



RIVER VALLEY SCHOOL
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RIVER VALLEY SCHOOL

2020-21 Learning-at-Home Guidelines

Scenario 1: In-School Learning

Classes resume, near-normal operations with health measures

Implementation of this School Re-Entry Plan is subject to change based on direction from the Chief Medical Officer of Health. It is based on the best available information and conditions related to the COVID-19 pandemic. This plan will evolve and be adjusted when information becomes available as the status of the COVID-19 pandemic changes.

September 16, 2020



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Dear River Valley School Parents and Guardians,

During this highly unusual time, we understand that, for a variety of reasons, some families will need to keep their children home. Some students will also be required to remain home during the pandemic due to their own health or that of a loved one. For these reasons, we are happy to put forth a plan that will support our learning-at-home students, in order to ensure their learning continues, no matter their situation.

All programming in Scenario 1 is being planned, as usual, using the model of synchronous learning. Simply stated synchronous learning will have students in school and at home engaging in learning at the same time, just from different places. The synchronous learning will be coordinated through the use of the daily homeroom timetable allowing for home learners to be in real time with their peers for instruction and work time via Zoom, and supported through the use of Seesaw and Google Classroom (in Grade 6 only). Student work will also be submitted and assessed using those platforms. Although this option will look different than it did during Scenario 3, when we were all working from home, there are many aspects that will be familiar.

This document outlines what learning-at-home will look like for students, during Scenario 1 (in-class learning with enhanced health and safety measures). As this scenario is new to us, it will require some time to finetune this option to meet the needs of our individual learners. The commitment on the part of our parents to assist learners with transitions between classes and, at times, navigating the use of technology is equally essential during this time. We thank our community members for working with us through this turbulent time, and for your patience as we learn together. We look forward to seeing you again soon.

Warm regards,

Carolyn Breland
Head of School



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Contents

Learning-at-Home

- Courses and Subjects
- Specialist Subjects
- Arrowsmith Program
- Supporting Remote Learning While Self-Isolating or Ill

School Operations

- Parent - Teacher Communication
- Postponed Events
- Recess and Daily Physical Activity (DPA)
- Student Co-curricular Clubs
- Field Trips
- School Uniform
- School Technology

Health Measures

- Testing and Demonstrating Clearance to Return
- Mental Health



Learning-at-Home

- Unlike in the spring when all students were in Scenario 3 (learning and working at home), our return to school will be in Scenario 1 (in-class learning with enhanced health and safety measures), using the model of synchronous learning. Simply stated synchronous learning will have students in school and at home engaging in learning at the same time, just from different places.
- The synchronous learning will be coordinated through the use of the daily homeroom timetable allowing for home learners to be in real time with their peers for instruction and work time via Zoom. (It should be noted that although homeroom teachers will follow the daily timetable to facilitate instruction in the subject areas, there may be times when the agenda may need to be slightly altered due to student needs and interests in particular areas as they engage in their learning.)
- There will be occasions when students at school will be involved in hands-on learning such as science experiments or working with manipulatives in math. The home learning students may receive what is needed beforehand from their teacher on an as needed basis where possible, or may just partake in these lessons through observation.
- It is important to bear in mind that flexibility will be needed as we navigate synchronous learning for our students at school and in the home environment in order to be responsive to the needs of our learners.
- While students learning-at-home will be following our daily timetable, it remains important that families create a schedule that includes breaks, playtime, lunchtime, free-reading and some stretching too. Any of our homeroom teachers will be able to provide you with some suggestions.
- Encourage a calm environment for working, studying and reading, preferably with some time in an ergonomic chair to protect developing bodies, but maintain flexibility. It is not uncommon at school for students to do their best work while laying on the floor or cuddled up in a comfortable chair.
- Provide support, as needed, with technology and materials. It is realistic that elementary school students may need the help of an adult logging onto SeeSaw or Zoom, or gathering much needed materials, but the actual completion of tasks should be up to them.
- Leave the work to your child, and let them submit whatever they have accomplished. It is imperative to our assessment process and student progress that our teachers see the wonderful successes of our students and also their mistakes and challenges. If our teachers don't see the areas for growth they will not be able to help students in achieving their personal best.
- The synchronous learning means that students who are finding work challenging may take more time to accomplish the tasks. It is important that if a student is struggling with a task, that a family reach out to the teacher or instructional assistant for support and



further explanation. On the other hand, some students may find the work to be very simple and may accomplish tasks quickly and easily. A check in with the teacher or instructional assistant is still recommended as work done quickly is not always done well. In cases where a student accurately completes work early, free-reading, review and breaks are always appropriate.

