



Lessons Learned From Virtual Learning During COVID-19

Tips for Educators From Families and Educators

Be Flexible

- Provide work options that allow for time flexibility
- Listen to families' feedback on students' successes and challenges, and adjust if necessary
- Consider which lessons may be best taught virtually and which require alternative approaches
- Recognize that various family members may be helping students on different days

Hold Group Sessions If Possible

- Meet at least once per week
- Provide students with an opportunity to socialize, without educational expectations
- Allow children to see their peers "in school"

Hold Individual Sessions

- Work with students on a one-to-one basis
- Check in with students' families frequently and consistently
- Reach out in a variety of ways (e.g., phone, texting, email, Skype)

Engage Families to Coordinate Fun Activities

- Host a game day
- Hold a virtual cooking event
- Oversee extracurricular and after-school activities
- Provide social time for students and adults (together or separately)



Schedule Office Hours

- Allow students and families times to personally reach you
- Offer students and families personal support and connect them with school resources

Use Interactive Activities

- Utilize platforms such as Kahoot, Quizlet Live, Padlet, Popplet
- Use built-in engagement techniques such as chatbox, Q&A, screensharing
- Allow students to give input and to teach parts of the lesson
- Keep things familiar
- Create focused, not “free time activities” during virtual meeting; avoid busy work
- Check for understanding and engagement during video learning and read-alouds
- Consider different ways in which students can respond to questions (e.g., picture selection, Boomcards)
- Establish goals for lessons and make sure that students can describe the goals in their own way

Think About Scheduling

- Provide flexibility of scheduling; hour-by-hour scheduling may not work in a home atmosphere
- Give multiple options and ideas to consider

- Be empathetic by providing ways for families to think through how to organize their time and resources
- Consider the student; some students may thrive on strict routine, while others may not find this helpful
- Recognize that transitioning from one activity to another can be difficult; consider the sequence of activities
- Note that schedules may look differently from student to student

Communicate With Families

- Establish frequent and consistent communication
- Tell families how they can support students during online lessons
- Discuss the levels of support that a student might need to complete an activity
- Provide the families with expectations of how a student is expected to participate in online learning

Promote Independence of Students With Disabilities

- Teach students with disabilities how to use the computer (e.g., the mouse, touchpad, keyboard)
- Provide guidance on how to access online learning platforms (both for students and families)
- Deliver instruction in accessible chunks with necessary breaks
- Be aware of accessibility concerns
- Ensure that students have a way to communicate in some way during digital learning experiences

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Tom Wolf, Governor

