

# North Arlington Public School District

## Parents' Guide to Virtual Learning

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# Getting Started

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## Opening Days At A Glance:

During the first weeks of the school year, teachers will be building online learning communities with students. In order to do this successfully, they will spend time getting to know students as learners and as individuals. While this is much like the typical start of the school year, there will be some significant differences as they develop classroom environments virtually. As teachers spend time fostering positive relationships, they will also provide live instruction (synchronous) and independent instruction (asynchronous) on a daily basis. This type of learning will include a series of different types of assessments and activities to identify potential learning gaps. Opportunities for live video interaction will be available to all students via Google Meets, as we recognize both the academic and social emotional importance of teacher-to-student and student-to-student interaction. The details of how this will be accomplished are outlined throughout this guiding document.

## Attendance:

Daily attendance will be taken and recorded in Realtime. We kindly ask that you or your child, depending on age-appropriateness, verify their attendance each morning before 9:00 a.m. In accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:32-8.3, the school day will consist of a full four hours with instruction taking place via Google Meets. While attendance policies will continue to be enforced, modifications are in place to adapt to asynchronous and synchronous learning. As you will find in our guide to netiquette below, student attendance and timeliness are essential parts of creating a positive learning environment. Any ongoing difficulties with live attendance will be addressed by the guidance department and building-level administration. Please be assured that there are collaborative practices in place to work with families and their unique schedules.

## Netiquette:

It's very important that students engage in remote learning in a respectful manner. Positive online practices, also known as *netiquette rules*, are essential to creating a remote learning environment that will benefit all students. The primary components of netiquette include politeness, timeliness, digital citizenship and presentation. We want to make sure everyone is interactive, comfortable and productive; therefore, we encourage students to turn their cameras on during live instruction.

While school uniforms will not be required, it is important for students to be dressed appropriately during their synchronous live lessons. For more information about netiquette, click this link:

[Netiquette for Students and Parents](#)

## **Creating a Space for Learning:**

The virtual learning day will consist of both live direct instruction (synchronous) and independent learning (asynchronous). In order to get the most out of this flexible learning schedule, it is recommended that you try to establish a learning space for your child. This does not have to be a large space but should be as quiet and organized as possible to provide students with access to the internet, their devices and any additional materials requested by their teachers. During live instruction, we encourage parents to allow students to engage with teachers independently. While the partnerships between teachers and parents are essential, it is important that students develop routines independently once they become acclimated to their remote learning environments.

Here are some other tips to encourage successful remote learning environments at home: [Remote Tips for Parents](#).

## **Extracurricular Activities:**

All extracurricular activities will be taking place virtually through Phase 1. Please check your child(ren)'s school handbook(s) for more details about remote extracurricular offerings. Assigned staff members will be promoting these opportunities to our children during the first few weeks of school.

# Students' Schedules

## Remote Learning Schedules:

Please review your child(ren)'s remote learning schedule(s) in order to prepare for the upcoming weeks.

**Please note:** The first week of school (9/8/20, 9/9/20, 9/10/20 & 9/11/20) will be single-sessions from 8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. **K-12 Scheduled Small Group Instruction will begin on Monday (9/14/20)**

<b>Virtual Schedule Grade PreK AM</b> Monday-Friday: 8:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. (Google Meet)	<b>Virtual Schedule Grade PreK PM</b> Monday-Friday: 12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. (Google Meet)
<b>Virtual Schedule Grades K-5</b>  Monday: 8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. (Google Meet) /LUNCH/ 1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. (Small Group Instruction) Tuesday: 8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. (Google Meet) /LUNCH/ 1:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. (Small Group Instruction) Wednesday: 8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. (Google Meet) /LUNCH/ 1:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. (Small Group Instruction) Thursday: 8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. (Google Meet) /LUNCH/ 1:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. (Small Group Instruction) Friday: 8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. (Google Meet) /LUNCH/ Teacher-Parent Conferences	
<b>Virtual Schedule Grades 6-12</b>  Monday: 7:50 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. (Google Meet) /LUNCH/1:00 p.m. – 2:15 p.m. (Small Group Instruction) Tuesday: 7:50 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. (Google Meet) /LUNCH/1:00 p.m. – 2:45 p.m. (Small Group Instruction) Wednesday: 7:50 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. (Google Meet) /LUNCH/1:00 p.m. – 2:45 p.m. (Small Group Instruction) Thursday: 7:50 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. (Google Meet) /LUNCH/1:00 p.m. – 2:45 p.m. (Small Group Instruction) Friday: 7:50 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. (Google Meet) /LUNCH/Teacher-Parent Conferences	

\*If you have any questions about the schedule, please contact your child(ren)'s building principal(s) if you have not already done so.