- Individual supply kits will be available for pick-up at the school for students learning-from-home. The coordination of this pick-up will happen through the homeroom teacher.
- Continue to provide your child with lots of love and support. They need you now more than ever to be their calming touchstone.

Courses and Subjects

- Unlike during Scenario 3 when we were all working from home and flexibility was paramount, students learning-at-home during Scenario 1 will be required to meet all the outcomes in the Programs of Study.
- Everyday will begin with a 10 minute homeroom block. Students learning-at-home are encouraged to Zoom-in during this time. Daily attendance will be taken, as usual, during homeroom, for students present in class and learning-at-home.
- Parents should be aware that homeroom time often looks quite chaotic; however, the free-flow of settling-in time is important to the sense of community of the classroom. We encourage families to allow their child to engage in this social development time.
- All students will be following the daily timetable of their homeroom class. Teachers will give consideration in their daily planning to encourage activities that lend themselves to physical distancing in the classroom and to working independently at home.
- All courses and subject areas will continue, including specialists.
- Some learning-at-home will occur based on teacher directions while other times it will be based on activities posted on Seesaw.
- Each class block will begin with a teacher-led instruction to frame the time period. Learning-at-home students will engage via Zoom during this time. Time will then be given 'off-line' for students to work on their assignments.
- Work time will look different, depending on the day, the subject, the class and the teacher, however, teachers and IAs will continue to be available to students.
- While we discourage students from working on the computer for the entire day, during work periods, we believe Zoom should be kept on with mute activated and with the screen off, preferably in the same room. This will allow students to hear what is happening in the classroom, and facilitate their participation at times when it is encouraged and/or needed. Complete instructions of what this will look like will be given by the homeroom teacher.
- Classroom iPads may be muted and the screen turned off during times of quiet work and/or, when needed, to ensure student privacy.



- Learning-at-home students will return to Zoom at the end of each class to wrap up their lesson and participate in the transition to the next block.
- Services provided by our Learning Support Team, including resource, enrichment, speech pathology and occupational therapy will continue, as necessary, via Zoom.

Specialist Subjects

- Pre-JK to Grade 6 students will continue to attend specialist classes with their specialist teachers (pre - JK: Music, French and PE; K - grade 6: Music, French, PE, OE, Art, and Drama). An effort will be made to include learning-at-home students in all specialist activities. This may require the pick-up of certain supplies from the school, and/or, ordering of personal supplies from an outside supplier (if a family so chooses). Teachers will be in touch regarding supplies required.
- All classes will continue to use the library once per week. Learning-at-home students in Pre-JK to grade 2 will be included in story-time with our Librarian via Zoom. Book lending can be discussed with our Librarian.
- The school's zSpace augmented reality lab will unfortunately not be available for learning-at-home students, during this time.

Arrowsmith Program

- The Arrowsmith learning-at-home option has continued.
- Students enrolled in Arrowsmith will be supported while learning-at-home.
- Arrowsmith teachers will be in touch with individual families to speak about this program.

Supporting Remote Learning While Self-Isolating or Ill

- If a student is ill, **the priority is rest and recovery**. Ailing students will not be expected to access classes or complete assignments during their recovery period.
- If a student is self-isolating but feeling well enough to complete daily schoolwork, classes will be accessible to the student live via Zoom, and lesson materials and assignments will be available via Seesaw (or Google Classroom in Grade 6).
- **In order to access the program, please provide your child's homeroom teacher with 24-hour notice**. This will allow homeroom and specialist teachers time to ensure everything is ready for your child to successfully participate in the program.

School Operations

Parent - Teacher Communication



- Our Meet-the-Teacher event on Thursday, August 27 will be facilitated via Zoom, or in-person. If you wish to attend this event in-person, please contact your child's homeroom teacher to make arrangements to come to the school during a less busy time. We will do our best to accommodate your family's schedule.
- Our first round of Progress Meetings (October 22-23) will be facilitated via Zoom.
- In lieu of in-person meetings with teachers and/or administrators before and after school hours, families may schedule Zoom meetings. Teachers and administrators will also remain available via email or phone.

