

## **Booker T. Washington Academy Distance Learning Plan**

The purpose of the Booker T. Washington Academy Distance Learning Plan is to provide ongoing instructional opportunities for students during a period of a prolonged school closure. At Booker T. Washington Academy, we are committed to preparing our scholars for college and beyond through a mission inspired by Booker T. Washington's credo: Excellence is doing common things in uncommon ways. We are committed to providing a safe, nurturing and challenging learning environment with the aim of producing responsible and productive citizens prepared to successfully compete in the global marketplace.

The goal of the Distance Learning Plan is to promote flexible learning opportunities in lieu of learning that would typically take place in the classroom. Under the Distance Learning Plan, teachers will provide students engaging instructional resources and tools through a combination of print and digital resources. In planning the instruction, careful consideration will be given to developmental appropriateness of expectations and differing access to online resources.

The Distance Learning Plan is not a replacement for in-class learning experiences that bring students and teachers together in social environments designed to ignite and support learning. Rather, its purpose is to offer an alternative to traditional instructional delivery during situations in which access to the school learning environment may be prohibited for an extended period of time. In these instances, the Distance Learning Plan is designed to offer, to the greatest degree possible, appropriate access to educational opportunities for each student.

The Distance Learning Plan has several goals for students, these include:

- Ensuring continuity of learning during what may be an extended closing
- Promoting access to information needed for distance learning
- Encouraging student independence and ownership of learning

Given that this plan would be implemented during emergency situations, it is designed to be flexible to the given situation. The responsibilities and expectations of students, parents, and staff are outlined in the plan. The success of the Distance Learning Plan is dependent upon the fulfillment of those responsibilities and expectations as well as an open flow of communication between parents, teachers, and students throughout its implementation.

Grades K-2 will have work packets in the area of reading, writing and math. Parents will be able to access assignments through Google Classroom. Packets will be created of all assignments and distributed to families who elect this option during a designated pick up time. Packets will be available for pick-up at the Middle School (located at 306 Circular Avenue, Hamden CT 06514) between the hours of: 7am-9am, 11:30-1:30, and 4:00 - 6:00. If families are unable to pick up during these hours, they should call the school to make mutually agreeable arrangements.

Grades 3-6 will have lessons in reading, writing and math will be posted daily on Google Classroom. Assignments will be posted as well.

Specials teachers, science, and social studies teachers will post weekly enrichment activities in their classrooms related to their subject area as well.

The general expectation will be that students will participate in approximately 4 hours of instructional activities each day; for a total of 20 hours over the course of a week.

The 4 hours should be divided into the following blocks: 1 hour of reading, 45 minutes of writing, one hour of mathematics, 45 minutes of enrichment, 30 minutes of homework, and breaks, as appropriate. Due to developmental and individual differences, the amount of time students actually spend on instruction may vary. Teachers will make recommendations for online resources that can be used to complement assignments.

Students may receive instruction through posted readings and PowerPoints, recorded video, and electronic messaging through the Google Classroom. Students can expect teachers to be available online to answer questions and to provide feedback on submitted work periodically. Email correspondence with students and parents will occur in a reasonable manner, within 2-3 hours between the hours of 8-4 Monday through Friday. Assignments will be developmentally appropriate and will reflect realistic expectations that can be achieved through distance learning for students.

### **Special Education**

Students receiving special education services will be provided appropriate learning activities under the direction of the special education teacher. Delivery of special education modifications and assignments will take place through a combination of Google Classroom and Zoom, as appropriate for each student. When appropriate, related services activities will be provided. Parents will receive assignments either through Google Classroom or if elected via mail. Delivery confirmation will be utilized.

### **Role of Teachers**

Teachers will play an active role in the teaching and learning that students experience under the Distance Learning Plan. Teachers will use Google Classroom to deliver assignments as the primary method for assigning learning tasks to students.

During the period in which the Alternative Learning Plan is in effect, expectations for teachers and other certified staff members will also include:

- Supporting student learning through regular parent email communications (i.e. parent/questions on assignments, feedback on completed work, etc.) in a timely manner
- Participating in PPTs through phone or online conferencing as indicated
- Collaborating with special education teachers to provide modifications for students receiving special education services
- Communicating when students can expect new work will be posted online
- Instructing students through recorded video using online platforms such as Google Meet
- Posting student assignments, projects, and tasks through Google Classroom
- Providing feedback on submitted assignments

- Grading submitted assignments, as appropriate
- Monitoring the work of students who are participating in online resources

#### Special Education, ELL, SRBI Teachers

- Collaborating with general education teachers in GoogleClassroom and ensure that lessons for students with Individualized Education Plans (IEP), SRBI goals, and ELL services are appropriately scaffolded
- Providing alternative assignments for students when appropriate
- Providing activities that reinforce skills being developed
- Participating in PPTs through phone or online conferencing as needed

#### Additional Professional Learning Opportunities For Certified Staff

As part of a typical Distance Learning school day, contact with students will be reduced as compared to a regular school day. To complement the work done with students and fulfill reasonable work time expectations, teachers will also engage in individual learning activities, online collaborations with colleagues, and other teaching-related activities that promote professional growth and development. Sample activities include:

- Engaging in professional learning provided through online resources such as <https://sanfordinspire.org/>
- Using online tools such as Google Meet to engage in grade-level Professional Learning Communities with colleagues
- Revising and developing online lessons
- Analyzing data to inform instructional practices
- Participating in webinars to support professional learning goals, including revised goals related to distance learning/technology
- Reading professional articles and texts
- Reading and reflecting on a book related to a professional learning topic

#### **Parent Expectations**

It has been well-documented that parent involvement in children's education correlates with higher academic achievement. Similarly, successful implementation of the Distance Learning Plan will depend greatly upon parent support and engagement, regardless of the age of the students. While parents will not be expected to take the place of the teacher, it is critical that parents consistently remind students that the learning which takes place via a digital or print experience is as important as the learning that takes place in the classroom. It is understood that each family's situation will be unique; however, it is strongly recommended that uninterrupted learning time be provided for each subject even if it occurs at different times throughout the day.

In order to effectively partner with Booker T. Washington Academy during a prolonged absence, parent involvement will ideally include:

- Developing a realistic, yet flexible, schedule for completion of school work (this is especially important since you may likely be balancing atypical demands and challenges in your own schedule related to the same situation which has forced an extended school closure)
- Creating a dedicated school work space
- Assisting with technical issues to ensure online activities can be accessed
- Supporting at home learning as much as possible
- Regularly checking email, school website or Google Classroom in order to receive important updates
- Monitoring completion of work assigned through Google Classroom
- Understanding and communicating to students that work assigned by teachers is not optional; the expectation is that assigned work will be completed
- Proactively communicating with classroom teachers, special education teachers, mental health workers, and administrators when you or your child is in need of assistance, or if a need is not being met