

FORT DODGE COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

**RETURN TO LEARN:
REQUIRED AT HOME
LEARNING MODEL**



Fort Dodge Community School District

Required At Home Learning Model

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

The introduction of COVID-19 has changed our world. However, it has not changed the need to educate all of our students. The Fort Dodge Community School District (FDCSD) is committed to providing the resources needed for our students to continue to receive a high quality education. While the way we deliver lessons may change, our priority of student achievement and well-being has and will remain.

The FDCSD is working diligently to provide and implement a learning model for instruction that continues to allow for student learning and mastery of the Early Learning Standards and the Iowa Core Academic Standards. No matter what the public health landscape looks like and what limitations may be placed on instruction by the Iowa Department of Public Health and the Iowa Department of Education, our commitment will continue to be on teaching and learning for the 2020-2021 school year.

The safety of our students and staff is a top priority for the FDCSD. The needs of all students will continue to be met through meaningful and purposeful instruction regardless of the delivery method.

This document provides guidance for students, families and employees regarding the At Home Learning Model. It is broken down into seven categories: leadership, infrastructure, health and safety, Iowa academic standards, equity, social emotional behavioral health and communications.

DISTRICT MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Fort Dodge Community School District is to provide quality learning experiences and build relationships that develop productive citizens ready for their futures.

DISTRICT VISION STATEMENT

The Fort Dodge Community School District is an innovative school community that exceeds expectations, builds meaningful relationships and creates the foundation for all learners to excel.

LEADERSHIP

The Fort Dodge Community School District will continue to focus learning on strong relationships and instruction for students. Regardless of the learning model, resources and systems will be in place to support teachers and staff in meeting the needs of all learners. District leaders will work to continuously ensure the academic and social emotional needs of students and staff are being met.

The FDCSD strives to keep our Dodger families and the community informed and engaged in the happenings of the school system. With the expected changes in the public health landscape for 2020-2021 school year, we anticipate the need for increased communication efforts around things like the status of schools (open or closed in response to virus outbreaks), health advisories and guidelines, operational modifications, resources, government actions and crisis situations.

There will likely be a need to move through our three learning models (At School, At Home and Hybrid). The models are flexible and fluid to allow for this movement. Learning in all the models, including At Home, will be required.

REQUIRED AT HOME LEARNING CONSIDERATIONS

During the spring of 2020, continuous learning opportunities were voluntary and participation was far below 100%. To successfully move to require At Home learning, the FDCSD will work through barriers such as attendance, family/home dynamics, technology accessibility, professional learning for staff and more.

MOVING FORWARD

The health and safety of our students and staff will continue to be our top priority. The FDCSD leadership team will work to ensure consistency, fluidity and continuity in how information and learning are provided.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Infrastructure includes organizational structures critical in day-to-day operations. This includes ensuring everyone has access to the technology needed to support student learning, establishing district/school calendars to maximize student learning opportunities, understanding how to approach attendance and grading/promotion across learning models, supporting needed professional development opportunities for teachers and staff, and adhering to privacy/FERPA concerns.

TECHNOLOGY ACCESS

For the purpose of required At Home learning, the FDCSD will provide each TK-12 student with a device (Chromebook or iPad).

The District has external internet access points at Butler Elementary, Cooper Elementary, FDMS, FDSH and the Central Office. Maps showing the best coverage areas are posted on the COVID-19 update page of [fdschools.org](https://www.fdschools.org). Weather and distance do affect the Wi-Fi signal, so the closer students can park/get to the access point, the better.

For families without internet access, in addition to online learning options, learning guidebooks will also be provided for required at home learning.

CALENDAR

The 2020-2021 calendar has student learning beginning on August 25 and concluding on May 28. There are teacher professional development days built into six months (August, October, November, January, March and May). The District will maintain the calendar and school day times as previously adopted to expand educational instruction opportunities.

20-21 School Hours

- TK and Elementary: 8 a.m. – 3:10 p.m. (addition of 25 minutes/day)
- Middle School: 8 a.m. – 3:05 p.m. (addition of 15 minutes/day)
- Senior High: 8 a.m. – 3 p.m.
- Preschool: 8 a.m. – 2:45 p.m.

[20-21 Calendar](#)

ATTENDANCE

In all learning models (At Home, At School or Hybrid) learning is required which makes regular attendance important. In the event of At Home learning, a special COVID-19 code will be used to track attendance in Infinite Campus. Use of this code by the District will shut off the automatic attendance dialer.

During At Home learning, learning will take place through both asynchronous (instruction and learning do not happen at the same time for all learners, resources and tasks provided by the teacher can be completed at a time of day that works best for the student and family) and synchronous (learning takes place at the same time for all students through resources provided by the teacher at a specific time) learning. This means attendance may be taken at a specific time or may be based on completion of tasks by a deadline.

GRADING/PROMOTION

In any mode of instruction, At Home, At School or Hybrid, the FDCSD's current grading policies and practices will be used to assess student learning. This will help ensure consistency for staff, students and families if the need to move between learning models occurs during the year. Since learning is required through all models, grades will be assigned and credit accrued for all classes. Teachers will update grades in Infinite Campus a minimum of weekly to help families keep track of how students are doing.