## The Virtual Learning Day:

**Morning Sessions:** Students will follow a traditional four hour school day schedule, which will include 30 minute periods. Each period will consist of two-way communication through Google Meet. While teachers will remain available in Google Meet to work with students for

the full duration of each period, independent learning activities will also take place after live instruction is delivered.

**LUNCH:** “Grab and Go” lunches will be available at North Arlington High School.

**Afternoon Sessions:** While taking into account students’ mental wellness, overall screen time, and need for small group instruction, teachers will schedule all students for afternoon small group instruction, as needed Monday through Thursday. This will allow teachers to focus on students who may be struggling with concepts taught earlier in the day, while also giving other students an opportunity to work independently and advance their learning.

## Digital Platforms & Tools for Virtual Learning

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### Pre-K Digital Learning Platform:

Students in Pre-K will utilize **ClassDojo** and **Google Meet** on a daily basis in order to communicate with teachers, engage in virtual lessons and receive assignments. ClassDojo is a school communication platform that teachers will use every day to share what's being learned in the classroom through photos, videos, and messages. For more information about ClassDojo, please click this link: [ClassDojo for Parents](#). Google Meet is a Google App that allows teachers to interact directly with students via a video chat. For more information about Google Meet, please click this link: [Features of Google Meet for Parents](#)

### K-12 Digital Learning Platform:

Students in grades K-12 will utilize **Google Classroom** and **Google Meet** on a daily basis in order to communicate with teachers, engage in virtual learning activities and receive assignments. Google Classroom invitations will be sent directly to students’ email addresses and must be accepted in order for students to participate in the classroom. For more information about Google Classroom, please click this link: [How to Use Google Classroom for Parents](#)

Once a student has joined a class, parents will receive a **Google Guardian** invitation sent by teachers directly to the email address indicated in Realtime SIS. Accepting this invitation will allow

all parents to receive regular updates directly to their emails regarding students' progress, upcoming assignments, lesson topics and any missing work. For more information about Google Guardian, please click this link: [Parent Guide to Google Guardian](#)

## Other Digital Tools for Online Learning:

- ❑ Elementary Reading and Writing: BrainPop, LinkIt!, Raz Kids, & T.C. Virtual
- ❑ Elementary Mathematics: BrainPop, IXL, LinkIt! & Reflex Math
- ❑ Middle School ELA: LinkIt!, StudySync & Turnitin
- ❑ Middle School Math: GoMath, IXL & LinkIt!
- ❑ High School ELA: Collegeboard, Khan Academy, LinkIt!, StudySync & Turnitin
- ❑ High School Math: Collegeboard, Khan Academy, EnVision, IXL & LinkIt!

# Expectations During Virtual Learning

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## Delivery of Instruction:

Throughout the course of virtual learning, teachers will blend whole group mini-lessons, small group instruction, independent practice and one-to-one supports in order to deliver effective instruction to all types of learners. This is not unlike the practices of a traditional in-person classroom. Differentiated instruction will continue to be at the heart of all learning goals set by teachers and support staff but will be delivered remotely. Students will receive daily live lessons via Google Meets in addition to the most appropriate instructional practices for that particular area of study and age group. It is vital for parents and students to understand that, as we are all unique learners, our teachers have various styles of delivering instruction, engaging students, and fostering positive learning environments. While every instructor will be utilizing the same curricular guides, New Jersey Student Learning Standards (NJSLS), and approved digital platforms, individual teachers may use a variety of approaches to suit the needs of their students. It's important to remember that no two classes will be identical, and there will be variations in instructional approaches from one teacher to another. That is the beauty of teaching. It's an art!

