
Distance Plan for Learning 2.0

Introduction to Plan for Learning

At St. Pius X School we are committed to making sure that students continue to experience the care and commitment of our faculty and the routine of daily learning, even in the event of school closure. We must acknowledge that our approach to distance learning cannot replicate the magic that happens when school is in regular session (the invaluable social interactions and mediation, real-time, in-person feedback, community and extracurricular events, and so on). However, we do contend that quality learning can occur from a distance and it is our intention to continue living our mission, vision, and strategic plan, which together assert the commitment to the well-being and growth of the whole child.

Our Distance Learning Committee, teachers and staff have all been working on updating and enhancing our spring distance learning plan with feedback from all constituents. Starting this fall, we will be delivering synchronous (same-time) instruction via our MS Teams platform with structured, regular, and meaningful engagement between teachers and students 5 days a week. We will also offer opportunities to connect in our community groups or gather virtually at our Monday all school assemblies led by our ASB. Our partnership between home and school will grow stronger.

We endeavor in our Distance Learning Plan 2.0 (DLP) to accomplish three goals for K-8 within a flexible framework:

- Daily Access to Live Stream Synchronous Student-Teacher Contact Time
- Online High-Quality Content Delivery
- Online Monitoring of Student Attendance, Progress, and Assessment

We will communicate through our regular channels--our e-newsletter, as well as special bulletins and emails, and postings on our website, & social media pages--so parents and families are current on pertinent information regarding our status. There are times when new information comes after the Tuesday newsletter, so please make sure your email is current with our front office and encourage you to follow us on FB and Instagram.

The decision to reopen school for in-person classes will be made with close consultation with the pastor, the Archdiocese of Seattle and local Department of Health.

With regard to the school's core technological and communications systems, our school offers the following chart to describe how we will communicate and manage learning in the event this Distance Plan 2.0 is implemented.

How will our school communicate with parents, students, and faculty/staff in the event of an extended campus closure?

Our school will continue to use the same channels it employs for normal day-to-day communications with parents, students, and faculty/staff. All of these systems are remotely accessible.

Channel	Audience	Description & Access
Email	Faculty, Staff, Parents	Email will be used for all major communications and announcements, including those from the Principal and teachers. Faculty will also use email to communicate, although they will use other platforms to interact with their students as well. Please make sure all parent emails are up to date and correct.
Microsoft Office 365 Applications	PreSchool, PreK, K-8th grade	Office 365 is configured to provide families the content they need from teachers and students are able to access remotely from any online web platform
Microsoft Teams	Students across all grades	Teams allows for delivery and receipt of assignments and assessment along with online video conferencing that allows for live group meetings, hosted by teachers.
Math IXL	Students in grades Pre-K-8	Teachers may assign math practice via Math IXL.
Amplify Science	5-8	Teacher will use digital and hands-on science curriculum for remote and in-person learning throughout the year.
Khan Academy	5-8	Organized by topic, the site includes math (K-12), science, technology, economics, art, history, and test prep. Each topic includes lectures delivered via YouTube videos. Students can use the site independently, or parents can create a parent account, then set up student accounts from which they can track their child's progress.
Starfall	Pre-K-3	Starfall is another free resource that has been around as long as my family has been homeschooling. Launched in 2002, the website now includes an app for smartphone and tablet users. Originally started as an online reading instruction program, Starfall has expanded to include math skills for young learners.

Scholastic News	K-8	Available for most subjects, especially Reading, Social Studies and Science.
Spelling City	K-8	Spelling
National Geographic for Kids	K-8	Science
Epic	K-8	Reading
Tynker, Code.org, Typing.com, Prodigy	K-8	Technology
ReadWorks	5-8	Informational reading
ABCYA	Preschool & PreK	Online supplemental material

Cautions

Many subjects, such as math or reading or writing, require that new concepts are built on previously learned and mastered concepts. The focus will be assessing where students are at in the beginning of the year.

Resources should have a purpose in teaching a concept that the child needs to learn. Using a typical course of study guide and identifying essential standards for each subject and grade level, we can help make the best choices at each stage of learning.

How will our school ensure that students have access to these tools from off-campus?

