



Dickson County Distance Learning

Handbook for Students and Parents

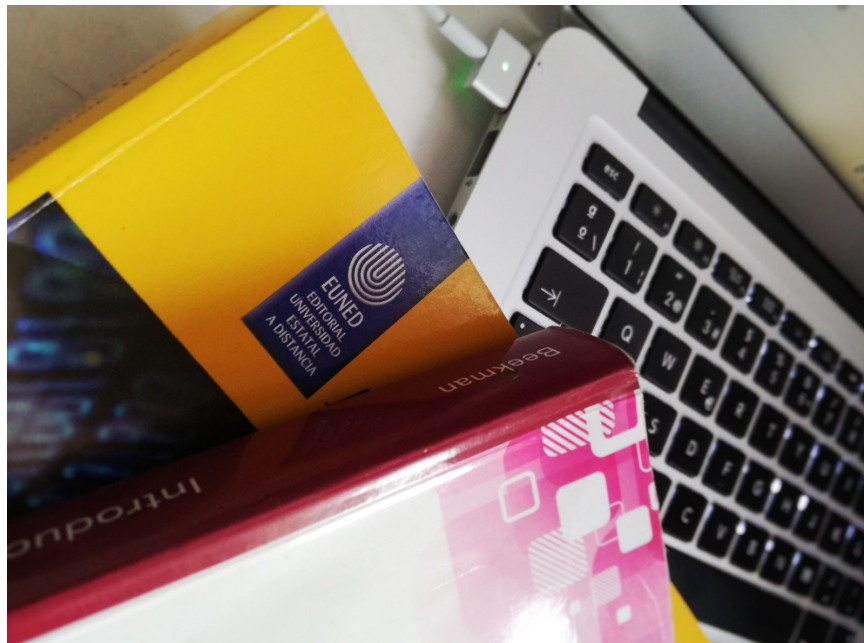


Table of Contents

[Introduction to Distance Learning](#)

[Parent Responsibilities](#)

[Student Responsibilities](#)

[Teacher Expectations](#)

[Classroom Guidelines and Expectations](#)

[Google Hangout Rules:](#)

[Google Classroom:](#)

[Special Populations](#)

[Grading](#)

[Attendance](#)

[Communication](#)

Introduction to Distance Learning

Dickson County Schools focus on making sure every child has someone to connect with and the supports necessary for all students to be successful. We will continue to Make it Count, we will put Students First, set High Expectations for all, continue to have Honor and Pride for Dickson County, be Purpose-Driven, and always share Mutual Responsibility for students.

I want to welcome parents and students to Dickson County Schools Distance Learning program. This program was developed to give students and families an additional choice in education. One thing I have learned over the years is everyone learns differently, and it is an educators responsibility to meet all children no matter the learning style. I am so excited for the opportunity to work with families and students across Dickson County. I truly believe that this is a wonderful opportunity.

Every K-8 student will have a teacher for each core content area (Math, English, Science, and Social Studies). High school students will be served through the Edgenuity program. A person from CWHS or DCHS will be their contact person if they need assistance with the content.

This handbook is designed to help provide guidance and answer questions. At any point during your child's learning process, if you need help please reach out. You can receive assistance by calling 615-740-6070 (we only have one phone line so if you don't get us the first time don't give up), you can send an email to gethelp@dcstn.org.

Parent Responsibilities

- Establishing routines and expectations at home
 - Have the conversation with your learner.
 - Let the student know what you expect as a parent.
- Defining physical space for your child to study
 - This space just needs to be set aside for your student to be able to work. It doesn't have to be anything fancy but just a defined space
- Monitoring communications from your child's teachers
 - Make sure you can contact your child's teacher. All have an email address through the school system and many have set up other ways for you to communicate with them. If they cannot answer your questions, always feel free to contact Dr. Mason.
- Taking an active role in helping your child process his/her learning
 - Like you always have, help your student when they need it but do not do it for them. One of the hardest things to do as a parent is to watch your child struggle, but a productive struggle is a way for your child to build confidence as they grow.
- Encouraging physical activity and/or exercise
 - Make sure they take breaks and go outside. It is easy to lose time on a computer. Everyone needs to play some.
- Remaining mindful of your child's stress or worry
 - When you see those signs, make sure and reach out. We are still here to help with that also. Change is stressful for everyone.

