



ST. TIMOTHY'S
SCHOOL

Life-Ready.

March 19, 2020

Dear Parents of Middle School Students,

On behalf of Lower School Head, Lindsay Behrens, and myself, we hope you all are doing well. In this uncertain time, we are reminded of the amazing community that we have at St. Timothy's School, whether on-campus or off. While we miss seeing the children every day, we are excited to get back into the learning routine with them, even from a distance. Our teachers have been developing learning opportunities that are age-appropriate, meaningful, and effective, while being mindful of the complex situations that families may face over the coming weeks. There will likely be lessons we all learn along the way, and we will be seeking your feedback throughout. We appreciate your patience, flexibility and grace as we make this transition. We are so grateful for our teachers, who are giving it their all for our students...because they deserve nothing less!

We wanted to start by fully communicating how distance learning at St. Timothy's School will work. In the letter that follows, I explain our distance learning schedule, the set-up of our classes, and how you or your child can check in with teachers with any questions. **We have also sent a [short orientation FAQ document](#) to help get everyone started. It includes information about where to find your child's schedule and how to log into classes.** In addition, our newly created [Middle School Distance Learning Portal](#) will be an important resource for you and children as we make this transition.

Schedule

Our distance learning schedule was created with the understanding that flexibility will be important as we navigate this new process together:

- Instead of our traditional schedule with subject classes meeting 2-5 times per week, classes will now meet 1-3 times a week.
- Those classes will run through Google Classroom and will contain live/interactive sessions on Google Meet or Zoom and independent assignments.
- Most of the classes are offered twice daily. If your child has a conflict with the class they are scheduled for, he/she can email their teacher and drop into the other class section. If there is a conflict with that second session, the live stream and videoconferencing sessions will be recorded and available to view later.
- In addition, we have set up the schedule so there are portions of the day when students can (and should) get outside for fresh air, play, and exercise.
- The [Middle School Distance Learning Portal](#) houses master schedules for each grade level as well as important information about expectations, grading, and other aspects of our new distance learning structure.
- Information about how to find your child's schedule can be found [here](#).



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Thursday, March 19th and Friday, March 20th are meant to be orientation days during which students can explore the Classrooms asynchronously. Starting Monday, March 23rd, students are expected to attend class meetings as listed on their schedule. Please have your child enter their class's Google Classroom at the start of each class. Instructions from the teacher will be waiting there.

Classes

Your child will have 3 to 4 classes on most days.

- Classes will be run through Google Classroom.
- Classes are scheduled for an hour but will generally run about 45 minutes.
- Students are not required to wear their uniforms to their classes but should dress appropriately for school.
- If you have any questions about the assignments in the Google Classroom, please email that teacher directly.
- Information about how to enroll in classes can be found [here](#).

Office Hours / Communication

There is time scheduled each week for your child to check in with their teachers.

- Those meetings will take place over videoconference (either Google Meet or Zoom).
- We are scheduling those meetings using Sign-up Genius. That will be posted on the [Middle School Distance Learning Portal](#) by early next week.
- Day-to-day questions can be asked directly to teachers via email.
- You may also use our phone system as usual. Teachers are checking their voicemails remotely.

Learning Support

While Teaching and Learning Coordinator Beth Popp will be reaching out to the families of students with whom she works on campus, she will also be available to connect during Office Hours to answer questions or concerns for any student or parent. She is also available over email. Please reach out to her at bpopp@sttimothys.org with any questions.

Social and Emotional Learning and Counseling

In addition to the academic classes, social and emotional learning work will continue to be offered.

- SEL class meets once per week for Grades 6, 7 and 8.
- In addition to the SEL classes, small group check-ins with Guidance Counselor Melanie Savage and SEL teacher Kim Balentine will be offered. They will follow up with details at a future date.
- Mrs. Savage is also available for conversations or scheduled check-ins with your child. Please reach out to her at msavage@sttimothys.org with any questions or to schedule.



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Athletics

Athletic Director Mike McConoughey has set up an Athletics Google Classroom where he will house a number of workouts and games that students can make part of their routines at home. He will send out a follow up email with that Class Code.

- In addition, keep an eye out for the launch of our Titan Walking Challenge next week.

Tech and Schedule Support

We have worked hard for the most successful possible transition to a distance learning structure, but we anticipate there will be (hopefully minimal) technical challenges.

- **Please have all of your children reboot their computers before the end of the day on Friday. Some videoconferencing apps – not in use until Monday morning - will require a reboot in order to fully update.**
- We have expanded our tech support team and have teachers, staff and administrators available to answer questions / provide support. Please reach out to helpdesk@sttimothys.org or call the school at (919) 787-3011 x4887 if you have any tech issues.
- Registrar Erin Spalinski is also available to answer any schedule questions at espalinski@sttimothys.org or (919) 787-3011 x1021.
- Teachers will be available to answer questions about their classes via email throughout our time as distance learners.
- Finally, if there is any support I can provide, be it about schedule or other concerns, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Feedback

We believe our plans ensure quality and substantive teaching and learning will continue, but we also want to make sure our structure is flexible and supports our students. As confident as we are about what we have built this week, we anticipate that feedback from the first week of instruction may change some things that we do in the second week of instruction. Midway through that first week (March 23rd to 27th) keep an eye out for a survey to help provide feedback about this rollout and the structure of instruction. We appreciate any feedback you can provide.

Your children have also received an email from me describing our distance learning environment. If they have any questions, they reach out their teacher or to me. We are always happy to help.

Thanks to all of the St. Timothy's families for their support as we make this transition.

All the best,

Tim Coleman
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