



**St. Thomas the Apostle School
Virtual Learning Plan
2019-2020**

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OVERVIEW

What is Virtual Learning?

Virtual learning, also referred to as digital learning or e-learning, is using technology for teaching and learning outside of the traditional classroom setting. It enables learning to take place anytime and anywhere, and does not require the instructor and the student(s) to be together. Virtual learning can be self-directed or guided by a facilitator and can take many different forms. These experiences may include:

- Video lessons and podcasts, self-generated by the teacher or generally available through resources such as Khan Academy, YouTube, and TED Talks
- Assignments utilizing online textbook access or open education resources, like CK-12
- Discussion boards and other interactive forums
- Other activities available through third-party web applications such as IXL, Quizlet and Edpuzzle
- Remote conferencing via video/audio through services such as Google Meet or Zoom.

When will students participate in Virtual Learning Days?

Students will participate in Virtual Learning Days when it is deemed necessary by school administration. For the most part, this will be during extended school closures due to such matters as inclement weather and emergency situations.

How will students and parents be notified if a Virtual Learning Day will be used in the event of an emergency school closing?

Parents will be notified by our school emergency notification system which includes a phone call as well as an email. Virtual Learning Days will only be utilized in the event of a long term emergency closure.

How will attendance be taken on Virtual Learning Days?

The students will be obligated to check in with their teachers via Google Classroom as well as completion of assignments.

In the event of an absence, a student is still responsible for completing the day's assignments.

What are the expected methods of communication between teachers and students on Virtual Learning Days?

Teachers and students are to follow the school's policy regarding communication which is as follows: *The school-sanctioned email address is the only authorized means of private communication between a student and a teacher.* Teachers and students may communicate in public forums such as discussion boards/blogs and G Suite for Education.

What are the recommended methods of communication between/among students if a collaborative assignment is given?

If a collaborative activity is assigned, students are encouraged to communicate with one another via G Suite for Education.

What is the value of Virtual Learning Days?

An experience of learning that is more self-directed with flexibility regarding the time and pace of study and assignment completion, will give our students another opportunity to hone their organization and time management skills.

Additionally, tools such as discussion boards for interaction and communication within a group, with individuals at various locations, are being used more frequently in education at all levels. Virtual Learning Days that incorporate this method of communication will also provide students the opportunity to fine tune their expertise to provide meaningful contributions in this type of forum.

THE VIRTUAL LEARNING EXPERIENCE

What will a Virtual Learning Day look like for students?

Combination of Virtual and assignments

PreK and K: 1 hour instruction and additional 1-2 hours with the teacher

Grades 1 and 2: 2 hours of instruction and an additional 2 hours comprised of classwork and homework assignments

Grades 3 through 8: 3 hours of instruction and an additional 3 hours comprised of classwork and homework assignments

Each teacher will post information about their virtual lessons on a designated section of their course website and Google Classroom. Teachers have been asked to provide students with comprehensive instructions for each virtual lesson on a single page of their class website(s) as well as Google Classroom.

Lessons will be approximately 30 minutes in length for each class each day, including time to complete any work that the students are assigned. In instances of extended school closings, teachers may opt to post a one-hour lesson to be completed over the course of two days. Each lesson will be accompanied with some form of formative assessment, which the teacher may count as a grade. Upon returning to school, teachers may also assess students on material learned during the Virtual Learning Days.

Students are expected to log in every Virtual Learning Day.

What will assessments/assignments be like on Virtual Learning Days?

Assessments/assignments may take many forms such as electronic tests, quizzes, surveys and polls, essays, Flipgrid, , *meaningful contributions* to Google Education Suite, and to name a few. Each teacher will provide information regarding the grading for each assessment. For example, will the assignment count as classwork, a quiz, or a test. When appropriate, teachers will provide a rubric to accompany a specific assignment.

Teachers will also provide a due date for each assignment. Many assignments will be due on the same day it is assigned. Some assignments will have a special identified due date. *It is the responsibility of each student to meet coursework deadlines as established by the teacher.*

When will Virtual Learning Day assignments be communicated?

In circumstances in which a Virtual Learning Day is deemed necessary ahead of time, teachers are asked to have their lessons posted by midnight the day before.

How often does a student need to log in on Virtual Learning Days?

Students are expected to log in **every** Virtual Learning Day. This action is necessary for students to connect with his/her teacher each day. Teachers will be communicating with students in many ways, not just sharing assignments. Students are responsible for receiving that communication from their teacher.

What if a student has questions or needs assistance during a Virtual Learning Day?

If a student has a question regarding a virtual lesson or assignment, the student/parent should contact the teacher via email. Teachers will be asked to check their email on a regular basis throughout the day in case student issues arise with attendance and or technology.

Will accommodations be made for students with learning needs and/or an ISP?

In order for teachers to continue their work in helping a student meet their academic goals for the year, teachers will make appropriate modifications to virtual lessons for specific students as needed. Compensatory Education teachers will remain in touch with their students and will be provided access to the Google Classroom to continue in class support.

TECH SUPPORT ---

What if a student has a problem with their Chromebook, or technology in general during Virtual Learning Days?

If a student is unable to access the Internet due to lack of connectivity, electrical failure or other extenuating circumstances, the parent will need to notify the teacher and an extension on assignments will be granted.

What if a student is having difficulty accessing their online textbook(s)?

If a student is having difficulty accessing their online textbook(s), contact the teacher first to verify that he/she is using the proper information regarding website address, username, and password.

Do Virtual Learning Days count as school days?

Yes. So long as Virtual Learning Days are conducted in accordance with Diocesan standards, Virtual Learning Days count toward the total number of school days and do not need to be “made up” throughout the year or at the end of the school year.

How does the Student/Parent Handbook apply to Virtual Learning Days?

The Student/Parent Handbook applies to all school days, including Virtual Learning Days. There is one policy exception on a Virtual Learning Day. Students do not need to be in school uniform when working from home or a remote location! Please be reminded that all other policies apply including: Academic Integrity Policy, Mutual Respect Policy, Electronic/Computer Use Policy and Chromebook Policy.