

Hilltop Learns at Home

Structure and routine are especially critical for our students that are going to begin the year online. Our amended distance learning plan will use a combination of live and recorded lessons, along with a mix of instructional tools that are age appropriate and individualized to meet the needs of your child. Each teacher will make sure to check in weekly with your family as to progress and just as if your child was in class for face to face instruction, our teachers are always available by phone call or Zoom/Facetime to provide assistance. We do ask that you contact your child's teacher during the school day or in the afternoon if possible so they can best assist you. We ask this also so that our faculty isn't asked to work all day with the students on campus, and then stay up late at night with those working from home until very late. We feel that during this health crisis, we are asking enough of our staff so they have been instructed to be as helpful as possible, but while also taking care of their own health by getting adequate sleep.

Our administration at HMS is also available at anytime during the school day to be a liaison for you as we work together to "tweak" your child's learning plan at home. To ensure our ability to chart academic progress effectively, we do ask that your child maintain the same deadlines at home that we have on campus. For example, if spelling tests or other assessments are done on Thursdays, that would be the same in your home. Also, for students in grades 1-8, we ask you let us know if your child is not participating in school that day so we can mark them as absent. As your child's primary educational provider, we need to account for absences, tardies, incomplete work and assessments just as if they are in class so we appreciate your help at home with this matter. We also want your child to not fall behind so that as soon as you are ready for them to rejoin the class for face to face instruction, they will be confident in their abilities.

For your child in particular, we have identified the following components that will work best to start:

- * IXL has been purchased for students in K-8th grade for math and language individual work that can be done from the comfort of home on an individual basis if needed. Please note that this can be done on an I-Pad, small laptop or desktop but would not work well on a phone.
- * Updated See Saw Plus has been purchased for better organization and engagement. This can be used to connect to the class, see lessons and be a part of the community while at home. This can be accessed through a phone or any device and is being used preschool through 6th grade.

- * Spanish-work will be sent for the week, depending on age and skill level. This may be shared through Ms. Ana's You-Tube Channel for the little ones and Ms. Graciela will send the work weekly for 1-8th grade. Once we get up and running, we will also work to send video lessons for 1-8th grade but please give us the first few weeks of school to adapt everything.
- * Art and music for 1-8th grade-work will be sent for the week, depending on age and skill level. This might be an assignment or a list of ideas for the month.
- * Google Classroom may be used for easier organization for parents and older students to work toward more independence if possible.
- * We would continue the use of Zoom or FaceTime for face to face interaction, but zoom experiences will be more individualized to better meet the needs of younger students who had trouble engaging online in a larger group. Teachers will offer a once per week individual session with each student to check in, gain feedback and offer a personal touch. With the class working on campus, the zoom or FaceTime might be participation in circle time, watching a science experiment or other community offering to encourage your child to feel part of the school. We also encourage you to follow us on social media and check the weekly emails so you can share community happenings as they unfold with your child.
- * We will be keeping the format for checking in and out of Montessori learning materials for the early grades. As before, they were sterilized in and out and were available for weekly check out. Weekly packets are also available. If you aren't comfortable coming into the office, we are glad to have them ready for you and run them out to your car during business hours.
- * We will be utilizing EPIC for readers to access reading material with ease at home to assist parents who may not have quick access to reading materials. Access to different reading materials may be coming through a public school grant and whatever is received, HMS will share if age and developmentally appropriate.
- * Other: _____

The framework we will attempt to follow is:

* All work for your child to complete on their own will be received by you no later than each Monday at 8:00 a.m.

* We ask that at the completion of the week, you take pictures and send your child's teacher an email with all the images for their work completed in one

email. If at all possible, we would like to receive this Friday at 1:00 pm or as close to that time as possible. Typically, the teachers need to see how your child is progressing in ample time to plan and send their work for the following week.

For your child's age and developmental level, we are expecting that distance learning will not take the entire day as studies have shown that children do not need to be in front of a computer all day, everyday. We ask that you give your child the same breaks they have at school for snack, lunch, physical education, recess and the pursuits of creativity in art, music or outdoor experiences with botany through gardening or other creative outlets. We would expect each day's instruction to be approximately:

Preschool/Kindergarten-2 1/2 hours in the morning, 1 hour in the afternoon

Lower elementary-3 hours in the morning with a snack break, 2 hours in the afternoon

Upper elementary-3 hours in the morning with a snack break, 2 1/2 hours in the afternoons

Middle school-Middle school students will participate remotely through our OWL system and we expect their day to closely mirror the academic experiences occurring in the building with the same level of homework, tests and preparation. Parents will be asked to proctor their child's exams.