



Thompson K-8 International Academy

An International Baccalaureate World School

16300 Lincoln Drive Southfield, MI 48076 248-746-7400 FAX: 248-746-7493



Ms. Tracy Hall | Principal

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September 25, 2020

Good afternoon,

As we close out the third week of remote teaching and learning and settle into a routine, I came across this blog from Lydia Martin, a fellow educator--it's worth the read!

The coronavirus pandemic has brought a new normal with a host of challenges for the average American. In addition to the health challenges and risks, social distancing measures have brought their own challenges. As parents, many of us are working from home at the same time that our children are suddenly engaged in remote learning.

This new normal can be an overwhelming one. It is, though, imperative that parents find a way to ensure their children feel safe, secure, and well cared for during this period of uncertainty.

One way to accomplish this feat is to create a consistent schedule for your family to get through each day. Consistent schedules will ensure children are able to continue learning while schools are closed, and are an easy way to help them build the good habits they'll need when these restrictions lift and they can resume a more "normal" life.



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While each day at home will be new and unusual, a routine will provide the consistency children need to feel secure and help families weather this storm together.

Why Your Family Needs a Schedule

While distance learning is a necessary reality for most students at this point in the pandemic, we would be remiss not to admit that, for most families, it has led to at least some form of disruption to their normal routine.

For parents struggling to adjust to the new reality of working from home, factoring in their new responsibility as their children's educator can be especially overwhelming. Indeed, the two important tasks of work and education often conflict with one another. This is why crafting a regular and consistent schedule is critical to everyone's success.

According to Friends' Central Lower School Principal Melody Acinapura, the challenge is that the current remote learning situation is prompted by a global crisis, rather than being each family's choice.

"This creates a really broad range of expectations and hopes from families," she says. "There are some families who feel really stressed by this. Some families have parents working on the front lines of the crisis and are asking for a really flexible remote learning schedule to work around their busy lives. On the other side of the spectrum, there are families that expect their schools to replicate what they offered face to face in the classroom, only online."

Acinapura believes the key to creating an effective schedule for remote learning is to acknowledge and understand what is feasible for each family in a given day.

Tips for Maintaining a Schedule

Are you struggling with establishing and keeping a remote learning schedule for your child that aligns with your work schedule and broader family responsibilities? Below are tips that you can use to help craft a schedule that will fit your unique needs.

1. Find a schedule that works for your family.

Every family has different needs and capabilities, and families should work to find a program that fits their specific needs. Whether you require a more flexible, asynchronous remote learning schedule or a more regimented approach, work with your school to determine what options are available to you.

2. Keep mornings predictable.

Treat your new weekdays with the same sense of structure and consistency as you would a typical day. The same routines that start your normal work/school days should be kept during this time of change. It's important for children to continue habits like:

- *Waking up at a set time*



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- *Changing out of pajamas and into “school clothes”*
- *Having a nutritious breakfast*
- *Brushing teeth*
- *Helping with “before school” chores*

This sense of consistency and clear understanding of the expectations for each day will help families better adhere to their new schedules, and will provide the routine students need to succeed in their new learning environment. They can also help establish a clear break between school and home life, which will go far in facilitating balance.

3. Focus on relationships.

Keep relationships an important part of your new routine. For all students, and especially younger children, the relationships they had established with their teachers were important—and stabilizing—ones before this crisis emerged. Allow your children to continue these by having individual virtual check-ins and regularly connecting with their teachers.

Parents should also be sure to keep the parent/teacher relationship strong by fostering open communication, and allowing teachers to act as resources during this time of transition. Even educators find being in charge of their children’s remote learning to be challenging, and it helps to connect with educators and even other families who are focused on getting their students through this difficult time.

Additionally, while it can be a challenge, encouraging your child to maintain friendships despite social distancing will be important to their emotional well-being.

4. Be adaptable.

In dealing with this crisis and the various challenges that it brings, parents should work to stay flexible and adaptable. Schools and teachers can help guide families through this new normal, but parents should remember that they are the experts when it comes to their kids. Parents should do whatever it takes to keep their children—and themselves—as physically, mentally, and emotionally healthy as possible. Whether that means allowing for more time outside, virtual play-dates with friends, additional quiet time to read and decompress, or time each week to digitally connect with their community, parents should remember that their children will respond to their energy. Try to embrace each day with the flexibility and openness that will allow you and your family to not just survive, but thrive in this difficult time.

5. Ask for help if you need it.

If this global pandemic has proven anything, it’s that we are all in this together. For parents, resources and connections are everywhere; if you need help, all one needs to do is ask. From school administration to support services, specialists and classroom teachers, educators are ready to act as resources should you need additional support.



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Keep it Simple

Though the task of keeping your family safe, working remotely, and ensuring your children don't fall behind academically can at times feel overwhelming, it's important for parents to remember: You've got this!