- Monitoring how much time your child is spending online. Between school and video games make sure your child's day is not all screen time.
- Keeping your child social, but set rules around their social media interactions.

Human interaction is important for all of us. In some situations you may not be able to do it in person but there are lots of ways to meet digitally. Please make sure those are healthy interactions.

For working parents, making sure your child is completing his or her assignments is not easy. I know the decision you have made was not easy but in your family's best interest. If there is anything you need help with that moves beyond learning please let us know. Dickson County Schools have resources to help.

Once your child has been scheduled to a distance learning classroom, his or her teacher will contact you with the specifics.

Following guidance from the TN Department of Education, we can share the following information regarding grade bands. In order to accommodate families' schedules, independent work does not have to be completed within the 8 to 3 window. Also if students are unable to take part in live instruction, the sessions will be recorded for later viewing through Google Classroom.

Kindergarten: The daily average time is 4.5 hours with at least 50% of that time spent interacting with the teacher.

1st – 5th Grades: The daily average time is 7 hours with at least 50% of that time spent interacting with the teacher.

6th – 8th Grades: The daily average time is 7 hours with at least 25% of that time spent interacting with the teacher.

9th-12th Grades: Students will be working through an online platform, and school-based facilitators will be monitoring their progress.

Please remember a 7 hour day includes physical activity, enrichment time such as art or music, and lunch. The student will not be in front of his or her computer for 7 hours. Again, independent work time for assignments is flexible.

As a parent of a distance learning student:

I understand and agree that by typing my name below and submitting this form constitutes an electronic signature that shall be valid as an original signature. By signing below I am stating that I am aware the DCS attendance policy is in place and that the state requires attendance to be recorded for students engaged in distance learning. K-8 will be taught by district certified teachers using district pacing guides. High school students will take classes through Edgenuity, which teaches the TN state standards. Secondary teachers will oversee secondary students' progress.

Participation in the DCS Distance Learning program requires a one semester commitment. The second semester begins January 5, 2021. In order for distance learning students to be considered present for the day they must be interacting and responding to instruction or engaged on the Edgenuity learning platform. The teachers will take attendance for each class based on the following:

- Submission of an assignment for the class
- Participation in an online discussion for the class

- Participation in synchronous learning in an online classroom or discussions with the teacher/class via phone call or email (synchronous learning refers to a learning event in which a group of students are engaging in learning at the same time)
- Completion of assessments/assignments for the class

Students with three (3) unexcused absences shall be subject to the progressive truancy intervention framework outlined in the DCS Student Handbook.

Parent Name (Print)

Parent Signature

Student Name (Print)

Student Signature

Student Responsibilities

A note as we begin this section. These are the minimum responsibilities for students. Your teacher may have specific ones for his or her classroom.

- Establish daily routines for engaging in the distance learning experiences.
- Identify a space in your home where you can work effectively and successfully, and participate in live online learning.
- Regularly monitor online platforms: always check the platforms your teachers said they would use.
- Engage in all learning with academic honesty
Do not cheat or plagiarize. We are here to help.
- Communicate proactively with your teachers if you cannot meet deadlines or require additional support.
- Comply with school internet safety policies including expectations for online etiquette.
- Have a studybuddy.
- Celebrate your success.

Teacher Expectations

- Collaborate with other members of the team and department, as appropriate, to design distance learning instruction for students.
- Foster a sense of community and connectedness between and among students. Check on every student daily.
- Provide students with timely communication and feedback. Please make it a goal to respond in two days.
- Take attendance, record absences, maintain student files.
- Create assessments that allow for the ability to gauge student progress during distance learning. Connect everything to standards. Provide at least two checks per week.
- Create ways to continue to collect information and provide feedback that will allow for grades to be reported for report cards/transcripts.
- Every teacher is expected to have a Google Classroom for each class they teach and record live sessions.
- Every teacher needs to add me as a co-teacher to each of their Google Classrooms.
- All assignments need to be added to Google Classroom each Friday no later than 4 pm for secondary and by Monday for elementary.