Postponed Events

- Large gatherings and school assemblies will be postponed until further notice. In lieu of these events, the school will be offering virtual alternatives. Students learning-at-home will be able to participate in these events via Zoom.

Recess and Daily Physical Activity (DPA)

- Recess and DPA continue to be valuable exercises for students learning-at-home. We encourage all families working at home to support healthy break times, time outside, and definitely time away from the computer.

Student Co-curricular Clubs

- For the time-being, learning-at-home students will not be supported in participating in co-curricular activities. We strongly suggest that students use the lunch hour to take a break away from the computer and engage in free-play and creative activities

Field Trips

- Walking field trips within 5 kilometres of the school building will be permitted; however, we understand participation will not be feasible for our learning-at-home students. Teachers will give suggestions that families can try out from home.

School Uniform

- Given our learning-at-home students will be Zooming in with their class throughout the day, we kindly request that they continue to wear their school uniform throughout the school day.

School Technology

- Each Grade 1-6 student will be assigned a school iPad to use for the year. This will eliminate the need to share iPads between students. Students learning-at-home who require a school iPad will have the ability to pick one up for use at home.

Health Measures

As the health and safety of our entire community remains our top priority, care and consideration have been given to include all community members in our general *2020-21 Re-entry Guidelines, Scenario 1: In-School Learning*. We request that all families familiarize themselves with these guidelines before the return to school, as adherence to them will aid in reducing risk for all of us.

Testing and Demonstrating Clearance to Return

- Families are welcome to rejoin our in-person learning at any time that they feel healthy and safe enough to do so. However, families who are opting for this program as a longer term option should let us know by August 24, 2020 by emailing admissions@rivervalleyschool.ca
- One of the essential strategies to support the health and well-being of all members of the River Valley School community is testing. Should anyone answer “YES” to any of the daily screening questions, they are prohibited from entering the school. Students and staff must stay at home if they are exhibiting any symptom related to COVID-19.
- Please use the [COVID-19 Self-Assessment tool](#) to determine whether your child needs to be tested for COVID-19. If they are tested and cleared to return, please demonstrate evidence of the negative test to the school. The school will not keep a copy of the results but will know that it is safe for the student to return.
- Should a student be required to stay home, for personal or family reasons, as long as they are healthy enough to do so, they may opt to exercise the learning-at-home option.

Mental Health

- If anything, COVID-19 has taught us a lot about who we are. Determination, kindness, understanding, as well as humility are a few things that come to mind. Together, we have experienced bumps along the way and as we have adapted to new circumstances, we have learned so much. As a school, we are proud of the resiliency we have shown during these uncertain times, and hopeful as we continue our journey together towards improved mental health outcomes for all.



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- The return to near normal, in-person and learning-at-home in Scenario 1, will have important mental health benefits as well as challenges for students and staff alike.
- We will continue to focus on positive mental health practices and support of staff, students and parents, throughout the 2020-21 school year.
- If your child is struggling with learning-at-home, please let your child's teacher and/or an administrator know as soon as possible.
- If you and/or one of your family members are struggling at this time, you may find the following mental health resources helpful:
 - Mental Health and Addiction COVID-19 Community Funding Grant
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 - Mental Health Helpline: Phone - **1-877-303-2642**
 - This toll-free helpline provides confidential and anonymous services, crisis intervention, information about mental health services and referrals to other agencies.
 - Kids Help Phone: 1-800-668-6868
 - kidshelpphone.ca
 - Text CONNECT to 686868
 - Health Link - Phone 8-1-1
 - Alberta Health Services
 - [Help in Tough Times](#)
 - [Healthy Together](#)
 - [Métis Nation of Alberta COVID-19 Mental Health Information](#)
 - [Social-Emotional Learning](#)
 - [Trauma-informed practice](#)
 - [Working Together to Support Mental Health in Alberta Schools](#)
 - [Heart of Recovery](#)
 - [Alberta Community and Social Services - Children's Mental Health](#)