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Over 900 Chromebooks and 500 instructional packets provided to Milwaukee students to continue their learning

Carmen Schools of Science and Technology continues instruction, communication, and community amid school closures during Coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic

MILWAUKEE – Carmen Schools of Science and Technology is ensuring their 2000 students have ongoing access to a quality education by providing technology, mailing instructional packets, taking learning online, and ensuring educators remain available for student and family communication during school closures.

The Milwaukee-based public charter school network provided more than 900 students in need of computers with Chromebooks and mailed instructional packets to the homes of over 500 families without internet access.

“It’s important for us to respond to our families’ individual needs during this time of crisis. We can provide a source of consistency through learning and offer our students and families a sense of community even while schools are closed,” said Jennifer López, Carmen’s Chief Executive Officer.

Despite major upheaval, students at Carmen Schools are staying on track for college. Prior to recent building closures, the school network made plans to shift instructional methods, working with students and families to overcome barriers and ensure access to online classrooms, internet service, or instructional packets aligned to classroom units and coursework. Carmen provided information regarding Milwaukee Public School food distribution sites and general information on how to minimize risk of infection from the CDC.

“My son is still able to learn from his teacher and guide his own learning from home. This is a difficult time, but our school community is doing everything to keep learning possible for students,” said Rosio Garcia whose son attends third grade at Carmen’s Stellar Elementary.

Instruction and Communication

Teachers are adjusting curriculum and teaching methods to ensure meaningful distance learning:

- **Websites and Google Classrooms:** Students access teacher-created [websites](#) that [organize](#) assignments
- **Continued Special Education:** Special needs are continuing to be met via modified instruction, supplemental videos, and student check-ins
- **Lab Recordings:** Students observe [science labs](#) and create their own hypotheses and notes
- **Study Sessions:** Students convene and break out into study groups hosted by teachers
- **Videos:** [Younger](#) students [watch](#) their teachers and [drive](#) their own [learning](#)

(continued on page 2)

(continued from page 1)

Carmen leaders and educators are ensuring families stay up-to-date and feel a continued sense of school community: :

- Families receive weekly communication from Carmen's CEO, Jennifer López
- Elementary students receive daily videos from their teachers; families can call and text teachers as needed
- Middle and high school students and families are in constant communication with teachers via email, text, and video conferencing

For many students and families, distance learning also provides community. Students log on to see their friends. This week, students will be able to access streaming video lunch hours and morning assemblies at their usual times.

Responding to Staff Needs

The Carmen network is also responding to the needs of its staff team. Staff have been given clear guidelines for instruction, family communication, and student feedback. These parameters allow teachers flexibility to engage students creatively while also arranging their days to meet personal and family needs.

Staff participate in regular school-wide video conferences to get updates and troubleshoot. Staff also have planned virtual happy hours to connect as a community and celebrate their hard work.

While it is unclear when school buildings will be reopened, Carmen Schools of Science and Technology continues to keep class in session for students and families.

The following are available for media interviews by phone and video conferencing:

- Carmen teachers, leaders, students, and family members
- Carmen Chief Executive Officer, Jennifer López
- Carmen Chief Schools Officer, Melissa McGonegle

For more information and to schedule interviews, contact Mike Nguyen at (414) 459-1894 or nguyenm@carmenschools.org

About Carmen Schools of Science and Technology

Carmen Schools of Science and Technology is a network of four public middle and high schools and one public elementary school with an unparalleled track record of success in educating and graduating Milwaukee students prepared for success in college, work, and as leaders in their communities. Ninety percent of the more than 2,000 students served come from families with low-incomes and live in some of Milwaukee's most challenged neighborhoods. Carmen students graduate with some of the highest ACT scores among all public schools in the city. By the time, students graduate from Carmen, 100% of them are accepted to college. In 2019, Carmen was named to U.S. News and World Report's national list of Best High Schools, ranking 2nd overall in the State of Wisconsin and 56th among all U.S. public charter high schools. Learn more at www.carmenschools.org.

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