Distance Learning Plan

A resource for parents outlining the School’s approach to maintaining educational continuity.
# Table of Contents

General Expectations ............................................................................................................ 4
Technology Requirements & Expectations of Use ................................................................. 5
Parent Resources .................................................................................................................. 5
Family Roles & Responsibilities ......................................................................................... 6
Student Expectations ........................................................................................................... 7
Frequently Asked Questions ................................................................................................. 8
Distance Learning By Division
  • Lower School ................................................................................................................ 10
  • Middle and Upper Schools ............................................................................................. 14
Updated Middle and Upper School Distance Learning Norms ..................................... 17
Distance Learning Research-Informed Strategies for Parents ........................................ 18

Updated 4/16/2020
Our Mission & Core Values

Our Mission
The mission of St. Andrew's Episcopal School is to know and inspire each child in an inclusive community dedicated to exceptional teaching, learning, and service.

— Approved by vote of the Board of Trustees June 7, 2010

Our Core Values
The core values of St. Andrew's Episcopal School are institutional values: all students, faculty, staff, and alumni aspire to embody these values for the advancement of the school, community, and world.

Inspiring Community: Through spirit, diversity, and understanding
Dynamic Growth: Through challenge, creativity, and joy
Transformative Achievement: Through research, resilience, and innovation
Visionary Leadership: Through courage, integrity, and service

— Approved by the Board of Trustees, April 2018
General Expectations

Our goal for distance learning will be to mirror a typical in-person school day as closely as possible. To help accomplish that goal, we have set forth the following expectations for teachers and students:

• Each course will have a ‘live’ (synchronous) component using Google Meet.
• Classes will begin on time and current policies around turning in work will be maintained.
• From time to time, some classes may be videos/instructions via Seesaw or Schoology that need to be completed by students before their next class.
• All classes will be recorded.
• Students should give their best effort, exhibit their best online class behavior, and attend classes regularly, health permitting.
• Students may follow “free dress” guidelines during the distance-learning period (shoes will be optional, but no pajamas, please!).
• Students should have their cell phones in a different room during class time.
Technology Requirements & Expectations for Use

- Lower School students will use Seesaw/Schoology and Google Meet to deliver synchronous and asynchronous learning.
- Middle and Upper School students must use Chrome as their browser, and they must be logged in with their school account.
- Students are expected to be courteous and respectful online and adhere to the technology code of conduct which they agreed to when they signed the handbook at the beginning of the year.
- Students should refrain from experimenting with the Google Meet options during class time, from muting other students’ microphones, or removing anyone from the Google Meet.

Parent Resources

For many of us, finding the right way to talk about coronavirus and the easing anxiety that comes with this atypical moment in time has been demanding. Here are some resources that may be of help over the next few weeks.

How to talk to your children about Coronavirus

- [Talking to Children About COVID-19 (Coronavirus): A Parent Resource](#)
- [Coronavirus (COVID-19): How to Talk to Your Child](#)
- [How to talk to your kids about COVID-19](#)

Other Articles and Resources

- [Parenting in the Time of Coronavirus](#)
- [Overestimating, Underestimating: 5 ways to help teens manage anxiety about coronavirus](#)
- [Meditation Apps for Kids](#)
Family Roles & Responsibilities

**UPPER AND MIDDLE SCHOOL**

- Help your children manage their online learning by encouraging them to attend all classes and finish all assignments.
- Create a comfortable, distraction-free place for your children to work and attend online classes.
- Do not join your children’s online classes or be visible on your children’s screens during classes.
- Encourage your children to incorporate physical activity and healthy breaks from classes during the day, while practicing responsible social distancing.

**LOWER SCHOOL**

- Calmly establish routines and expectations for your child.
- Take an active role in your child’s learning. Assist them in logging into the device and various applications, and walk them through instructions when needed.
- Create a comfortable, distraction-free place to work.
- Partner with your child’s teachers and reach out should any challenges arise.
- Help your child to plan and turn in their work and keep them focused and on task.
- Provide opportunities for your child to play and move outside, while practicing responsible social distancing.
- Abide by our Lower School Technology Contract regarding use of the school-provided device.
Student Expectations

When classes are being conducted online via Google Meet, students are expected to follow these guidelines:

• Give your best effort and best online class behavior.