Creating a schedule that works for your family is one critical step you can take to ensure that you and your children have the routine and consistency necessary to stay on track.

At the end of the day, if children have a consistent routine that they can rely on—one that incorporates dedicated time to focus on educational practice and enrichment, creativity, socialization, exercise and restful, relaxing time—they will be better prepared to weather the current storm in a healthy way, and will be able to hit the ground running when the world returns to a more “normal” way of life.

Please read below for information and updates.

WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 28:

- MYP Class Rotation
 - Monday - EVEN
 - Tuesday - ODD
 - Wednesday - EVEN
 - Thursday - ODD
 - Friday - ALL
- October 2: Forgotten Harvest Food Distribution / 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm @ Bussey Center (24501 Fredrick Street Southfield, MI 48033)

UPCOMING:

- Coffee with the Principal / Monday, October 5 from 9:00 am - 10:00 am: More information and meeting link in next week's update.
- Parent-Teacher Conferences / November 19, 2020: 4:30 pm - 7:30 pm: More information to come!

VIRTUAL CURRICULUM NIGHT: WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 23

Thank you to all who attended! I've received great feedback from families and teachers that said the night went well. I did experience some technical difficulties, but that's our new normal, right? Practice makes perfect, so your patience as we all work together to ensure that our technology is seamless is very much appreciated.



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TEACHING & LEARNING

- Daily Bell Schedule: [Click here](#)
- Schoology Access for Students: Access to class meeting links (live teaching and learning) and assignments are in Schoology. Schoology classes are automatically entered based on student schedules.
 - If you do not see your child's class in Schoology and there was a schedule change less than 24 hours prior to, contact the teacher for a meeting link and/or
 - assignments. [THIS LINK](#) is a presentation of how students can access and navigate Schoology.
- Schoology Access for Parents: Please **contact your child's teachers** for your Schoology Parent Code. Once you receive it:
 - Go to [schoology.com](https://www.schoology.com)
 - Click sign up at the top of the page
 - Select Parent
 - Enter the parent access code. The 12 digit code is xxxx-xxxx-xxxx
 - Fill out the form with your information
 - Click Register to complete
 - Note: when you use a parent access code to create an account, you are automatically associated with your child. You can add additional children to your account using the "add child" button.
 - [THIS LINK](#) will take you to a video of the Parent View in Schoology.

TECHNOLOGY

- Support: Please contact the Oakland Schools Help Desk with issues related to district issued technology (chromebook) at **248.209.2060**.
- Chromebook & Internet Hotspot Distribution: Please contact your child's Advisory teacher if he/she is in need of a chromebook or Internet hotspot.

STUDENT & FAMILY AGREEMENTS AND INFORMATION

Please click on each of the links below to read, agree to and supply important information for your child:

- [Student Information Sheet](#): Contact and Health information
- [Parent/Guardian Norms & Expectations](#)
- [SPS Code of Conduct](#)



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SPS RETURN TO SCHOOL

Please visit this [site](#) for the most current SPS information regarding the Remote 2020/21 school year. You can also find information regarding Champions (full day care), meal services and other information related to Southfield Public Schools and our efforts to educate your child during the pandemic.

STUDENT & FAMILY SUPPORT

Our new normal of remote learning may take an emotional toll on students and/or families. SPS has partnered with the agencies below to assist those in need of extra support.

The Student Support Network is an advocate and mediator for students who need additional resources to support behavioral/social goals or need a trusted adult for advice and guidance in non-academic matters.

The process outlined below affords district families access to mobile health services. Easterseals (Support for All Buildings). For current individuals/clients accessing services, Easterseals is offering telehealth. This can be completed through a smartphone, tablet or computer. For those individuals that do not have access to the internet, Easterseals is offering telephonic services. This process may be done on a case by case situation. Individuals can call (248) 475-6300 for an appointment.

For new individuals/clients, please call the (248) 475-2150 to get scheduled for intake. Easterseals will offer intake using telehealth and will continue to provide services using a telehealth platform.

Psychiatrists and doctors are using telehealth as well, please call (248) 475- 6300 for an appointment.

EasterSeals Contact:

Jennifer Thayer, LMSW, CAADC

Program Manager

Office: (248) 475.6307 | Fax: (248) 475.6370 | jthayer@essmichigan.org

2399 E. Walton Blvd., Auburn Hills, MI 48326 | www.EastersealsMichigan.com

THOMPSON STUDENT AND FAMILY HANDBOOK

Please take the time to review our [school handbook](#) with your child for this school year.



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Enjoy your weekend, be well and stay safe!



Learning and teaching are not inherently linked. Much learning takes place without teaching, and indeed much teaching takes place without learning.

Jane Bozarth