



HPEDSB Virtual School

Guidelines for Remote Instruction and Learning for Parents and Students

It is our intention to provide an engaging and effective remote learning environment and experience for all students. The following guidelines will help us to work effectively together with parents and students to achieve this goal. We are all aware that this type of learning is new for most students and staff, so adjustments to our guidelines and plans will be required.

Definitions of “Remote”, “Synchronous”, and “Asynchronous” Learning

Remote learning: *Learning that occurs when classes are taught at a distance and when students and educators are not in a conventional classroom setting. Classes can be synchronous or asynchronous and can be taught online through a Learning Management System (LMS) or by using videoconferencing tools. In some cases, they may be delivered through emails, print materials, broadcast media, or telephone calls.*

Synchronous learning: *Learning that happens in real time. Synchronous learning involves using text, video, or voice communication in a way that enables educators and other members of the school- or board-based team to instruct and connect with students in real time. Synchronous learning supports the well-being and academic achievement of all students, including students with special education needs, by providing educators and students with an interactive and engaging way to learn. It helps teachers provide immediate feedback to students and enables students to interact with one another.*

Asynchronous learning: *Learning that is not delivered in real time. Asynchronous learning may involve students watching pre-recorded video lessons, completing assigned tasks, or contributing to online discussion boards.*

Engaging Students During Remote Learning

At the beginning of the school year, students and parents will be provided with a daily schedule or timetable that includes 300 minutes of learning opportunities, with a combination of synchronous and asynchronous learning activities. Programming will be based on the full Ontario curriculum and will include opportunities for guided instruction, large- and small-group learning, check-ins, and independent work. Teachers will be available to students during the school day as scheduled.

Synchronous Learning

The schedule or timetable that is provided to parents and students will have synchronous (live, real-time) learning sessions. Students are expected to attend and actively participate in all scheduled synchronous learning. In special circumstances, if a student is unable to attend a session, alternative learning activities may be afforded to students on an individual basis.

Guidelines for Synchronous Learning Activities

Grade Level of Students	Daily Minimum Synchronous Learning Time	Daily Asynchronous Learning Time
Kindergarten	180 minutes	120 minutes
Grades 1 to 8	225 minutes	75 minutes
Grades 9 to 12	240 minutes for each 300-minute class period	60 minutes

The synchronous learning time requirements outlined in the table above may be divided into shorter periods throughout the school day. For example, a child in Kindergarten may participate in an opening exercise for 10 minutes with their whole class, as well as a combination of whole-group and small-group sessions throughout the school day, and a 10-minute closing exercise with their class at the end of the school day.

Synchronous learning will be provided for large and small groups of students each day in a manner similar to in-person classroom teaching. Synchronous learning time may include students working independently and in small groups while engaged in a virtual classroom with the teacher overseeing their learning, providing feedback and available for questions.

Additional group meetings may take place between educators and students as needed to address specific learning needs.

Asynchronous Learning

There will be periods of time set aside during the school day for students to complete learning activities on their own. Completing these tasks will be important for students to gain knowledge or experience that will prepare them for synchronous sessions. All students are expected to participate fully and to complete all assigned asynchronous learning tasks.

Communicating with Educators and the School

We want to hear from you! Since we are a virtual school and operate from a variety of locations, your son or daughter's teacher will provide you with information about how to connect with them electronically. You can also call the school at 613 966 1170 x 62120 or email us: virtualschool@hpedsb.on.ca

We will work with parents to provide technical support to access the Learning Management System (LMS) and for the use of board-provided devices and access to the Internet during remote learning.

If students and parents are having trouble accessing the learning materials, they should seek support through their teacher who will help to find the right support.



Differentiated Assessment and Instruction

As part of a comprehensive assessment plan, teachers will provide daily opportunities for each student to receive meaningful feedback through assessment for, as, and of learning (including diagnostic, formative, and summative assessment). In addition, teachers will provide differentiated support to all students, including English Language Learners, and students with special education needs who have an Individual Education Plan (IEP).

Supporting Students with Special Education Needs

Educators will provide learning opportunities for students with special education needs, based on their individual strengths and needs, and provide differentiated support and instruction. This may include more than the minimally required synchronous learning time described earlier as well as accommodations, modified expectations, and alternative programming as detailed in their IEPs. If it is not possible to meet a student's needs through synchronous learning, educators and families will work together to find solutions.

Students will be provided continued access to assistive technology, including Special Equipment Amount (SEA) equipment, where possible, to support students with special education needs as they participate in remote learning. In situations where access to assistive technology is not feasible, educators will work with students and parents to determine workable solutions on an individual basis.

Student Attendance

Student attendance will be taken daily. Parents are asked to call or email the school to report any absences in advance. Maintaining an open communication with the teacher is important so we can mitigate the impact of absences from synchronous learning sessions.

Access to Remote Learning Devices

The school will work collaboratively with parents to support students who are unable access to remote learning devices and the Internet during remote learning.

As a school board, we have a successful partnership with Staples to access special pricing for Chromebooks for HPEDSB students. We encourage parents to take advantage of this partnership. You can find details of this program [here](#).

In situations where students do not have access to remote learning devices or the Internet, and equipment is not available, the school administrators will work collaboratively with educators, students and parents to establish alternative arrangements on an individual basis.

Cyber Security, Privacy, and Online Safety

Ensuring the protection of privacy and the cyber security of educators, students, and parents is paramount to supporting a safe and inclusive learning environment for remote learning. All students are expected to follow

school board-established procedures related to online safety, privacy, and cyber security. Educators will review these procedures with students regularly.

Process for Exemption from Synchronous Learning

Exemption from synchronous learning may be requested, in writing, by parents or by students who are 18 years of age or older, and students who are 16 or 17 years of age but have withdrawn from parental control.

Exempted students will be provided with a daily schedule or timetable in accordance with the 300-minute instructional day.