• You are expected to attend your classes unless your parent or guardian notifies Ms. Addison or Ms. Egan via email that you are sick. Teachers will take attendance at the beginning of each class.

• Stay in contact (your teachers and advisors will be checking their email during the week daily during school days).

• Be dressed appropriately - consider it a casual dress day at school. No pajamas, please!
Who do I contact if I have a question?

In the Middle and Upper School, please contact individual teachers if you have concerns about classwork. Other general questions about your student should go to advisors or your child’s grade dean. In the Lower School, your first point of contact should be homeroom teachers. If you have a technology related issue, please email our Technology Department at laptops@saes.org. If you have a general question about distance learning, please contact your Division Head.

How will the School ensure that my child has continuity of learning?

Teachers and school leaders have worked closely to finalize a distance learning plan that will ensure continuity of learning. Utilizing Schoology (our Learning Management System), Google Hangouts Meet, Seesaw, and other technology platforms, like email and video conferencing, our teachers will remain in contact with every student with an open line of communication to parents. Our campus is closed, but school remains open.

What resources are available if my child faces challenges with distance learning?

While we may not be together physically, all of the school’s resources remain available to our students. The Education Center, College Counseling, our school counselor and Chaplain Isaacs and Chaplain Slater all will be hard at work supporting our students. At the same time, the Center for Transformative Teaching and Learning will continue to provide resources and strategies to support our teachers and school leaders.

If my child is sick on a distance learning day, what should my family do?

Just like on a normal school day, a parent should notify Ms. Addison (US), Ms. Egan (MS), or Ms. Seidel (LS) if their child is sick. Because all of the classes are being recorded and archived through the end of the third trimester, students will have the opportunity to watch classes at a later time when they are feeling better to catch up without having missed that classroom instruction.
Does my child who is a senior need to worry about graduation requirements?

St. Andrew’s teachers and administrators are committed to supporting every student in meeting their graduation requirements. We will make decisions about adjusting graduation requirements as needed in the coming weeks. Rest assured, the School is committed to helping the Class of 2020 successfully graduate.
Lower School Distance Learning

GOALS

The goal of the Lower School Distance Learning Plan is to keep your children engaged so they can learn and grow, while also affording them with meaningful opportunities for connection and community. We will provide opportunities for them to read, write, share ideas, explore, create, play, and move. Perhaps most importantly, we will continue to provide them a sense of community and normalcy with a structured school day that continues the planned learning program.

Due to the developmental stages of our youngest learners, parents will need to assist your child with distance learning. For example, assist in logging into the device and various applications, in addition to walking through directions when needed.

For Preschool through Pre-K, teachers will provide suggested activities to allow students the opportunity to continue cognitive, physical, and social-emotional skill-building. Learning engagements are playful, inquiry-based explorations.

For Kindergarten through Grade 5, assignments should be completed by the due date. Please reach out to the teacher through email if your child is unable to participate in distance learning due to illness.

SCHEDULE (PRESCHOOL - GRADE 5)

At 9 a.m. on school days, each homeroom class will meet virtually for morning meeting. These morning meetings will take place via Google Meet and we currently expect each class will be recorded and archived through the end of the third trimester. Students will be able to find the link to video conferencing in the Seesaw app (PS - Grade 4) and Schoology (Grade 5).

Teachers will provide a daily to-do list describing learning goals and activities for the day. Homeroom teachers will formulate lessons around reading, writing, and math and one or two special subject teachers per day will provide a subject-related activity. These assignments will have a balance of on-screen and off-screen tasks that help connect to previous learning and the current curriculum. Students will be able to see the assignments on their to-do list through Seesaw or Schoology. Teachers will remain in the Google Meet video conference until 10:15 a.m. to answer individual questions.
By 3 p.m., students should complete their daily to-do list, being mindful of taking brain breaks, which ideally includes physical activity and/or exercise. Homeroom teachers will check-in with individual students at least once per week.

As always, faculty and administrators are available via email if you would like to schedule a conversation.

**DAILY SCHEDULE**

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<th>MONDAY (D1)</th>
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DIGITAL RESOURCES AND DEVICE MANAGEMENT EXPECTATIONS

DIGITAL RESOURCES

• Preschool through Grade 4

  Teachers will upload daily activities or assignments to Seesaw, an app that has been preloaded onto iPads for students in Pre-Kindergarten through Grade 4.

