Distance Learning Plan for Richfield Public Schools (DRAFT)

Background

Governor Walz’s Executive Order 20-41 declares that public school districts and charter schools will continue to implement distance learning plans through the end of their planned 2019-20 school calendar year.

Following this order, Richfield Public Schools instituted a distance learning plan on April 4, 2020, that focused on the following priorities:

- Equitable access to technology and internet access
- Equitable access to rich and rigorous curricula
- Uninterrupted academic guidance and support in a virtual setting as it was in a physical setting.

What is distance learning?

Distance learning is defined by the Minnesota Department of Education as students interacting daily with their licensed teacher(s), and with appropriate educational materials to continue their learning. This learning is to be a full replacement for face-to-face instruction and is to abide by all IEPs, 504s, and other instructional needs of students.

Staff mindset

We asked our staff to stop for a moment and reflect upon what work would look like and feel like if staff and students were not on-site at RPS, but instead were at their homes providing instruction and instructional support synchronously (in real-time) and asynchronously (pre-recorded).

How did Richfield Public Schools staff prepare for distance learning?

First, we asked staff to be learners for eight days. This was a must. We needed staff to not only plan curriculum, and hone their digital lesson delivery skills, but we also needed them to build their capacity on adult-to-adult and adult-to-student digital connection. We taught them through a number of online learning sessions to become facilitators of synchronous and asynchronous
digital learning that would take place through our two learning management platforms - Seesaw (PreK-5) and Schoology (6-12). These systems are designed to be learning delivery platforms that allow for online and offline work to be completed, captured, and shared, as well as for teachers and students to communicate and collaborate effectively and safely.

What can you expect from staff and what is being asked of students and families?

Staff expectations

**Before the start of the day**
- Teachers will ensure that content and directions are posted on the learning management system (either Seesaw or Schoology).

**During regular school hours**
- Attendance will be taken each day.
- Staff will check and respond to email and voicemail twice a day (at minimum), in the morning and the afternoon, and will communicate office hours to students and families.

Student expectations

- Be present for learning each day. Distance learning is a direct substitute for in-person learning. Attendance is mandatory.
- Complete work on time. Teachers must share due dates with students on Seesaw and Schoology. Learning may occur whenever it’s most convenient for students throughout the day.
- If students need help with their work, their teacher is expected to check emails twice each day before 4 p.m. If students need help or are falling behind, they should message their teacher by email, through Seesaw, or in Schoology right away to let them know. Calling their teachers is also an option because they will be checking their voicemail daily. Finally, all teachers will be holding digital office hours. How to access teachers during those hours will be determined and shared by individual teachers.

Parent/guardian expectations

- Assist in the guidance and facilitation of student learning, as well as hold children accountable on the student expectations listed above.
- Parents/guardians are being asked to be DIRECT partners in distance learning. Hands-on, not hands-off.

What does distance learning look like?

For PreK-5 learners

- Staff will post announcements, updates, and learning opportunities to Seesaw (or Google Classroom for some STEM classes) in the morning. Then students complete them and submit them via technology applications.
- Some sessions such as interventions and special services will be completed face-to-face on
Hangouts Meet or Zoom.

For grade 6-8 learners

- Staff will post announcements, updates, and learning opportunities to Schoology in the morning. Then students complete them and submit them asynchronously.
- Some sessions such as AP or advanced classes, interventions, and special services will be completed face-to-face on Hangouts Meet, Schoology Conferences, or Zoom.

Daily attendance

- Daily attendance is any form of student contact on a school day. This includes a student login into Schoology, Seesaw, personal phone contact, email exchange, text message exchange, google conferencing, or other direct student contact.

Technology concerns

What if we don’t have good internet, we have a broken device or some other roadblock for access to digital learning opportunities?

- Richfield Public Schools pledges to get paper or alternative resources to students who cannot access learning opportunities via our technology.

What if we don’t have a good learning device?

- We pledge to issue devices to all students in grades 6-12 via our 1:1 device program and to provide a Chromebook to all elementary families in need. Contact the technology help desk at 612-798-6050 if you need a device.

Essential tools for facilitating distance learning

School employee-to-family phone calls

- [Google Voice](#)

Adult-to-student communication

- E-5: Gmail, Seesaw (if possible)
- 6-12: Schoology messages (preferred), Gmail (Ok, but steer them to Schoology)
- All district staff: Phone calls and alerts will be used by the district with contact information that is in our student information system (Synergy).

Synchronous learning connections (live, face-to-face)

- Schoology / [Schoology Conferencing](#)
- [Google Hangouts Meet](#) joined via a link (enable microphone and camera)

Student learning

- E-5: [Seesaw](#) (preferred), occasionally Google Classroom
- 6-12: [Schoology](#)
Best modes of communication for families to contact staff

- Gmail
- Voicemail (Instructions)
- ParentVue

Essential district-supported learning applications

- Schoology: Learning management
- Seesaw: Learning management
- Reading A-Z: Leveled readers for EC-5
- Dreambox Learning: Personalized math learning modules for each student
- Flipgrid: Student video responses to teacher prompts
- EdPuzzle: Formative assessment tool that allows teachers to add questions to videos in order to check for understanding
- Screencastify: Screen recording
- Pear Deck: Formative assessments in a presentation
- NewsELA: Current events articles for students able to be adjusted for appropriate Lexile scores
- CPM Math: Online textbook and manipulative for secondary students
- Kami: PDF editor for all

Support?

We have built out a comprehensive distance learning support page on our website.