” order per except for certain essential activities and work to provide life-sustaining business and government services until at least April 30, 2020. Once this is lifted, we will organize a safe plan for students to pick up any personal belongings. It is our hope to release the details of this plan in early May.

How will the school take student attendance? Attendance is being taken every day using our website www.steelcentertech.com. Students need to visit there and complete the **virtual attendance form every day** to have your attendance recorded for each day. Because of the many obstacles that our students and families are facing during the COVID-19 closure, attendance issues will be a reason for failure. If you experience issues completing this form, please notify your teacher. If a student has any issues doing this or getting to the website, they should reach send an email to Mrs. Biles at jbiles@steelcentertech.com or call 412-469-3200 and leave a message.

What if my child is sick? If a student is sick/ill and cannot complete the online work for the day(s), first inform their CTE teacher, then please send an email to Mrs. Biles at jbiles@steelcentertech.com or call 412-469-3200 and leave a message. The student will then be marked as absent.

Can my child’s Co-Op continue during the shutdown? No, not as a Steel Center sanctioned activity. Steel Center does not permit students to remain on Co-Op during this time. If a student wishes to continue to work, that arrangement is solely based up on the family and employer. Steel Center has no authority or jurisdiction over this decision.

My child has an IEP/GIEP and/or a 504 plan. How will you make accommodations? Since Steel Center is closed for all students in accordance with Governor Wolf’s school closure order, our Learning

April 20, 2020

Facilitators are working diligently with our teachers to ensure that your child's IEP or 504 Plan or GIEP is followed to the maximum extent necessary and possible given the limitations of Distance Learning. Parents/Students are encouraged to reach out to the child's CTE Teacher or Learning Facilitator to discuss the specifics of implementation and any questions or concerns you may have. Please know that our school staff and school remains committed to giving our best faith effort to provide a continuity of education for all of our students.

Will my child graduate if they do not take the NOCTI? Yes. Pennsylvania has waived the NOCTI requirement for seniors. Assuming the student has enough credits to graduate (just like any year), seniors will earn their diploma from their high school and receive their program of study certificate from Steel Center. Students will not be issued a Pennsylvania Skills Certificate because this is tied to the NOCTI, which will not be given this year. Many (most) seniors have already earned some Industry recognized Credentials or Certifications. As always, Steel Center encourages all students to earn as many industry certifications as possible.

Will the cancellation of NOCTI tests affect my child's ability to get a job or enter into college/post-secondary? Steel Center has always placed a strong on the end of program assessments of NOCTI exams, long before they became a state requirement. With a hands-on and a written component, the NOCTIs are one way to demonstrate a student's knowledge in their specific technical field – but it is not the only way. The reality is that this is just not possible to do this year, especially given the hands-on portion of the exam. Although disappointing, not having the NOCTI **will not** hurt students going directly into the workforce or heading to college since so many of our students earn other industry certifications (e.g., ServSafe, CNA, EPA, OSHA, etc.). In addition to students attaining industry certifications, all seniors **will receive a list of the competencies they have earned** during their time at Steel Center. This competency (task) list is aligned with business and industry standards AND sanctioned by the Pennsylvania Department of Education and will serve as evidence of their technical knowledge and skills. To summarize, although it is disappointing that the school/state cannot have seniors take the NOCTI, students **will be ready** to enter their respective careers and colleges after graduation.

What is the best way to reach my teacher? During scheduled online classes, the best way is through Zoom, Schoology, or Google Classroom. Otherwise, they can be reached via email.

How do I get UPDATES on things happening through the remainder of the school year? UPDATES will continue to be posted to the Steel Center website www.steelcentertech.com and on social media Twitter @SteelCenterCTE, and Facebook @steelcenterforcte as they become available. If there is a critical update, we will utilize the Blackboard Connect@ system to inform all students and their families as well as staff. For other questions, please contact the school's Executive Director, Mr. Kevin Rice, at krice@steelcentertech.com.