Most of our technology tools are not device-specific, which means students will be able to access learning through nearly any electronic device. Students will be asked to utilize home electronic devices to access these tools. If your family does not have access to a laptop, computer, or tablet, please notify your teacher as you will be allowed to sign out a Chromebook (or like device) from the school provided that you sign a waiver and the Chromebook is returned in similar condition (lost, broken or stolen Chromebooks subject to a fee). Please note that we have a limited number of devices. Please only sign out this device if it is necessary—our recommendation is 1:1 device per child. If you do not have wireless, we can recommend using a hotspot and data from your phone. <https://www.pcmag.com/how-to/how-to-turn-your-phone-into-a-wi-fi-hotspot>

Eight Distance Learning Guidelines for Teachers

The transition to distance learning will not be simple or easy. Teachers will need to think differently about how to communicate, give instruction, and provide feedback, how to design lessons and assignments that are authentic and meaningful, and how to ensure students continue to collaborate and communicate with others. The eight guidelines provided below are intended to help teachers across all grade levels reflect on challenges they'll confront in shifting to distance learning.

1—At our school, we know our students and they know we care

Our commitment is to nurture relationships and demonstrate deep care for our students and one another. In the event of a crisis that leads to implementation of this DPL, your students may be stressed or worried. Before diving into curriculum, take the time to assess your students' mental, physical, and emotional wellbeing. How are they doing? How are their families?

2—Evaluate your students' conditions for distance learning

While most students will have reliable online access at home and the necessary devices to shift to distance learning, others will not. Teachers should remember that each family's circumstances will vary and they should avoid assumptions about limitations or restrictions students are facing. Ask your students and/or their parents whether their online access is reliable and what devices the student has at their disposal. Determine which students will need to sign out a device. Open a dialogue with students and families and avoid assumptions that all students' circumstances are the same.

3—Stick with the familiar

Especially in the first weeks after moving to this DPL, teachers should continue using existing communication channels and learning management systems. In other words, **stick with what's familiar to your students**. Teachers should remember that while many students will thrive with distance learning, others will struggle.

4—Less is more

One challenge confronting teachers will be how to best streamline content and elevate the most essential learning for students. In other words, teachers need to take a less-is-more perspective, including the pacing of lessons and volume of assignments and assessments.

5—Seize the moment; embrace new opportunities and possibilities for your students

Years or decades from now, how will our students remember the emergency that resulted in school closure? While distance learning should attempt to bring some normalcy and routine to students' lives, teachers shouldn't ignore the opportunities resulting from school closure either. Teachers might require students to keep a daily journal or diary for the duration of the crisis. Personal journaling and/or other creative writing assignments can help students process their thoughts, worries, and emotions, particularly in times of crisis. Students might use other media as well, including video, drawing, painting, and music. Moreover, the crisis might also provide other real-life opportunities to study scientific phenomena associated with the crisis, and media/government responses.

6—Design asynchronous learning experiences

When school is closed and students are learning from various locations, teachers can still connect them asynchronously (not all students at the same time). For example, Middle School teachers can use familiar discussion forums/thread or tools to allow for student responses and dialogue during a set time period, knowing that students might not all be online at the same exact time.

7—Design synchronous learning experiences

When it comes to student engagement and learning, relationships matter as much online as they do in person. Collaboration remains important and there are many ways teachers can foster it through synchronous (all students at the same time) learning. This is a good time for discussion, class meetings, sharing, show and tell, and more.

8—Think differently about assessment

Assessment is one of the most challenging adjustments for teachers new to online learning. Distance learning should be seen as an opportunity for students, individually or collaboratively, to complete writing assignments, design infographics, make video presentations, or complete oral assessments via video chat. Teachers are encouraged to **think differently about the frequency and end goal of assessment** instead of forcing a traditional assessment method that doesn't fit distance learning.

The guidelines above are modeled directly on the DLP of the American International School of Japan and 'Iolani School, with our gratitude.

Ten Guidelines for Parents Supporting Distance Learning

The transition to distance learning may be challenging for families. Parents will need to think differently about how to support their children; how to create structures and routines that allow their children to be successful; and how to monitor and support their children's learning. Some students will thrive with distance learning, while others may struggle. The ten guidelines provided below are intended to help parents think about what they can do to help their children find success in a distance learning environment.