STAFF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Professional learning opportunities for staff will focus on health and safety, technology (engagement, assessment and feedback strategies for at home learning), and social emotional behavioral health. There are six days prior to school starting that are designated for staff professional development and work days. There are an additional six days built into the calendar for staff professional development. In addition, staff will continue to meet regularly in their Professional Learning Communities.

PRIVACY/FERPA

The FDCSD will continue to adhere to all privacy and FERPA laws.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

The health and safety of our Dodger students, families and staff are first and foremost in planning for the 2020-2021 school year. There are several considerations that cut across delivery models. During periods of At Home learning the following recommendations and guidelines will be used.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Staff members entering buildings during use of the At Home Learning Model will be required to answer screening questions and asked to maintain social distancing guidelines in place at the time. Staff will not be required to wear a mask.
- If appropriate, staff will have access to PPE and education on how to correctly use the PPE.
- Education on proper hand washing will be shared with staff working in buildings and hand sanitizer will be supplied in all buildings.
- All in building meetings will be scheduled through the secretary to ensure notification of the custodial staff for additional cleaning after each meeting.
- Buildings will be closed to public activities when At Home learning is occurring.
- School events such as conferences, IEP and/or 504 meetings, etc. will be held online when

- possible during periods of at home learning.
- School nurses will provide information to be communicated to families regarding resources and education on the current virus situation.

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS

The FDCSD Buildings and Grounds department is dedicated to providing clean, safe and well-maintained learning environments that support all educational activities. Cleaning practices focus on cleaning for health, which includes an emphasis on disinfection of health sensitive and high touch areas, where bacteria and viruses are most likely to be transmitted.

There is a great emphasis on disinfection activities during pandemics and times of health crisis. The disinfection of health sensitive areas is a priority and this work is required at all times, including times when there is a shortage of custodial staff.

The greatest health sensitive areas are disinfected a minimum of once per day. High touch surfaces are areas in the following locations will be disinfected a minimum of once per day:

- Classrooms
- Media Centers
- Health Offices
- Cafeterias
- Locker Rooms
- Weight Rooms

IOWA ACADEMIC STANDARDS

At the FDCSD, academic learning will continue to be a priority, regardless of the methods by which students return to learning for the 2020-2021 school year. While some planning considerations will be similar across different return to learn delivery models, there are also unique factors that need to be considered.

During use of the At Home Model, learning occurs at home/away from school with instruction and support provided by FDCSD teachers and staff. In this model, both asynchronous and synchronous sessions are supported with communication, interaction, and digital and paper learning.

Asynchronous is when instruction and learning do not happen at the same time for all learners. Resources and tasks provided by the teacher can be completed at a time of day that works best for the student and family.

Synchronous is when learning takes place at the same time for all students through resources provided by the teacher at a specific time.

In the At Home Model, teachers will meet virtually with students through Zoom or Google Meet on a daily basis. Parents/Caregivers are welcome to join the virtual meetings to learn how to support their students while away from school. Students will practice skills away from the time with the teacher. Teachers will provide regular feedback regarding student performance.

The Academic Standards team identified critical action steps that will address the learning needs of all students in an At Home Learning Model. The action steps include:

- Determining Universal Power Standards
- Use of pacing guides for content areas
- Use of Professional Learning Communities by staff to access student progress
- Professional development on how to use student voice, differentiation, scaffolding, and online instruction as well as social emotional behavioral health
- Twice weekly check ins by staff with students
- Develop online learning norms, consistent across levels, and practice these norms with students
- Develop and use a consistent student performance feedback protocol

EQUITY

The FDCSD is committed to creating equitable learning opportunities for all students. Equity in this context is focused on ensuring all students, including students with individualized education plans, English language learners, students at risk and talented and gifted students, have access to a free and appropriate public education, are able to access the Iowa Content Standards and have the supports needed to progress in their learning.

EQUITY FOR STUDENTS ON IEPS

Parents/guardians will be provided necessary passwords and video tutorials for programs used. Back to school events will focus on teaching technology used. Links to how to videos will be posted online. IEP meetings will be held with the parent/guardian, principal and special education teacher physically together when possible with all others participating via Zoom.

Teachers and paras will have set collaborative time for special education and general education every week. Schedules for every teacher will be provided to all staff. Special education staff will be responsible to taking inventory of their students' needs. They will also be responsible for gathering outside information and resources including testing needed to determine eligibility.

Services for students who are unable to be served remotely will be determined by the IEP team and return to learn section of the IEP. Students who are identified as alternate assessment and or Family Service Plans will be in person instruction location to be determined by the IEP team.

504 plans will be reviewed, and changes made as a team to address At Home learning with support needed in place for student success. These plans will need to be completed by September 30, 2020. 504 meetings would follow IEP protocol for meeting with families, administration and counseling staff on site for these meetings.

