

# DEERFIELD-WINDSOR SCHOOL

Student and Parent  
VIRTUAL SCHOOL HANDBOOK  
&  
CONTINUITY OF LEARNING PLAN





**Deerfield-Windsor School**

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**This Deerfield-Windsor School Handbook and Continuity Plan is a living document that will serve as a set of expectations, guidelines, and resources to aid students and parents should a transition from in-person to hybrid or fully online teaching and learning be required. Compliance with each division's Student & Parent Handbook continues to be expected. This handbook serves as additional expectations and reminders for our virtual learning environment.**

**Disclaimer: This handbook represents the most current policies at DWS; however, the administration and staff of DWS reserve the right to make any necessary changes to any policy should the need arise.**

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## ABOUT DEERFIELD-WINDSOR SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

***Deerfield-Windsor School exists to inspire in its students  
a passion for learning,  
a commitment to personal integrity, and  
a sense of social responsibility.***

This mission is executed in the following ways:

- We provide a college preparatory education of unsurpassed quality by providing students with individual attention while sustaining a wide range of academic, athletic, and extracurricular activities.
- We support an excellent, dedicated faculty and ensure that these stewards of Deerfield-Windsor's mission are the ablest leaders and teachers.
- We achieve both the power of unity and the stimulation of diversity by attracting students from among the most accomplished and promising young people from a variety of racial, national, religious, and economic backgrounds.
- We affirm our strong belief in the value of a college preparatory education, by preparing our students for the most demanding universities and by equipping them to assume leadership in our society.
- We foster the intellectual and moral development of our students in every area of the School's program by stressing the fundamental values of integrity, honesty, self-discipline, community responsibility, compassion, love of knowledge, and respect for freedom and law.
- We provide the quality facilities necessary to support the best efforts of teachers and students, as we seek to keep the promises of yesterday while fostering the dreams of tomorrow.

### *Deerfield-Windsor School Alma Mater*

*We will cling to Deerfield-Windsor, to memories gathered here.  
The friendships made will last the years and enrich our lives.  
Alma Mater, Alma Mater, you will always hold us close.  
Though the days divide us, we will still be one!*

## HONOR SYSTEM

Deerfield-Windsor operates under an honor system. This statement simply means that the most important form of control exercised in the school on the part of the students will be *self-control*. The school expects all students to represent the truth in their words and deeds, to ensure that whatever work they say is theirs is indeed theirs and no one else's, and to hold inviolate another's property, no matter how small or how large it may be in value.

A student who lies to another person has broken trust with that person but has also broken the collective trust that we hold dear as a school. A school that is full of suspicion and distrust is not a healthy, fulfilling environment.

A student who copies another student's homework has cheated himself of a learning experience. Students should do their own homework, and not work in groups unless instructed to do so by the teacher. A student should assume that each homework assignment may be graded.

Due to the open nature of the school environment as well as the relative material well-being of students and faculty alike at DWS, stealing is seen as a most senseless and egregious breach of faith, trust, integrity, and personal responsibility and may be dealt with even more severely than lying or cheating.

The Honor Code expresses the ideal of an agreement that implies faith and trust in each other. It also expresses an attitude against violation of that faith and trust. Each student will be expected to sign the following pledge.

*I, \_\_\_\_\_, pledge on my honor as a Deerfield-Windsor School student not to accept or give any unauthorized help whatsoever in class or out of class in reference to the work required of me. I shall not lie, steal, cheat, forge another's name or commit plagiarism in any form.*

SIGNED: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

The Honor Committee, composed of 3 faculty members and 8 students (4 juniors and 4 seniors chosen by the faculty and their classmates), reviews cases dealing with lying and cheating.

In the case of a first offense, the student in violation of the Honor Code receives a **Warning** if they accept responsibility for their actions. As this process exists to educate students to make better choices in the future, a Warning will not go on the student's record; however, the student will typically receive an "unsatisfactory" mark in department and a grade reduction on the assignment (0 in the case of a daily grade; major work may be resubmitted for a maximum grade of 70). A Warning is a big break: it does not go on the student's official school record, but retroactively becomes a **First Offense** if the student is later found in violation of the Honor Code for a second time.

A **Second Offense** during a student's enrollment in a division will result in a three-day suspension, an "unsatisfactory" mark in department, and resubmission of the work for a greatly reduced grade (0 in the case of a daily grade; major work may be resubmitted for a maximum grade of 50).

A **Third Offense** during a student's enrollment in a division will likely result in dismissal from DWS.

In the case of a non-academic offense such as lying or stealing, consequences will depend on the severity of the violation and could result in dismissal. As with all disciplinary matters, the administration may modify the consequences associated with the offense if the circumstances warrant. Students guilty of an Honor Offense may not be eligible for end of the year awards.

## VIRTUAL LEARNING AT DWS

Deerfield-Windsor School firmly believes that, while moving teaching online requires familiarity with new tools and approaches, good teaching is good teaching. The same skills that make our faculty distinctive will carry the DWS student through any necessary shifts. The goal of virtual learning is to allow as little disruption to the student experience of the academic program as possible. This requires us all to think differently about how we learn.