1—Establish routines and expectations

From the first day our school implements its DPL, parents need to establish routines and expectations. We encourage parents to set regular hours for their children's school-work. We suggest students begin their studies at 9:00 a.m. Keep normal bedtime routines for younger children and expect the same from your older-aged students, too. (Don't let them stay up late and sleep in!) Your children should move regularly and take periodic breaks as they study. It is important that parents set these expectations for how their children will spend their days starting as soon as distance learning is implemented, not several days later after it becomes apparent a child is struggling with the absence of routine.

2—Define the physical space for your child's study

Your child may have a regular place for doing homework under normal circumstances, but this space may or may not be suitable for an extended period of time, as will be the case if this DPL is implemented. We encourage families to establish a space/location where their children will learn most of the time. This should be a public/family space, not in a child's bedroom. It should be a place that can be quiet at times and have a strong wireless internet signal, if possible.

3—Monitor communications from your children's teachers

Teachers will communicate with students/parents through email, when and as necessary. The frequency and detail of these communications will be determined by your children's ages, maturity, and their degree of independence. When you need to contact teachers, please remember that teachers will be communicating with many students as well as other parents and that communications should be essential, succinct, and self-aware. We also encourage parents to have their 5th-8th aged children explain the online platforms their teachers are using.

4—Begin and end each day with a check-in

Parents are encouraged to start and finish each day with a simple check-in. In the morning, ask what is your child learning today? What are their learning targets or goals? How will they spend their time? What resources do they require? What support do they need? This brief grounding conversation matters. It allows children to process the instructions they've received from their teachers. It helps them organize themselves and set priorities. Older students may not want to have these check-ins with parents (that's normal!), but they should nevertheless. Parents should establish these check-ins as regular parts of each day. Not all students thrive in a distance learning environment; some struggle with too much independence or lack of structure. These check-in routines need to be established early, before students fall behind or begin to struggle.

5—Take an active role in helping your children process and own their learning

In the course of a regular school day, your son or daughter engages with other students or adults dozens if not hundreds of times. These social interactions and opportunities for mediation include turning to a peer to exchange a thought or idea, participating in small or large group discussions, asking questions for clarification, collaborating on group projects, and countless other moments. Human beings learn best when they have opportunities to process their learning with others. Beyond the check-ins recommended at the start and end of each day, if possible parents should regularly circle back and engage with their children about what they're learning.

6—Establish times for quiet and reflection

A huge challenge for families with multiple children will be how to manage all their children's needs, especially when those children are different ages and have different needs. There may be times when siblings need to work in different rooms to avoid distraction. Parents may even experiment with noise-cancelling headphones (no music necessary!) to block out distractions.

7—Encourage physical activity and/or exercise

Make sure your children remember to move and exercise. This is vitally important to their health, wellbeing, and to their learning. It is important for parents to model and encourage exercise! Think also about how your children can pitch in more around the house with chores or other responsibilities. Don't let your children off the hook – expect them to pitch in!

8—Remain mindful of your child's stress or worry

One thing is for certain: our school will only implement this DPL if a serious emergency has occurred. Should this happen, it is imperative for parents to help their children manage the worry, anxiety, and range of emotions each may experience. Difficult though it may be, do your best not to transfer your stress or worry to your children. They will be out of sorts, whether they admit it or not, and need as much normal routine as parents can provide. Please reach out to your child's teacher or contact us should you feel your child needs a counselor if they are expressing extreme worry.

9—Monitor how much time your child is spending online

Our school does not want its students staring at computer screens for 7–8 hours a day. We ask that parents remember most teachers are not experts in distance learning and that it will require some trial-and-error before we find the right balance between online and offline learning experiences. Administrators or teachers will periodically check in with you to assess what you're seeing at home and what we need to adjust. We thank you in advance for your patience and partnership!

10—Keep your children social, but set rules around their social media interactions

There's always excitement and uncertainty when there is a significant change to a routine, like school. If our school implements this DPL, the initial excitement of school being closed will fade quickly when students start missing their friends, classmates, and teachers. Help your children maintain contact with friends and see them in person when circumstances permit. Please also monitor your children's social media use, especially during an extended school closure. Older students will rely more on social media to communicate with friends. We ask parents to monitor their children's use of social media. Remind your children to be polite, respectful, and appropriate in their communications and to represent your family's values in their interactions with others. A student's written words and tone can sometimes offend or cause harm to others.

