

Saint Benedict Catholic School



Distance Learning Information for Students and Parents

Updated March 20, 2020



Dear Students and Parents,

It is during times like this that I am especially grateful to be part of such a strong community of support and faith. In just a few short days, I have been able to witness our school transition from in-class learning to distance learning. Teachers have adjusted their lesson plans and embraced new forms of technology. Parents have put in extra time and attention to keep students on track with their studies. Students have embraced the new method of learning and sought out engagement with teachers and peers. It is such a wonderful reflection of this community and how we live out the motto of St. Benedict and our school, “That in all things, God may be glorified.”

As we celebrate this Centennial year, it is an opportunity to look back on all the struggles faced by our predecessors. During the 100 years of our school’s existence, this community has dealt with wars, economic depression, disease, and monumental changes in society. Through it all, we have continued to educate the children of our community and grown more dedicated through adversity!

Please don't forget to keep in prayer all of those struggling with health issues, whether it be coronavirus or other illnesses. As a school community, we put our trust in God and in his loving care. Here is a reminder from Psalm 121:

I lift up my eyes to the hills. From where does my help come?
My help comes from the LORD, who made heaven and earth.
He will not let your foot be moved; he who keeps you will not slumber.
Behold, he who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.
The LORD is your keeper; the LORD is your shade on your right hand.
The sun shall not strike you by day, nor the moon by night.
The LORD will keep you from all evil; he will keep your life.
The LORD will keep your going out and your coming in from this time forth and forevermore.

In Christ,

Sean M. Cruess
Principal

(We gratefully acknowledge the assistance of St. Catherine’s School in creating this document)

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance and information for students and parents about the continuation of learning during a prolonged suspension of on-campus student activity. We hope that you will find this resource helpful as we transition to distance learning. Faculty in each division have developed distance learning plans using best practices that are in alignment with the age and developmental level of our students. Our primary goal is to provide our students with a calm, consistent, and engaging experience as they transition to learning from home. We aim to provide the best experience possible for our students while offering flexibility. We will actively monitor our Distance Learning Program and make adjustments as needed.

FACTS/ParentsWeb and the Weekly Newsletter will be the primary method of communication for student learning. Middle school classes will also utilize Google Classroom. We recognize that each family will have different circumstances, and we will work with you and your child to ensure he/she has the support he needs.

Please know that we are committed to ongoing evaluation and improvement of this plan. We will continue to monitor, evaluate and refine it to ensure the best possible experience for students, families and faculty.

Distance Learning Contacts

If you have a question about...	Please contact
General inquiries	Sean Cruess, scruess@saintbenedictschool.org
A learning activity or course assignment	Classroom teacher
A technology issue or support	Ash Tabrizi, atabrizi@saintbenedictschool.org Elizabeth Hanson, ehanson@saintbenedictschool.org

Core Digital Tools

Tool	Audience	Description
Email	Parents, students	Email will be used for major communications from the Principal, deans, and faculty, although faculty may use other channels to communicate. A compilation of all work for all grade levels will come through the Weekly Newsletter. Email may also be used to submit work to teachers.
FACTS/ParentsWeb	Parents	FACTS/ParentsWeb will serve as our hub for distance learning information for parents.
Zoom	Students	Videoconference tool for check-ins and Q & As
Google Classroom	Students	Primary hub for sharing, submitting, and grading assessments at the middle school level

Tips to Support Your Student

- Organize a dedicated learning space at home with all of the materials your student will need to work efficiently. This should be a common, quiet space with internet access where your student can be supervised.
- If your student will be using his webcam for Zoom sessions or video recordings, please help him assess his surroundings. All video conferencing and recording should be done in a common space with a neutral background if possible.
- Please help your child develop a daily schedule and remind him to take regular breaks from work and digital devices.
- Please help your student keep a regular bedtime and remind him to engage in physical activity as often as possible.
- Check in with your student regularly.
- Ensure your student has regular breaks, physical activity and FUN!

Lower Elementary and Upper Elementary Distance Learning Plan

Teachers have planned activities connected to our curriculum guided by clear learning objectives. We recognize that every family's circumstances are different and that completion of some of these activities, particularly for students in lower grades, will require increased parent supervision and engagement. We request elementary parents partner with teachers by providing support in the following ways:

- Monitor email updates daily
- Share the learning activities with your child and check in with him regarding his Progress
- Contact your student's elementary teacher with questions or suggestions

Sample Lower Elementary Schedule (sample schedules are only offered for guidance if parents would like to use them - they are completely optional)

