

## **PCDS Distance Learning Plan Upper School & Middle School**

### **Distance Learning Protocol**

- **Canvas and PCDS email will be the primary tools for instruction and communication of expectations for classes.**
  - All assignments for students will be posted on individual course Canvas pages.
  - Students are responsible for checking each class page on Canvas daily and for checking their PCDS email throughout the school day.
  - Students who are not meeting deadlines for assignments, who are not responding to emails, or who lack an online presence will be referred to an Assistant Division Head who will contact a parent.
- To be counted present, students must log out and then log back in to Canvas every day by 9:00 a.m. through the Canvas website, not the mobile app.
- **The rotation calendar will be used for assignment due dates and for scheduling synchronous online class activities.**
  - Students are encouraged but not required to attend scheduled online activities occurring during their class block.
  - Recordings of these will be made available for students to review asynchronously and may be required or associated with submitted work.
- **At all times, students are required to adhere to the expectations for behavior and honesty outlined in the PCDS Student-Parent Handbook.**
  - Online interactions must be respectful and appropriate as would be typically expected in a classroom environment.
- **All coursework will be guided by deadlines as designated by students' teachers.**
  - Teachers will plan for activities/assignments that do not exceed the amount of time a student would normally be in class plus the time they would normally spend on homework for that class.
  - If a student is overly challenged by the workload, they should contact their teacher or advisor for help.

- **Teachers will set virtual office hours in addition to their regular scheduled class time each school day.**
  - During these office hours, teachers will make themselves available to support students and answer questions.
  - Please see each teacher's individual Canvas course page for details about how office hours will be carried out.
  - Teachers will also be monitoring email during normal school hours: 7:50 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

## **Support and Communication**

- Advisors will be in touch with their advisees each week to gather feedback and support students as we move forward with distance learning.
  - This may include virtual group or individual meetings, emails, Google forms/docs or phone calls.
  - Advisors will serve as a primary point person for helping students resolve issues.
- Parents should regularly check email for school communications and remind their student(s) to check their email often for messages from the school, teachers, or advisor.
- PCDS counselors and administrators are available for any student who needs additional support. If you or your child is struggling with a learning or emotional need, please contact [Lynetta Binger](#), [Kate Halsey](#), or [Luke Phillips](#) in the Upper School. In the Middle School, please contact [Ben Sullivan](#), [Kelly Butler](#), [Maria Roman](#), or [Michele Huskey](#).
- Please let your teacher or advisor know immediately if you are experiencing any general technology issues.
  - If you are having trouble logging into *myPCDS*, contact [Eric Neuffer](#), Information Resources Manager.
  - If you forgot your Canvas password, Click *Forgot Password* on the [Canvas](#) login page. Enter your username (last name first initial: smithj) and a password reset link will be sent to your PCDS email.
  - If you have Google login issues, contact [Joe Boehle](#), IT Director.

## Preparing the Home Learning Environment

- If possible, dedicate a place at home as a “learning space.”
  - This can be any space with room to work and store materials.
  - Ideally, the space will be free of distractions.
  - Use this [PCDS Technology Preparedness checklist](#).
- Make time in the daily plan for exercise, social opportunities with family members, healthy snacks and brain breaks.
- Parents are encouraged to monitor online activity whenever possible to help ensure safe and on-task decision making. Distance learning should not require long periods of continuous screen time.
- Consider creating a daily checklist for work that is due, including estimates for the amount of time for each assignment.
  - Determine the order of assignments for the day and create a plan for working on assignments, breaks, snacks and meals.
  - Assign amounts of time for each work block and set a timer.
  - Allow flexibility in the plan, if a break is needed before the timer goes off or if a task needs a bit more time.

## General Tips

- Limiting physical contact with others is the most important step we can take to slow the spread of the virus, which is why school is not in session.
  - The CDC recommends discouraging children and teens from gathering in public places, and events of any size should only be continued if they can be carried out with adherence to guidelines for protecting vulnerable populations, hand hygiene, and physical distancing.
  - The best way to prevent the spread of the virus is to limit contact with others, so we also caution parents against allowing any gatherings of any size in their homes.
- For more recommendations for families from the Center for Disease Control, visit: [Tips to keep children healthy while school's out](#)