



MEMO TO: Elementary Administrators and Staff of In-Person Schools

FROM: Senior Administration

DATE: December 30, 2020

SUBJECT: Remote Learning Update

Thank you for your continued support. As a follow-up to the communication that was shared with you on Monday, December 21, 2020 we are providing you with additional details as we transition to remote learning for the week of January 4, 2021.

All elementary students will participate in remote learning during the week of January 4, 2021 and are anticipated to return to in-person learning on Monday, January 11, 2021.

Expectations for Remote Learning

The Ministry has confirmed the expectation that remote learning in elementary schools in January 2021 will follow the required minutes for synchronous learning outlined in [Program Policy Memorandum – Expectations for Remote Learning PM 164](#):

Grade Level of Students	Daily Synchronous Learning Time Requirement
Kindergarten	180 minutes
Grades 1 to 8	225 minutes

Synchronous learning is part of the 300-minute instructional day during which teachers remain available to students. It is important to note that synchronous learning may include times where the teacher is available online, but where students are working independently or in small groups (e.g., consolidation tasks such as practice questions, writing tasks, preparing a presentation, etc.). It should be noted that some flexibility for students may be required on an individual basis when students are unable to participate in synchronous learning.

Monday, January 4, 2021

We are requesting that all elementary administrators host a virtual remote learning planning meeting during the instructional day on the morning of Monday, January 4, 2021. The purpose of this meeting will be to connect with staff, review plans for remote learning, and respond to questions from staff members. Collaboration amongst school staff, particularly those who provide instruction to more than one class of students (i.e., specialty and homeroom teachers), will be important to review. January's regular Staff

Meeting will occur outside the instructional day on January 11, 2021. The remainder of the day on Monday, January 4, 2021 will be used by school staff to check-in with all students.

This phone call "check-in" will include:

- Confirming family access to technology/internet. If a device is needed, it is important for the teacher to ask if the family has already requested a device through the Parent Portal and/or email or voice mail. If a device has already been requested, no further information is needed. If a device has not been requested, the educator should collect the following information from the family: student first name and last name, and if there is a need for a Chromebook, or if an internet-enabled device is required. This information must be shared with the school administration.
- Providing students/families with the daily plan (timetable) for remote learning (synchronous/asynchronous times and expectations) as well as the [Parent Guides for Brightspace and Google Classroom](#)
- Answering questions students/families may have with respect to the use of the digital platform.
- In the event of a homeroom teacher absence on January 4th, utilizing other school-based staff to complete check-in phone calls.
- At the end of the day, providing a list of students/families with whom a connection could not be made to administrators. Attempt to make contact the next day.

Remote learning for elementary students is to begin on Tuesday, January 5, 2021.

Monday, January 4, 2021 is to allow the opportunity to transition from in-person to remote learning and ensure clear understanding (students, parents/guardians, staff) of requirements for remote learning to begin on Tuesday, January 5, 2021. This timeline will be shared with families in a separate communication.

Remote Learning Plan January 5th- January 8th

The following expectations are provided for all elementary educators, including specialty teachers, LSTs, ESL teachers, Teacher-Librarians:

- Regular check-ins with students to maintain relationships, encourage engagement and connections (support staff are to assist with these communications, particularly for students who will benefit from this connection).
- Adhere to synchronous learning expectations from PPM 164 (combination of synchronous and asynchronous learning based on a 300-minute instructional day).
- Use of the digital platform that was selected for the class (this includes use by prep teachers and support staff).
- Google Meet is the platform which is being used in TVDSB for synchronous learning.
- Collaboration with educator colleagues to ensure consistency of expectations and support both student and educator efficacy in remote learning setting.
- Providing students/families and school administration with a schedule for the week which illustrates synchronous and asynchronous learning opportunities.

Support for Students

All special education supports and services will continue to be accessible to students in a virtual format. New referrals may also be submitted by school teams for Special Education TOSA or Professional Student Services (Psychological Services, Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology Services, and School Counselling and Social Work) support.

Student Attendance

Monday, January 4th will be marked as a G Day centrally for all elementary students. Beginning Tuesday, January 5th, attendance is to be taken by the homeroom teacher by the end of the day. Students are to be marked present for all three blocks if they have participated in synchronous or asynchronous learning at any point during the day. Secretaries will launch School Messenger calls after all blocks of attendance have been recorded through teacher web attendance for that school day so that families will be notified if students have not engaged in learning during the day.

Occasional teachers/ New Long-Term Occasional Positions

As per normal practices, day plans must be provided for any occasional staff covering absences outlined in TVARRIS.

Administrators will be sent instructions by January 4th regarding how to add an occasional teacher/ECE/EA to a digital classroom in the event of a staff absence.

Access to Schools

Secretaries, custodians and administrators will be in school buildings in order to assist with school operations.

During the remote learning period, educators may attend their home schools to access resources and technology in order to deliver quality instruction, if needed.

Staff must notify the school administration if they are required to work in the school and must adhere to all health and safety protocols (i.e., masking, physical distancing, no congregating etc.). In addition, staff accessing the school must sign in and out each day, using the existing Visitor's Log, to ensure that administrators are aware of who accessed the school each day.

Device Deployment

Families were asked to request devices by January 3rd through the Parent Portal. After this time, school staff are to continue to accept device requests through the school's main office staff. For families who do not have access to the Parent Portal, email or phone requests to the school were suggested as an option.

If an educator learns, during their family "check-in", that a device is required and has not been requested by the family, the teacher should gather the information indicated in the "Check-In" instructions above. Schools will determine if this information is shared from educators to administrators via email, or a school-generated electronic form.

Administrators are asked to enter this information on behalf of families who did not

submit their request through the Employee Portal (via Technology Needs Request / School Request Form for Students) as early as possible the week of January 4th.

TSA's have started prepping devices for student use at home, based on some requests received since December 28th. These devices will be delivered to the respective schools starting on January 4th. TSA's will continue working in schools on the week of January 4th to prepare devices for student use at home, as requests are received. Once devices are ready in each school for student deployment, the TSA and/or their supervisor will advise the administrator so that the office team at the school can contact families to arrange for front door pick up of devices.

It will take several days for devices to be prepared and deployed across the system.

Supports for Educators for Remote Learning

The Learning Technologies Team, along with other Learning Support Services staff, will continue to provide supports for educators during Remote Learning.

The [TVDSB Digital Resources Sharepoint link](#) provides tip sheets, videos and links to upcoming virtual learning sessions. This will allow educators to access professional learning supports at any time. Also available on this Sharepoint link is a list of upcoming, interactive virtual PD opportunities that will support educators' use of digital learning platforms, with a particular focus on setting up Google Meet sessions for synchronous learning. Through this Sharepoint site, educators will find a complete list of professional supports for digital learning including virtual office hours with Learning Technologies Coordinators and TOSAs.

A quick synopsis of key "start up" TVDSB PD resources for synchronous learning can be found at [Synchronous Learning Resources for Educators](#).

The Ministry of Education has also provided [Resources to Support Educators](#) with remote learning.

We sincerely appreciate your ongoing support, understanding and flexibility as we transition to remote learning.