Roles & Responsibilities During Distance Learning

Many stakeholders will contribute to the effective implementation of this DPL. The roles and responsibilities of students and parents are delineated below.

Student Roles & Responsibilities	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish daily routines for engaging in the learning experiences (e.g. following your daily schedule or establishing an 9:00 a.m. start)—Show up to class on time. • Identify a comfortable, quiet space in your home where you can work effectively and successfully • Regularly monitor online platforms check for announcements and feedback from your teachers • Complete assignments with integrity and academic honesty, doing your best work • Review grades and feedback on all graded/returned work and resubmit when required • Do your best to meet timelines, commitments, and due dates • Communicate proactively with your teachers if you cannot meet deadlines or require additional support • Collaborate and support your peers in their learning • Comply with the school technology contract, including expectations for online etiquette • Proactively seek out and communicate with other adults as different needs arise (see below) 	
For questions about ...	Contact
a course, assignment, or resource	the relevant teacher
a technology-related problem or issue	The homeroom teacher first, then principal or technology director
a personal, academic or social-emotional concern	your homeroom teacher
Parent Roles and Responsibilities	
<p>Provide support for your children by adhering to the 10 Guidelines for Parents as well as you can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish routines and expectations; support your child in arriving to class on time (even virtually) • Define the physical space for your child’s study • Monitor communications from your children’s teachers • Begin and end each day with a check-in • Take an active role in helping your children process their learning; review the weekly schedule • Establish times for quiet and reflection • Encourage physical activity and/or exercise • Remain mindful of your child’s stress or worry • Monitor how much time your child is spending online • Keep your children social, but set rules around their social media interactions • Communicate proactively with your child(ren)’s teachers 	

PS-4 School Priorities & Considerations

- After receiving initial notice from the Principal about our school's opening or closing timeline, families and students will receive an email from their homeroom teacher with class instructions
- We will have 5 days of synchronous and asynchronous instruction, with core subject taught in the morning and specialists in the afternoon. Social/emotional lessons will be taught throughout the week.
- The primary tools for communication between teachers and families will be newsletters via email and with 1 portal access to individual Office 365 accounts.
- Students will have both off- and on-screen learning activities designed to engage learners in experiences that connect to the current curriculum.
- Weekly supplemental material will be provided for parent pick up on a designated day
- Resources will vary by class and lesson, but may include links to videos, graphic organizers, scanned material to read and engage with, independent research material via online sources or our library databases, and reading materials including ebooks.
- "Offline" resources may be textbooks, library books, consumables, and journals that are not computer based
- Learning tasks and activities will provide direction to families on how best to support student learning and the expected level of adult involvement. It is expected that students in grades K–2 will need higher levels of support than students in grades 3–4. A virtual meeting with a teacher is always available to support students with academic, social, or emotional needs. Parents may initiate contact by email or through Microsoft Teams.
- Follow our technology agreement

Middle School (5-8) Priorities & Considerations

- After receiving initial notice from the Principal about our school's opening or closing timeline, families and students will receive an email from their homeroom teacher with class instructions.
- We will have 5 days of synchronous and asynchronous instruction, with core subject taught in the morning and specialists in the afternoon. Social/emotional lessons will be taught throughout the week.
- The primary tool for communication between teachers and families is email and with 1 portal access to individual Office 365 accounts.
- Learning experiences are designed to be completed independently or in collaboration with other students. Tutoring is not recommended, nor should a parent/guardian be too involved.
- Weekly supplemental material will be provided for parent pick up on a designated day
- Resources vary by class and lesson, but will include links to videos, graphic organizers, scanned material to read and engage with, independent research material via online sources or our library databases, and reading materials including ebooks.
- "Offline" resources may be textbooks, library books, consumables, and journals that are not computer based
- Students are encouraged to be proactive in reaching out to teachers via Microsoft Teams when they have questions or assignments are unclear.
- A virtual meeting with a teacher is always available to support students with academic, social, or emotional needs. Please initiate contact by Microsoft Teams.
- Follow our technology agreement