



# HOPKINTON

## PUBLIC SCHOOLS

### Distance Learning Guidelines for Students and Families

The transition from “brick and mortar” to remote learning represents a dramatic change in the way that we educate our students. Likewise, it represents a significant shift in the way that families will approach and support their children’s learning experience. Parents and guardians are now in the unique position of overseeing the instructional day...this brings its own set of dynamics that families will need to navigate. To support families as we enter this next phase of remote learning, we have provided six detailed suggestions, followed by bulleted summaries for parents/guardians and for students.

1. **Health and wellness are at the forefront of our priorities.** Please be aware of your child’s worries. Children will view this situation from their own unique perspectives. Some will handle the change with ease, some will struggle to acclimate, and many children will experience a range of emotions. Because the same is true for adults, it is important for parents to do their best to prevent their own concerns from impacting their children. When children see adults responding to situations in a calm and reasonable manner, they will be more likely to follow suit. Our school counselors are available if families believe that additional support or advice would be of help.
2. **When preparing for academics at home, routines will become important.** For many children, school represents their structured environment and home is often a more relaxed setting. We are entering a period where the two will become intertwined. Setting a fixed “school spot” in your home will help students differentiate between the place where they relax and watch movies, and the place where they will sit and focus on learning. If your child already has a spot where homework is successfully completed, capitalize on the familiar. There is no need to recreate the wheel! Each of our schools has created a schedule of sorts; there will be some predetermined times when students will need to be available to work online with their teachers. Outside of that, it is recommended that students and families set expected work times to help contribute to a new home-school routine. Children will benefit from having work time and/or a workplace that separates siblings.
3. **Please take note of communications from your children’s teachers.** All teachers and service providers will be connecting personally with their students each week. They will be using a variety of tools to facilitate this communication, including (but not limited to) email, Google Classroom, SeeSaw, Zoom, Google Meet, etc. Each teacher will be explicit in his or her communication plans with students; obviously there will be more communication to families of younger students who may require assistance with signing on and accessing some of the tools than there will be for our older students who are already proficient with many of these tools.
4. **Likewise, please be mindful that students at all ages need to own their learning.** While it may be tempting to peek in on a Zoom session or class chat, please allow students and teachers to maintain the integrity of the learning experience that belongs uniquely to teachers and their students. Unless your child requests your help with a technology issue, please allow the “synchronous” learning

experiences (when teachers are talking and working directly with students through the computer) to remain exclusively between teachers and students. **Students and parents should not save, record, share, or post this session or any photos from this session.** Similarly, children should be doing their assigned work independently. Assignments have been created by your children's teachers to be accessible, and support staff are available to assist as well. If you discover that your child is in need of significant help, please reach out to your child's teacher.

5. **Ensure that each day has some time set aside for check-ins.** These can be very informal. Just as families tend to do on typical school days, please feel free to ask your child (after school) to tell you about something that happened or something they enjoyed during their learning time. Does your child need any specific materials or resources that you can help them acquire? Are there activities or learning tasks that require family involvement, or that your child could use some assistance with? Students of all ages and at all grade levels are suddenly finding themselves without the conversation, processing, and check-ins that occur authentically throughout the school day. Parents cannot replicate a full day's academic and social experiences, but simple check-ins help your children feel connected, and will help you get a feel for any challenges they may be having.
6. **Children of all ages (and adults) need to move!** Please encourage movement between academic activities or student learning sessions with teachers. Students are used to walking the halls of large buildings with multiple floors between classes and throughout their school day. Wellness, movement, and mindfulness are incorporated into all academic areas and within the culture of the Hopkinton Public Schools. Parents and students should take advantage of the flexibility afforded within the remote learning schedule and incorporate ample opportunities for movement, exercise, and your preferred means of resetting and recharging.

#### **Student Responsibilities**

- Identify a "school spot" where you will be able to concentrate, work independently, and access virtual class meetings free of distractions
- Follow the daily schedule that your teacher(s) have provided
- Attend the virtual class sessions as scheduled by your teachers (they will be taking attendance)
- Give your best effort and participate in the class sessions
- Dress for the online sessions as you would for a typical school day
- Be patient in your new learning environment
- Complete and submit all assignments as directed by your teachers
- Adhere to the Hopkinton Acceptable Use Policy, including the online behavior expectations and rules shared by your teachers; all school rules are still in effect
- Communicate with your teacher and/or an adult at home if you need help
- Do not save, audio record, video record, take pictures/screenshots, share or post any portion of an online class

#### **Parent/Guardian Responsibilities**

- Remain mindful of your child's worries
- Establish routines and expectations
- Help your child identify his or her "school spot"
- Be mindful of communications from your children's teachers or other school staff
- Help your child organize his or her time so all daily class requirements are met; communicate challenges or questions regarding school work to your child's teacher (for the most part, older students should do this on their own)
- Ensure that your child is aware of his or her online class schedule, and that he or she is signing in to

all virtual “real-time” classes

- Leave the learning time to the student and teachers when virtual classes are being held, and encourage independence as your child completes his or her work
- Do not save, audio record, video record, take pictures/screenshots, share or post any portion of an online class
- Set aside time for daily check-ins with your child
- Ensure that your child has the materials necessary for learning
- Maintain an awareness of your child’s technology tools and online activity; assist your child if technology issues have become a barrier to accessing learning
- Reach out directly to school staff (your child’s teacher, service provider, principal, etc. if you have questions or concerns
- Encourage physical activity and/or exercise