- Be mindful of how long an activity takes. Sometimes they take longer than we think.
- At least 2 checks for understanding must be given each week.

Classroom Guidelines and Expectations

Google Hangout Rules:

- Show up on time at the scheduled time.
- Find a quiet place, from distractions (pets, television).
- Maintain respect in both speaking, writing, and appearance.
- Stay on mute. Only unmute yourself if you have a question or something to contribute.
- Video needs to remain ON and to focus. Eye contact should be maintained.
- Refrain from chewing gum, eating, or drinking in front of the camera.
- Make sure you are dressed and not wearing anything with profanity, alcohol, drugs, or tobacco products.
- Do not travel around the house with your device. Try to remain in your designated learning area.

- Remember that this is a class, treat it as one Rules for Posting Comments (oral and written).

Google Classroom:

- Be kind to each other.
- Use educational language not slang or profanity.
- Stay on topic and Participate.
- Treat others online as you wish you to be treated in person.
- Stay focused on your learning and help others.
- Remember that what you post on Google Classroom will be seen by all of your classmates, teachers, and administrators, please make good choices and show PRIDE.
- Turn your assignments in and if you need help or have problems contact your teacher.
- If you do not have internet access and have to download assignments and materials, please let your teacher know.
- Make sure you look for rubrics and instructions on assignments to guide you as you work.
- Do not try to do all the assignments in one night. Remember this is for the week.

Special Populations

Every student in the Distance Learning Program for Dickson County will still receive services based on need. The level of services will be determined just like it is in a school building. Over accommodating hinders a student as much as under accommodating. Your student has a specific person responsible for making sure their services and needs are met. You should hear from them as well. If you feel your student's needs are not being met please reach out to rmason@dcstn.org and we will solve the issue together.

Grading

The focus of grading is decided on the mastery level of a standard. Each assignment a teacher gives a student is important to determine if a student has learned the standard. While we believe that attending live Google Meets to interact with the teacher and classmates promotes and increases student academic achievement, our Distance Learning Program credits student attendance according to completion of student assignments, tests, and assessments. Each Friday, teachers will review the completion of their students' assignments for the present week. Assignments not completed will be assigned a zero. Students will have until the next Friday (or 5 school days) to complete the missing assignment/s in order to receive a higher grade. Official grades will be entered in Skyward weekly for parents to see. Unofficial grades are in Google Classroom. If you have questions or concerns please reach out to the classroom teacher first and if it cannot be resolved please contact rmason@dcstn.org.

Attendance

Your student's teacher will be recording attendance daily. Attendance is based on completion of assignments. We understand that your child may only be able to turn in assignments once a week. If a teacher cannot reach a student via Google Meet, Google Classroom, or email, after one week they are to contact the parent by phone to make sure there are no problems and to see if anyone needs help. If they cannot make contact, a call from the Principal will be made. It is very important for your student to stay on top of his or her learning. If your student has ever missed a week of school and was sent home make up work you can remember the stack. Things will pile up in Google Classroom and there will not be a visual reminder.

School days in which assignments have not been completed will be coded Unexcused unless the parent contacts the teacher to give an acceptable reason for the student not completing the work. Students do have the option of completing assignments for a grade for days coded as Unexcused. This opportunity is granted in an effort to support continued student learning.

Students with three unexcused absences shall be subject to the progressive Truancy Intervention Framework outlined in the Dickson County Schools Student handbook.

Communication

Every teacher has office hours scheduled to assist you and your student. If you cannot connect with them or there is a problem please contact rmason@dcstn.org. It is important for students to maintain daily contact with teachers if at all possible. We want to make sure they are doing well and having no issues. If there is no way to email or participate online, please call New Directions Academy 615-740-6070 so we can let the teacher know.