

Here are answers to questions asked during the [Oct 1 Elementary Curriculum Forum](#)

**Q: What is being left out of the curriculum and how can we, as parents, supplement and support the teachers?**

We have listed curricular goals for the year on our website. We will adapt those goals depending on the flow of our classroom instruction. To this end, we have established points to check-in with teachers. Teachers will regularly get together and discuss the pace and depth of our coverage. Our progress will be shared with the community as well. Our goal is to be both transparent and accurate.

As it relates to your children specifically, just as in past years, classroom teachers will continue to report out to parents and share each individual child's successes and areas for growth as well. This will be done formally through scheduled report cards and informally throughout the year, as needed.

Families can support their children and teachers as they always have. Please provide your child with a quiet space to organize their work. Allow time for them to engage with learning extensions.

These are the essential concepts and skills taught at each grade level in each content area.

- [ELA](#)
- [Math](#)
- [Science](#)
- [Social Studies](#)

It also helps for you to make sure that your child is prepared with their device fully charged and with zoom links ready to go for the day (this includes specials zoom links as well). Celebrate your child's work, and communicate with your child's teacher whenever you have questions.

**Q: What is the difference between Independent work and “homework” if they are both done at home?**

Independent work is designed to occur during school hours. More than practice...It represents an essential continuation of the school day with accountability that impacts learning that extends, reviews, and previews classroom instruction. For example, after a mini-lesson in writers' workshop, students might be asked to continue with the independent writing assignment at home - implementing the strategies and skills that were explicitly taught in the lesson. Teachers are designing independent work to focus on the connection to the learning, check for understanding of concepts and provide meaningful feedback to students. In addition to independent work, the teacher may ask

for extra practice on a skill or strategy by extending reading, working on computation and problem solving skills or individual goals.

The planning of these assignments is purposeful and teachers will continue to develop best practices as it relates to independent assignments.

**Q: What are the curriculum differences between Virtual and Hybrid Classrooms?**

Both follow the same grade level curriculum maps. In some cases Virtual and Hybrid classes use different tools and approaches to teach and assess learning, but content coverage is the same.

**Q: I have already noticed different activities in my friend's child's classroom and they are both in 2nd grade. If they are learning the same concepts, shouldn't they be doing the same things?**

In some cases, you will notice students in different classes on a grade level engaged in the same or similar activities. However, we encourage teachers to make adaptations that reflect the needs of their students while following the curricular maps. Just as we encourage student agency, we support teachers who are adapting instruction according to their students' needs.

We urge parents to avoid comparisons across classrooms and schools. Rather, if you are concerned with observed differences, we encourage you to directly ask teachers to help you understand the reasons for the differences. Principals and assistant principals can be resources if further clarification is needed.

**Q: What are teachers doing during the Wednesday planning blocks? And what are our children expected to do?**

Teachers are coordinating and planning instruction, attending training sessions, aligning curriculum, sharing materials, assessing, and reflecting on student work. While teachers are engaged in this work, the cohort scheduled to stay at home on that day will have an opportunity to participate in our Wednesday Enrichment Block (or what we're calling WEB).

[The website with the District WEB offerings is linked here](#)

During these WEBs, we look to connect both hybrid and virtual students from their home schools together through choice programming and events. While students will still receive independent work from their teachers, they will also have access to virtual assemblies, presentations, clubs, and asynchronous activities provided by the district and the school. While the cohort that stays home on a Wednesday will engage in this

programming, the other cohort will attend specials and plan to come to school during their regularly scheduled time like any other day. The district will send out and post the WEB district-wide offerings on the Monday before the Wednesday WEB block. Individual schools will communicate any school specific offerings that will be available at that time directly to their students.

**Q: What assessments and metrics are we using to measure success?**

We will be using familiar modes of formal and informal assessment just as in past years.

Formal assessments include Star Reading and Math assessments, Fountas & Pinnell reading assessments, and IXL for mathematics.

Informal Teachers College quick assessments including evaluating for volume and stamina in reading and writing may also be used.

We will be looking at the growth of social-emotional wellness and essential dispositions such as self regulation, tenacity, creativity, and cooperation.

As we move forward we are learning and incorporating new methods of assessment that are currently emerging in response to new needs brought to us by COVID.

**Q: Do we need to attend special area teachers' classes online?**

The specials are rich complements to the core curriculum. In fact, they often work hand-in-hand with the classroom teachers' instruction - expanding students' use of language and conceptual understandings. It is, in effect, a supplement where students can apply and deepen the very skills they are learning in the core program.

It is our expectation that students attend specials. I hear from parents that circumstances may not always allow attendance at times, that's why we have absences in even regular school. We would not recommend forgoing specials in favor of other forms of supplemental instruction, which are separate from the school. That could further throw the curricular experience for the child out of balance.

**What's the point of the 15-minute Zoom on Wednesday? Can you get rid of the 15-minute Zoom?**

This Zoom is intended as an opportunity for teachers to connect with the students. We include it because in the district and around the country, last spring, many teachers, students, and parents reported the benefits of checking in when they were not in the physical school.

This 15-minute check-in illustrates how the committees that came together in the summer - teachers, parents, and administrators - considered the feedback from all

concerned in the spring. We may find we need to adapt it further and will be looking for feedback. We first need to give it an opportunity to be tried.