

## Parent Tips for Supporting Home Learning

March 2020

At this point, Dalat has no indication that schools in our area will be closed. However, in light of recent news related to the COVID-19 virus, Dalat staff are working hard to prepare contingency plans that will allow learning to continue in the event that the situation requires our school to close. We are required to follow directives from the Ministry of Education and may have no choice at some point but to close our doors for some length of time. Dalat is committed to doing our best to continue to deliver high-quality instruction through a variety of instructional tools online.

We have no way to anticipate when or how long school might be closed, so we are doing what we can to prepare for any scenario. An important step is making sure that our parent community is also thinking carefully about this along with us. There is no need for panic, but a thoughtful approach to what may happen will go a long way in the event that something does happen. Pray with us that school can continue as normal for the remainder of the school year and all of the planning will not be needed. Regardless, it is a good learning opportunity for our staff to practice delivery in a different way and we may see benefits even if school never closes.

An important step in preparing is to make certain that school supplies, texts, and resources are carried home in case of a sudden school closure. This is particularly important as we look at the coming two-week spring break. Students must take texts, computers, and other school resources with them as they leave school so that in the event of a closure, they have the resources needed to continue learning.

**Successful learning in this environment will require more significant investment and collaboration from parents. Please take a moment to read about some of the best practices and guidelines that we would encourage you all to help establish in your homes to empower your students to continue to learn in the event of a school closure.**

## Best Practices in the event of a closure

The best learning will take place if you take the time to develop an environment and a routine that is conducive to learning. Please do what you can to ensure the following steps are taken in your home.

- Read carefully all communication that is sent to parents from both administration and teachers. We will need your help reading our instructions and helping your students follow these carefully.
- Follow a consistent schedule each day. Have this be very similar to your normal school schedule. Get out of bed at the same time, dress and shower when you normally would. Have breakfast as if you were headed to a normal day of school. Keep the same routines in your home to help students prioritize that this is a school day, even if it feels very different.
- Create a space that is suitable for learning and working. A desk is ideal, but a dining room table may work. Make the space comfortable and free of distractions. Items that are regularly needed should be easily available (pencil, paper, calculator, books, power-points for computer plug-ins, etc.) Keep the workspace free of clutter. If possible, make this space public so that you can monitor it easily. DO NOT allow your students to simply work in their bedroom with the door closed.
- Keep distractions at a minimum. Turn off phones and instant messaging. Do not allow other siblings to watch TV or movies in the background. All siblings should work at school at the same time if possible. Turn off instant messaging on the computer and disable pop-ups. Close any tabs or programs that are not needed at that moment.
- Consider installing monitoring software especially if you will need to be away while your older kids are home working. Software can help you keep tabs on your students online activity. There are many applications available. [Freedom](#), [Qustodio](#), and [Covenant Eyes](#) are all good options. Talk with our tech team for help in this area.
- Parents should support learning in grade-level specific ways. Be available to help. Encourage students to stay focused. Keep an eye on how your kids are spending time and redirect them to be productive. Do not allow important tasks to get put off or drag on. Read instructions from teachers together and check for understanding. Help your student with the technology so that it does not become a stumbling block that causes frustration or inhibits the learning process. Make it your family goal to finish school in a reasonable time and then schedule rest and leisure activities once the hard work is completed.

Stay engaged. Even the most motivated students will benefit from a parent who is aware of what happens each day and is checking up on the student's progress.

Please remember that even though your children are hard workers, this is new and there will be challenges. Communicate regularly with your kids about how they are doing and how you can provide appropriate support for their learning. A parent who has experience with

home-schooling shared the following thoughtful approach to supporting her kids in online learning:

*“Consider getting started at the beginning of the day with a Morning Meeting (we call ours Super Start). Setting a time and place for this meeting (i.e. 8:30a on the couch) can be a great help to keeping a consistent schedule. Set this time as ‘connection’ point with your student to encourage communication and keep you all on the same page. You may even want to jot down the answers to questions in a notebook. (or create a print out) Some questions might include... How did you sleep?, Are you feeling healthy or sick?, On a scale of 1-10 what is your stress level today?, Do you have any tests or quizzes today/this week?, What can I help you or support you in today?, Do you need any help with communicating with teachers? How will you bless, serve, or unify our family/those around you today? How can I pray for you today? (These are just some of the questions that I ask. Praying aloud for the child in front of the child is also recommended) The whole thing takes 5-10 minutes. This can also be done the night before if parents are rushing out the door in the morning.*

*Conversely, parents may consider doing an end of the school day check in with each student. One idea is a ‘release sheet’. This gives some definition to the end of the day. List each subject on a piece of paper and have the students mark what they have completed and a brief description of what they worked on that day. This takes 2 minutes of my time as I read over their sheet and ask questions.”*

### **MS and HS Daily Schedule:**

<b>HS/MS Home Learning Schedule</b>					
	<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>
<b>8:30-9:10</b>	A	E/ F		A	E/F
<b>9:20-10:00</b>	B	G		B	G
<b>Morning work time</b>					
All teachers available online for contact through email and messaging					
<b>12:30-1:10</b>	C	H		C	H
<b>1:20-1:50</b>	D			D	
<b>Afternoon work/teacher planning time (2-4)</b>					
Teachers may be available for contact but may also use this time for planning and may not be available					
<b>3-4 pm</b>	Dalat teacher meeting time - Teacher collaboration and work time				

## Middle School Specific Instruction

Stay engaged. Middle school students require adequate support from parents in order for online learning to be successful. Remember that even if your student is a hard worker, online learning will be mostly new to them and will provide new challenges. Communicate with your students regularly about what types of assignments their teachers are assigning, how they are progressing through the assignments, and if they need additional support.

Remember that if students are not in the classroom every day, their teacher may not be able to see their struggles, but you can be their advocate and communicate with teachers where you see your child struggling.

### Technology Platforms

Teachers will be giving instruction to students in each of the following platforms in the coming weeks. We are even taking a day to practice in every class while we are still in school and able to give direct assistance to students. For consistency and clarity, it is important that all teachers and students understand the technology platform that will be used for a variety of different purposes.

#### **DIScourse:**

Your students should be familiar with DIScourse already. Please ask them this week to show it to you so you can familiarize yourself with it.

**Daily Updates:** Teachers have been instructed to use DIScourse as the first place each class period to look for instructions about required assignments, readings, activities, and assignments. Online learning expectations will be posted by 9:00 am in the announcement section.

**Submitting Assignments:** These should also be submitted through DIScourse. Do not submit assignments through email.

**Messaging:** Discourse supports instant-messaging of both teachers and classmates. Students should use this function to message questions to their teachers.

**Zoom:** We will use Zoom for video conferencing and interacting with classmates.

**Google Drive:** As is our normal procedure File Sharing and Saving will be done through Google Drive.

**Office 365:** Video Sharing and recorded Lectures will be shared and stored in the office 365 platform

Middle School teachers will schedule an appointment to check-in with your children via Zoom at a specific time each week. This will be an opportunity for direct instruction and giving out weekly expectations to small groups of students. Check-ins will last between 20-40 minutes, depending on the subject and size of groups. Students will be expected to be online at the designated times so as not to miss out on important instruction. Additionally, all teachers will be available to conference with students and answer questions via DIScourse messaging during designated times.