In the event of a temporary school closing, DWS may need to transition from on-campus learning to off-campus virtual/distance learning for our students. The School may engage in both synchronous (real-time) and asynchronous (learning/sharing outside the constraints of time and place) off-site learning. This type of learning involves faculty connecting with students and families using digital devices and platforms to continue learning when on-campus, face-to-face meeting is not possible or when the school deems distance learning is necessary. At the heart of our Continuity of Learning plan are the relationships between teachers and students as well as between students and students. Deerfield-Windsor School is committed to continuing a program of high academic rigor in a safe place for students to ask questions, make mistakes and take academic risks that support their growth as learners. That said, this learning plan will not be without glitches, technological or otherwise. Not every lesson will be as time-tested or well-refined as what students experience in the typical DWS classroom; however, we have the best faculty doing their best to provide a strong education for our students. It is expected that students work with, not against, their teachers to make this a positive and productive learning experience. The tips and tools offered identify specific actions that can be taken in support of the endeavor to promote virtual learning.

Our virtual learning approach includes the following.

- ❑ Teaching and learning will continue but will look and feel different: let go, take risks, have fun!
- ❑ Teaching will not be a collection of online links to consume. Students will continue to experience the personal touch of DWS.
- ❑ Appropriate guidelines and expectations exist for each level of the school.
  - Prekindergarten and Kindergarten: Internet access, one family device for occasional access to internet, hands-on materials, and a space to play/exercise/practice mindfulness
  - Grades 1-2: Internet access, one family device for occasional access to internet, hands-on materials, and a space to play/exercise/practice mindfulness
  - Grades 3-5: Internet access, computer/laptop or chromebook, hands-on materials, and a space to play/exercise/practice mindfulness
  - Grades 6-12: Internet access, computer or laptop, and a space to play/exercise/practice mindfulness
- ❑ All grade levels will use Google Classroom. Other virtual platforms used may vary by grade.
- ❑ DWS expects students to be their best selves online and uphold the Honor Code. This is a golden opportunity for students to continue and hone the moral code that hopefully they will follow the rest of their lives.

# STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES FOR MEANINGFUL ENGAGEMENT

## GOALS FOR STUDENTS

- Hone your abilities to be self-directed, independent learners who are self-advocates
- Navigate multiple platforms to make sense of content and learn new modes of communication
- Work at your own pace, take advantage of the new opportunities faculty provide, and challenge yourself to the best of your ability in each class
- Maintain a sense of normalcy, structure, and routine, even in relatively abnormal circumstances
- Experience the workplace of the future

## GENERAL EXPECTATIONS

### *Middle & Upper School*

To make this virtual journey smooth, we will follow these guidelines.

- The daily schedule will follow the normal rotation as set in the DWS School Planner.
- Students will be expected to join a Google Meet for each of their classes at the time the class would normally meet. Links to Google Meet are located in your Google Classroom.
- Teachers will take and submit attendance for each class period, provide instructions via Google Classroom and/or Google Meet, and will be available during the normal class period.
- Assignments and/or lessons will be posted in Google Classroom.
- Students may be asked to complete work independently or collaboratively during class via Google Docs, Google Meets, or some other platform.
- Assessments will be administered, using the honor system, and student work will be graded.

### *Lower School*

To make this virtual journey smooth, we will follow these guidelines.

- The daily schedule will be determined by the homeroom teacher and posted on Google Classroom
- Students will be expected to join a Google Meet as directed by the homeroom teacher. Links to Google Meet are located in your Google Classroom.
- Teachers will take and submit attendance each day, provide instructions via Google Classroom and/or Google Meet, and will be available during posted times.
- Assignments and/or lessons will be posted in Google Classroom.
- Students may be asked to complete work independently or collaboratively during class via Google Docs, Google Meets, or some other platform.
- Assessments will be administered, using the honor system, and student work will be graded.

## **ATTENDANCE**

When lessons are scheduled to be delivered through virtual means, class attendance is required. Teachers will track virtual attendance in a variety of ways, and technology tools facilitate the confirmation of a student's participation in virtual learning. Ways teachers can identify who is in attendance include the following.

- Attending live class sessions in Google Meet
- Signing into their Google Drive and completing assignments
- Communicating through the sending and receiving of emails
- Participating in online chats
- Uploading images, documents, videos, etc. to document their learning

*Note:* Students are considered tardy if they are not logged in, with their camera on, at the appropriate time.

All attendance policies apply in the virtual learning environment. (See Student & Parent Handbook.) For unplanned absences, parents should email the Administrative Assistant between 7:45 and 8:45 a.m. the morning of the absence. If verification is not received, the absence will be considered unexcused, and the procedure for unexcused absences will be followed.

We understand technological problems will happen. If an absence or tardy is due to technology malfunctions, students should immediately communicate these problems to their teacher and/or the Administrative Assistant.

## **COMMUNICATION**

Gmail and Google Classroom will continue to be the primary method of communication between teacher and student. All DWS students have Gmail accounts as well as Google Classroom access for every class. Students should check their email account and their Google Classrooms multiple times every day for information from teachers as well as other school personnel.