  • Google Meet links will be posted in the Inbox tab under Messages
  • Daily lessons and recordings of Morning Meeting will be posted to the Activities tab.
  • Parents with students in PSI and PSII can upload the Seesaw app to an iOS or Android device in the home.
  • Follow the instructions sent home via backpack mail on March 13.
  • Contact Alyssa Morris if you need assistance.

• Help Center Tutorials
  • How do I add to my child’s journal?
  • How do I message a teacher?
  • Help Center

• Grade 5

  • Fifth grade teachers and students utilize Schoology, a Learning Management System (LMS) to manage their assignments.

HOME DEVICES

• Pre-K through Grade 5

  • All devices have been preloaded with the relevant apps and have filters installed.
  • Each device includes a charger.
  • Keep the device in a place in the home that is a common area (living room, etc).
• Keep chargers in those common areas.
• Do not allow your child to bring the device to other rooms of the house.
• Do not let other members of the family on to this device.

**PSI and PSII**

• Each PSI and PSII student was provided an information sheet that has a unique QR code that when scanned using the Seesaw app will link directly to your child’s account.

• Download the Seesaw app onto any home iOs or android device, and scan your child’s unique QR code using the app.

• Open your child’s Seesaw app/account before 9:00 am each school day. You can access it via the app, or [app.seesaw.me](http://app.seesaw.me).

• On the right side of the screen, click on *Inbox*. Look for the announcement about that day’s Google Meet.

• Each Meet will be listed with the day’s date.

• Click the link to join the Google Meet.

• Be sure to put your device on mute. This makes it easier to hear the teacher. When it is your child’s turn to share, you will be able to unmute.

• Check back daily on Seesaw for news, announcements, and activities.

• Email your child’s homeroom teacher if you have any questions about daily meetings or activities.
Middle and Upper School Distance Learning

GOALS

The goal of the Middle and Upper School Distance Learning Plan is to run school as close to a typical, in-person day as possible to provide the best academic experience as possible while staying connected as a community of learners. We will employ technology resources we currently use day-to-day (Schoology, Google Drive, laptops) to connect, extend, and deepen learning.

SCHEDULE

Each course will have a “live” (synchronous) component using Google Hangouts Meet following the school’s daily schedule. Students should follow the schedule as outlined in the email they receive the evening before. Attendance will be taken and reported for each class. All classes will begin on time according to our daily schedule (Day 1 - Day 5) and all current policies - late work, deadlines, etc. - will be maintained. All classes will be recorded and we expect them to be archived through the end of the third trimester. Students will receive a calendar invite through their school email that will contain the link to each class.

From time to time, some classes may not meet online. Videos with assignment instructions will be shared for those classes via Schoology and are to be completed by students before the next online class meeting.

Morning meeting will take place for the Middle School on Mondays and Fridays and for the Upper School on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Upper School advisory will meet twice a week at the regularly scheduled times in the daily schedule. The advisor may want to meet as a group or schedule individual meetings with their advisees during those times. In Middle School, each advisory will meet as a group online once per week with advisors also setting up one-on-one check-ins with advisees. We will continue to hold Chapel once a week during regularly-scheduled Chapel time.

In the Upper School, teachers will be available during office hours and students should email a teacher they want to speak with ahead of time to schedule that conversation. In the Middle School, there will be no organized activities around study hall, athletics or recess. Students should use those times as a healthy break throughout the day. Students are
expected to eat during breaks from classes but not during classes as a courtesy to others and also to protect their laptops from potential damage.

As always, faculty and administrators are available via email if you would like to schedule a conversation.
DIGITAL RESOURCES AND DEVICE/TECH MANAGEMENT EXPECTATIONS

• Google Meet will be used for video conferencing for each class.
• Students must check their St. Andrew’s email account several times daily.
• Students must check their St. Andrew’s Google calendar each day for live class links.
• Students must use their school Google account on Chrome as their browser and be logged into that account and connect it to Schoology.
• Students are expected to be courteous and respectful online and adhere to the technology code of conduct which they agreed to when they signed the handbook at the beginning of the year.
• Students should refrain from experimenting with the Google Meet options during class time, from muting other students’ microphones, removing anyone from the Google Meet, or from jumping ahead.
• Students are required to keep the camera on in live sessions and the microphone muted unless speaking.
• Students should take turns, contribute, and ask questions in class discussions.
• Students should use chat appropriately and be mindful that their classes are being recorded.
• School-provided laptops will have all of the apps and technology capable for any needs during distance learning. Students are encouraged to use their school computers during this time for compatibility.
UPDATED MIDDLE AND UPPER SCHOOL DISTANCE LEARNING NORMS

