



**Bucks County
Intermediate Unit**

Services Update as Related to School Closures

**COVID-19 Pandemic
Spring 2020, Edition 1**

The Bucks County Intermediate Unit stands ready to support and assist our School Districts, Career and Technical Centers, and all their staff in response to the closures resulting from the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic, and in support of the students of Bucks County. As is our mission, we will continue to support the optimal growth of all learners by collaborating with our schools and community to initiate, design, and deliver exemplary leadership, teaching and learning.

We offer the following highlights regarding updates to our services as they specifically relate to the current situation.

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Services Update

PAIU Technical Assistance

PDE (PA Department of Education) requested the assistance of PAIU (PA Association of Intermediate Units) in the development and management of a toolkit of resources available to school entities to help guide them through the process of establishing a continuity of education for their students through this unprecedented period of school closures. The Bucks IU, working with over 100 people from all 29 IUs, worked diligently to help formulate this comprehensive document.

Dr. Andrew Coonradt, Bucks IU Teaching and Learning Specialist, is one of the job alike coordinators for PAIU and in that role has been a part of the leadership team organizing this effort at the behest of PDE. As districts complete their Continuity of Education plans, Andy is available to review plans according to PDE guidelines prior to their submission.



Contact Andy at ACoonradt@BucksIU.org or 215-348-2940 Ext. 1405.

Access to Trusted, Local Expertise

By being an integral part of the Toolkit development Team, Andy can help you navigate and disseminate information for your school entity.

Concerns/Questions Addressed Quickly

Andy is part of weekly meetings with PAIU and PDE to review questions and changes.

Bucks IU Toolkit of Resources

Andy has updated the PAIU Toolkit to elaborate on and include specific Bucks County regional considerations and options. Contact him for your copy.

Professional Development

Services Update

With personnel working remotely and social distancing mandated, we have shifted our focus to better address the immediate Professional Development needs of those we serve with changes to how we provide this and what topics we are presenting.



Moving More Online

We are shifting key learning and educational sessions to web conferencing to continue to offer educational and developmental classes while schools are closed. Our University Partners have also adjusted their plans to accommodate online learning at this time.



Introducing a New Professional Online Learning Platform

We have partnered with EducatorEd™, a division of Public Consulting Group (PCG), to offer a variety of Act 48, Act 45, and graduate credit courses through an online learning platform. There are over 70 courses being offered – [click here for more details](#).



Focus on Today's Relevant Topics

Learning and sharing related to several key areas has become very important within the uncertainty and changes of our current environment.

Some of the areas we are focusing on to help us all adapt include:

- Using Zoom and WebEx
- Setting up virtual communication structures within your school/district
- Supporting your staff's Social Emotional Wellness
- Creating support groups for parents, teachers, and staff

Services Update

Online/Virtual Education

We have proudly been a long-time proponent of virtual education options that are supportive of our school entities and their educational programs. In response to the current situation, additional online resources are now available in support of providing a continuity of education to your students.

We are here to assist with questions or to help guide selections related to what may be the best option for your school entity, staff, and students.

All Pennsylvania LEAs (inclusive of public school districts, public charter schools, and CTC's) will have FREE and OPTIONAL access (fully funded by PDE) to enroll students into any one of the three online digital content solutions within the **Edgenuity** and **Odysseyware** catalog of services, K-12.

This solution would involve the use of district teachers to provide all instructional support and grading. There would be some ability to customize the course content while staying in line with NCAA and Advanced Placement course guidelines at the secondary level. [Click here for more details.](#)

Our ongoing **Bridges** partnership allows us to assist school entities with the implementation or refinement of their own virtual education programs. The overall goal is to strengthen the existing academic program of each school district by providing agile learning environments that promote individualized learning paths for students. This program includes the teacher instruction while allowing students to remain enrolled in their home district. [For more information, click here.](#)



Special Education and Early Childhood Programs

Services Update

Students being served by the Bucks IU for educational and developmental services or supports, are being given our utmost attention and focus during this time. Unique needs combined with distance learning requirements demand that we find and utilize new ways of providing our services to our students. We are including a level of customization to these options to allow for maximum flexibility.

Distance Learning Opportunities/Experiences

For our programs, we have activated online services to allow students to continue both their education and therapies remotely. The Bucks IU is supporting areas such as literacy, math, social emotional wellness, motor, language, coping, and self-regulatory skills for our students.

- **Seesaw:** This program is providing a platform through which we can implement a wide variety of content area activities in a primarily asynchronous format.
- **Telepractice:** This advanced telecommunications technology allows us to directly communicate and connect with our students and families as needed.

Connecting With Families

Bucks IU students may require additional support and considerations during this time. As a means of checking in with our students and families, we are making telephone calls or having online meetings through WebEx. Should needs be identified, we are directing families and students to applicable support information and programs.

