



COVID-19 School Closures & English Learners

This resource was last updated on April 23, 2020. Some information may have changed.

- 1. Students Can Get Free Meals:** Many schools, towns, and food pantries are offering breakfasts and lunches for pick-up. Locations and times may change, so check often for updates. Call your school or a local food bank, or search online for information.
- 2. You Should Receive Translation and Interpretation Services:** During school closures, your school must contact you and share information in the language you prefer. If you only get information in English, tell your school what language you need and how to send you information.
- 3. Students Have a Right to “ESL” or Language Instruction:** Students learning English must get support from ESL teachers and English instruction to understand and participate in their classes. If your child needs help with instruction or assignments, ask for an ESL teacher.
- 4. Schools Can Help with Online Learning:** If your school is providing online learning, you can ask for help with internet access or how to borrow a computer. Schools can also share instructions about how to do online learning, including using translation services and ESL resources.
- 5. Schools Must Support Students with Disabilities:** If your student has a disability, the school must talk with you about your child’s special education services in your preferred language. This includes supports your child will receive and temporary changes while schools are closed. If your school cannot provide certain services, your child can receive those services when school reopens.

This document is being translated into Arabic, Spanish, Nepali, Vietnamese, and Simplified Chinese. Please check www.elc-pa.org/covid-19/ for updates.

The Education Law Center-PA (ELC) is a nonprofit, legal advocacy organization with offices in Philadelphia and Pittsburgh, dedicated to ensuring that all children in Pennsylvania have access to a quality public education.

ELC’s publications provide a general statement of the law. However, each situation is different, and state and federal guidance on these topics continues to change.

If you have questions or concerns, please call our Helpline at 215-238-6970 (Eastern and Central PA) or 412-258-2120 (Western PA).