Students should use Gmail or Google Classroom to communicate with a teacher or other school personnel. All communication is to be respectful. Students should write a professional email and avoid slang, abbreviations, text-speak, etc.

## **DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP STANDARDS AND EXPECTATIONS**

It is essential that all show respect to their teachers and peers in the virtual learning environment. As in the physical classroom, remember the following expectations.

- Engage in positive online behaviors only
- Use respectful behavior and language
- Limit discussions to appropriate topics
- Send only appropriate video transmissions
- Dress appropriately (See Student & Parent Handbook.)
- Avoid walking around during Google Meetings
- Keep your audio on mute unless the teacher directs you otherwise
- Leave the online classroom when the teacher ends the class
- Put away your cell phone unless instructed otherwise by your teacher



- Be honest and do not plagiarize or copy the work of others (*Remember, you signed the Honor Code!*)
- Be patient and flexible with teachers, classmates, and yourself!

It is only when everyone acts kindly, shows consideration, and respects others that the focus can be on learning.

The DWS Technology Acceptable Use Policy (See Student & Parent Handbook) is in effect and specifically addresses appropriate and inappropriate use of technology. This includes but is not limited to Google Meets class conduct, and the following Google Meet behavior will not be tolerated.

- Unauthorized sharing of virtual learning class codes or meeting details with students not enrolled in the course
- Misrepresenting oneself in any form of electronic communication
- Removing or muting other attendees from the Google Meet
- Accessing the account or password of another, or in any way invading her/his privacy
- Posting anonymous messages
- Interfering with the online learning of your classmates, including distractions such as inappropriate sounds or gestures
- Recording, photographing and/or posting online classroom presentations or Google Meets without the teacher's permission

## **LEARNING ROUTINE & SPACE**

Virtual learning is just as challenging and rigorous as a day of learning in the classroom. Expect there to be an adjustment period. Take ownership of your learning, and realize some productive struggle is essential to the learning process. Adjusting to virtual learning provides an opportunity to learn new skills, try new approaches, and gain greater independence and confidence. As more time is spent learning virtually, you learn what works best in terms of staying focused and on task. As we all adjust, stay positive, be patient (with yourself and others), and be persistent.

The following tips will encourage active learning and advocating for learning needs in the virtual learning environment:

- Have a daily routine. You will have more responsibility in managing your time. Reach out to your advisor or counselor if you need assistance in developing your schedule. Use your dedicated class time wisely, even if you are not having a Google class meeting. Also, be sure your routine includes breaks for exercise, relaxation, and meals/snacks.
- Have a dedicated learning space. (And this space should not be your bed!) This space should be free of clutter and distractions - yes, that means your cell phone unless your teacher instructs otherwise. If easily distracted, wear headphones or earbuds to reduce noise interference.
- Avoid multitasking. You may feel you can listen while playing a game, shopping online or chatting on a different tab, but research proves the human brain is not equipped to do so.
- Make sure your learning space has all the tools and supplies you need to learn. You will need a computer, tablet, or other device. You'll need paper, pens/pencils, calculator, and any other class supplies. And you will need textbooks, notebooks, and any other curriculum materials required by your teacher.

## **HEALTH, WELLNESS, & STUDENT SUPPORT**

Student social and emotional well-being continues to be a priority even in a virtual learning environment. Support may look different at a distance, but there is a strong team ready to lend support and guidance. All DWS support services continue to be available.. The guidance counselor will conduct regular check-ins as needed and is available to assist students and families with mental health concerns related to school or social issues. The college counselor will continue supporting students in their college search process. Our Learning Support Center remains open and active, regularly checking in with students and providing academic learning support. To schedule additional support, email the appropriate counselor or specialist.

The DWS advisory programs will meet during regularly scheduled times. The advisor is an important resource for the student and provides him/her an extra layer of support. The advisory group is a safe place to discuss the ups and downs of this learning environment and the stress and anxiety created by it. This advisory time also serves as a great opportunity to connect with others during a period of isolation.

Physical movement and exercise are vital to maintaining physical and mental health, reducing stress and anxiety as well as improving concentration and focus for more effective learning and retention. Whether it's through fitness workouts or challenges provided by the coaches or just by getting outside, daily exercise will be especially important for strengthening your mind and feeling better during this time away. So get up and move!

## KEY TERMINOLOGY FOR VIRTUAL LEARNING

*Asynchronous:* Class interactions occur via a Learning Management System (i.e. Google Classroom) without real-time interactions. Students engage in class materials and complete work at their own pace, typically within a given timeframe, often using discussion boards to drive peer-to-peer engagement.

*Synchronous:* Class interactions occur in real time, at the same time. Students may virtually attend class together via video conference, livestream, or chat. We have Google Meet for synchronous meetings.

Most online courses are a blend of *synchronous* contact and *asynchronous* study/work. For many, *asynchronous* instruction works best for deep learning, whereas *synchronous* instruction is essential for maintaining relationships.

*Video Conference:* A virtual meeting in which participants in different locations are able to communicate with each other through audio and video. We use Google Meet for classes and conferencing.