9:00-9:30am	Make sure you had breakfast, say a morning prayer, review the work you have for the day, get any school supplies you might need, put on a big SMILE!
9:30-10:30am	Math/Religion
10:30-11:00am	Break/Email teacher with any questions
11:00-11:45am	English (Reading, Writing, Journal)
11:45am-12:00pm	Break/Email teacher with any questions
12:00-12:30pm	Lunch - don't forget your Angelus and meal blessing!
12:30-1:15pm	Additional English Time/Science/History
1:15-2:00pm	PE Break - take some active time outside :)
2:00-2:30pm	Art, Music, or other subjects, close the academic day in prayer, and find time to RELAX

Sample Upper Elementary Schedule (sample schedules are only offered for guidance if parents would like to use them - they are completely optional)

9:00-9:30am	Make sure you had breakfast, say a morning prayer, review the work you have for the day, get any school supplies you might need, put on a big SMILE!
9:30-10:30am	Math/Religion
10:30-10:45am	Break/Email teacher with any questions
10:45-11:45am	English (Reading, Writing, Grammar)
11:45am-12:00pm	Break/Email teacher with any questions
12:00-12:30pm	Lunch - don't forget your Angelus and meal blessing!
12:30-1:15pm	Additional English Time/Science/History
1:15-2:00pm	PE Break - take some active time outside :)
2:00-2:30pm	Latin/Art/Music, or other subjects, close the academic day in prayer, and find time to RELAX

Middle School Distance Learning Plan

All assignments and resources will be linked on your student's course pages in FACTS/ParentsWeb and Google Classroom. If a class is to meet in real-time, "virtually," attempts will be made to have it during the scheduled class time in order to avoid students having overlapping virtual classes. The teachers will let students know in advance about these real-time sessions.

Expectations for Students:

- Establish daily routines for engaging in learning
- Identify a comfortable, quiet space in your home where you can work effectively and successfully
- Regularly check email and Google Classroom for announcements, assignments and communication from your teachers
- Complete assignments with integrity and academic honesty, doing your best work
- Follow the SBCS Responsible Technology Use Policy (see below)
- Do your best to meet timelines, commitments, and due dates
- Communicate proactively with your teachers if you have questions, are unable to meet deadlines, or if you need additional support

We request Middle School parents partner with teachers by providing support in the following ways:

- Check in with your student regarding his progress as he gets used to distance learning
- Contact your student's Middle School teacher with questions, concerns and suggestions

Sample Middle School Schedule (sample schedules are only offered for guidance if parents would like to use them - they are completely optional)

8:30-9:00	Prayer and reflection
9:00-9:45	Science
9:45-10:00	Break/Email Questions
10:00-10:45	Math
10:45-11:00	Break/Email Questions
11:00-12:00	English & Seminar
12:00-1:00	Lunch and time outdoors - don't forget your Angelus and meal blessing!
1:00-1:45	History
1:45-2:00	Break/Email Questions
2:00-3:00	Latin & Religion
3:00-3:30	Specials

SBCS Technology Acceptable Use Policy

Your child will access technology resources and the internet at St. Benedict Catholic School. With this educational opportunity also comes responsibility. It is important that you and your child read this policy and discuss it together.

Please stress to your child the importance of using only his or her own account and password, and the importance of keeping it a secret from other students. Under no circumstances should your child let anyone else use his or her account and password.

Students

Students are responsible for appropriate behavior when using technology resources just as they are in a classroom or on a school playground. Students should consider their activities on the network public in nature--there should be no expectation of privacy. Students are expected not to access, keep, or send anything that they would not want their parents or teachers to see.

The use of technology resources is a privilege, not a right, and may be revoked if abused. The student is personally responsible for his/her actions in accessing and utilizing the school's technology resources. It is expected that students comply with the standards of behavior set forth in this policy.

Expected Behaviors

I will:

- Notify an adult immediately, if by accident, I encounter materials, which violate the standards of behavior set forth in this policy.
- Notify an adult immediately, if I am contacted by people I do not know or feel uncomfortable or bullied in any way by others on the network or the Internet.
- Be prepared to be held accountable for my actions and for the loss of privileges if the Technology Acceptable Use Policy rules are violated.

I will not:

- Use technology to harm myself, other people or their work.
- Share personal information via outside services, social networking sites or the Internet such as my age, address, phone number, school name or favorite places.
- Damage the network or any technology resource in any way.
- View, send or display offensive messages or images.
- Share my password or in any way obtain another person's password.
- Violate copyright laws.

Additional Resources

Centers for Disease Control (CDC) - COVID-19 How to Prepare

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/index.html>

World Health Organization (WHO) - COVID-19 Advice for the Public

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public>

Virginia Department of Health - COVID-19 in Virginia

<http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/>

Catholic Diocese of Richmond - Coronavirus Information and Resources

<https://richmonddiocese.org/coronavirus/>