## Types of Lessons:

During daily **Google Meet live lessons**, teachers will be providing students with synchronous direct instruction. These live lessons may consist of mini-lessons and/or full lessons depending on the content area, grade level, and specific needs of students. The varying lengths of lessons will be tailored to each class but will always take place Monday through Friday. This direct interaction is an important part of both the academic learning and social emotional aspects of student development. Teachers will use this time to engage with students on a personal basis. While we understand that families' schedules vary from household to household, it is expected that students attend live lessons on a daily basis. Some of the primary goals of live lessons include the following:

- Delivering new material to students with real-time guidance
- Visually gauging student engagement, mood, verbal cues, motor skills, etc.
- Fostering a classroom environment centered around the expression of ideas
- Developing trusting relationships with students
- Synthesizing academic and social emotional learning (SEL)
- Discussing the learning expectations for the day
- Providing whole group lessons and/or small group supports

These live lessons will be blended with asynchronous independent learning. The primary goals of asynchronous learning include the following:

- Allowing student to independently explore concepts at their own pace
- Providing flexible timelines for completion of work and deadlines
- Developing student ownership of learning and time management
- Fostering independent group work and collaboration
- Creating platforms for extended learning
- Developing work and study skills

**Mini-Lessons** are concise, lasting approximately 10-15 minutes, and are typically delivered to a whole group. These lessons are designed to focus on new concepts that will be explored by students both asynchronously and synchronously, after the mini-lesson. Mini-lessons will be delivered via **Google Meet**.

**Small Group Instruction** takes place with a select group of students with whom the teacher works to identify specific strengths and weaknesses. This provides teachers with the opportunity to hone in on students' progress and provide teacher-led support or encourage peer-led collaboration. This direct instruction can be delivered live via Google Meet. Additionally, Google Classroom Discussions, Comment Streams, and interactive Google Documents are platforms for direct support from teachers to students via typed text. Small group instruction will be arranged by teachers, based on students' needs and will be scheduled during afternoon sessions.

**Independent Practice** is an excellent opportunity for students to self-assess prior learning or explore additional learning. Independent practice typically takes place asynchronously and can be equated to homework, studying for an assessment, or any other learning activity a student does without direct assistance, but under the guidance of a teacher. Students who struggle with independent practice may reach out to their teachers to schedule **one-to-one support** or extra help.

## Communication During Virtual Learning

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### Partnerships:

Parent-teacher partnerships are so very important when working towards student success. This year, that importance is further amplified with remote learning, flexible scheduling, individual families' needs and numerous additional factors that are new to many of us. Parents are encouraged to reach out to teachers and administrators with questions and concerns. Also, teachers will be taking additional measures to streamline immediate communication with parents via email, virtual conferences, Realtime and up-to-date messages via Class Dojo (PreK) and Google Classroom (K-12).

### Parent and Teacher Outreach:

In the event that a student is struggling with concepts or is not submitting assignments, teachers will reach out to parents in order to develop collaborative plans for each student's success. While assignments will be assigned with flexible timelines, deadlines will be established throughout each week. In the event that a student surpasses a deadline, it is important that the student and/or parent reach out to the instructor to let them know that the late assignment is ready to be submitted. This

will allow the teacher to revisit that assignment and coordinate grading expectations with students based on their individual needs.

## How to Communicate with Teachers:

- ❑ Pre-K:
  - ❑ Class Dojo for Parents
  - ❑ School Email
  - ❑ Scheduled Phone Conferences
  - ❑ Scheduled Google Meets
- ❑ K-12:
  - ❑ Google Guardian
  - ❑ School Email
  - ❑ Scheduled Phone Conferences
  - ❑ Scheduled Google Meets

## Resources for Parents

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- ❑ [ClassDojo for Parents \(Pre-K\)](#)
- ❑ [Features of Google Meet for Parents](#)
- ❑ [Google Classroom Tutorial for Parents and Students](#)
- ❑ [How to Join a Google Classroom](#)
- ❑ [How to Use Google Classroom for Parents](#)
- ❑ [K-5 Access to Google Classroom and Email](#)
- ❑ [Parent Guide to Google Classroom](#)
- ❑ [Parent Guide to Google Guardian Summaries](#)
- ❑ [Remote Tips for Parents](#)