EQUITY FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS (ELL)

Parents/guardians will be provided recordings in Spanish as well as in English. Parents/guardians will be provided necessary passwords and video tutorials for programs used. Back to school events will focus on teaching technology used. Links to how to videos will be posted online.

ELL students will each have a device and access to the internet. All ELL students will have access to the Imagine Learning program.

Teachers and staff will provide communication in English and Spanish.

General education teachers who have a student who is identified as an ELL student, will have all materials to the ELL staff by the Monday before they need the materials for class or home

communication. This will allow for all support staff the time to translate materials for learning and or communication with our families. All translations from staff must be submitted electronically by 4 pm to the support staff's school issued email on Monday. When staff send in materials to be translated, the materials need to be in Google docs with the edit feature turned on.

EQUITY FOR STUDENTS AT-RISK

Parents/guardians will be provided necessary passwords and video tutorials for programs used. Back to school events will focus on teaching technology used. Links to how to videos will be posted online.

Schedules for every teacher will be provided for all staff to reference. At-risk teams will meet weekly to determine needs of students, review interventions and provide tools for support for students. Intervention tools for academics and behavior will be provided as needed by staff. Staff will be available to pick up hard copy materials from students without internet access. Staff will check in with students/families to help determine basic needs such as food, shelter, clothing and mental and physical health.

Students identified as at-risk will meet at least weekly with staff for academic/behavior supports. All students will have a device and access to the internet.

EQUITY FOR TAG STUDENTS

Parents/guardians will be provided necessary passwords and video tutorials for programs used. Back to school events will focus on teaching technology used. Links to how to videos will be posted online.

TAG students will meet virtually at least once per week while using the at home learning model.

Teachers/staff will schedule a virtual meeting with each group at least once a week. Social emotional learning and extensions will be addressed. There will be consistent communication from core area teachers to provide support.

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

The social emotional behavioral health of the FDCSD teachers, staff, students and families is first and foremost as we plan for the 2020-2021 school year. Our priority will be securing and enhancing supportive relationships with staff, students and their families when a transition to at home learning is needed.

During use of the At Home Learning Model:

Staff will be allowed to record some lessons and will hold office hours to provide flexibility. Co-facilitators will be assigned for Zoom classes to help with classroom management. The implementation of engaging strategies, brain breaks and transitions will be encouraged to help build relationships.

Zoom etiquette and safety will be taught to staff, students and families. Expectations, schedules and routines will be communicated and taught as well.

Student social emotional learning will be supported virtually. Teachers will incorporate this learning into their lessons. Morning meetings and community circles will be held. Fun, non-academic activities may also be held online with peers.

A central website location will be identified for providing well-being information to families. Information on community resources to support SEL will be shared.

Outside service providers will not be allowed onsite. Alternative methods, such as virtual appointments, will be scheduled during school hours. Schools will regularly share how school counselors can be accessed.

Assemblies may be held virtually or special announcements may be used for students.

Virtual staff gatherings will be held to maintain culture and relationships.

COMMUNICATIONS

The FDCSD Communications department will continue to keep staff, families and students and the Fort Dodge community informed about the work of the District.

Regardless of the learning model being used, important information will need to be shared. The Communications department's goal is to produce clear and consistent messages across all channels to educate and inform our stakeholders.

In order to ensure all families receive important messages, translation services will be used for Spanish speaking families.

INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

The FDCSD Communications department provides regular and urgent messages to our staff in multiple ways including email, phone calls, text messages, face-to-face and/or virtual meetings the staff intranet site, website and social media channels.

- Email is our primary mode of communication with employees. All staff should check their email a minimum of once a day during periods of at home learning.
- Phone and text is used for urgent messages and as a reminder for staff to check their email.
- Face-to-face/virtual meetings may be used by building and/or department leaders to share updates and information.
- Staff are encouraged to like or follow the District on Facebook and Twitter for updates and reminders.

EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION

These are the messages sent to all audiences outside of the employees. They include day-to-day messaging, urgent information and changes to health/safety status. In many instances these messages will also be sent to staff. Delivery method will include emails, phone and text messaging, the website and social media. It may also include traditional media coverage.

- Email is our primary mode of communication. Families can sign up to receive emails from the District through their Infinite Campus Parent account.
- Phone and text is used to provide important updates and crisis alerts. With the potential for movement between the three learning models, these immediate contact tools become increasingly important. Families can sign up to receive calls and/or texts through their Infinite Campus Parent account.
- Website announcements are used for timely updates and announcements. Information will be placed in a banner near the top of the homepage, www.fdschools.org.

- Social media is used for updates and reminders. Much of the content will encourage interaction and participation. Follow or like the District on Facebook and Twitter for updates.
- Media coverage can be reactive or proactive. When possible media stories will be shared on our social media.

CRISIS COMMUNICATION

Returning to school during an ongoing pandemic will likely create the need for day-to-day health and status updates. To communicate our updates and responses, the District will rely on Infinite Campus for calls, emails and texts, our website and social media channels.

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