When attending classes, students should:

- Sit-up while in class — no lying down.
- Make sure their face is visible and immediately recognizable. Please do not bring masks or costumes to class.
- Not wear or display clothing with any inappropriate logos, words or symbols.
- Have their camera on at all times during class unless the teacher asks or gives them permission to turn it off.
- Use their own school-issued computer for distance learning. Do not share computers.
- Not ask friends to join classes or advisor period. Do not share the class links for Google Hangouts Meet with anyone who is not a part of that class.
- Be aware that teachers are now able to use DYNO.
- Have their cell phones away during class time, preferably in another room.
- Remember that classes start on the hour — please be on time.
Distance learning is not a new method of teaching. As a result, there are plenty of research-informed strategies that the Center for Transformative Teaching and Learning has complied to help support parents and students.

**Monotask, not multitask**

Help your child monotask. This means, no phone, Netflix, video games, or Gchat during class time. They should not have non-academic applications, windows or browser tabs open on their laptop during online class sessions. Encourage your child to set their phone to “do not disturb” and put it in another room while working — they can check it during breaks in the school day.

**A good study environment aids good studying**

Set up a good study environment. Your child should not do online classes in bed, and ideally not in their bedroom. Try to avoid spaces where there are distractions. Try to avoid spaces with clutter because many students find this distracting. Your child should not listen to music while “doing” an online class. However, music while studying is an interesting question. It seems to help some students on some tasks (perhaps because it might reduce anxiety), but hurts others. Listening to music is not bad *per se*, but your child needs to find out what works for them.

**Strong self-advocacy is always crucial — now even more so**

Encourage your child to be a strong self-advocate and communicate with teachers when they have questions or concerns, or even then they just feel they need to check in with their teacher and chat. This can be done by email or by requesting a one-on-one virtual meeting on Google Meet (ask during an online class or by sending them a short email). If at any point they are wondering, “what should I do now?,” just ask.
Everyone benefits from help with scheduling

One thing that might happen in the course of this distance learning experience is that your child may be given more projects and longer tasks that require more independent work. Balancing the demands of several projects at once is something that many students of all ages find challenging. Help your child break down and schedule tasks for asynchronous projects. If necessary, help them monitor their progress, help them decide if switching strategies might aid their progress, or help them determine whether a satisfactory end point has been reached.

Support your child’s metacognition

Metacognition aids learning. You can help by asking questions, such as:

• What are your big learnings or takeaways from the day?
• What’s challenging? / What do you have questions about? / What don’t you understand yet? (and suggest they reach out to the appropriate teacher by email, one-on-one check in, or writing down their question(s) to ask in the chat of their next Google meeting).

Where possible, help your child bring in prior knowledge from experiences they have had in the past. And help them make connections, again where possible, between their work and the things in the real world. We tend to overestimate how automatically students make these connections, so help them.

Emotion and cognition are interlinked

Emotion and learning are intertwined, both in your child’s brain and in their everyday experience of school. Having an emotional well-being check in can help — if they are feeling stressed with school, giving them space to offload those feelings can help them focus on learning. They can talk to you, talk to a friend, or even write or draw.

Relationships help buffer stress, so staying socially connected is an important part of being a successful student during distance learning. But take note of the monotasking vs. multitasking comment above, and separate out social time from work time.
Exercise, diet, and sleep help reduce stress as well as improve overall health. Going for a walk or run, while practicing responsible social distancing, can be tremendously beneficial for overall well-being and learning.

Research suggests that mindfulness and meditation techniques can benefit students of all ages. There are many free online resources, such as the apps recommended earlier in this plan. Even if your child is a skeptic, attempt to get them to try a few things out and to see if they can find something that works for them.

Play is important for students of all ages. Make time for play.

Do things that aren’t on screens in leisure time.

Stanford University’s Denise Pope, who Dr. Ian Kelleher presented with at SXSW last year argues that every child needs PDF time, as this helps both well-being and learning: Play time; Down time; and Family time.