

# A.E.S. Distance Learning



Andover Elementary School strives to provide students with a high-quality distance learning experience when they are opting to remain at home or when we are directed to close the physical school building. Currently, the 2020/2021 school year is set to begin with students and staff returning to the physical classrooms at Andover Elementary. Parents are provided with the option to have their children remain at home and receive their instruction via our distance learning model. In order to provide more insight as to what distance learning will look like, we are providing this brief description here to allow for parents to make the decision as to where their child will be attending in September.

## **Goals of Distance Learning:**

- To provide a platform that allows flexible access for all students and families
- To continue instruction using many existing programs for students in partnership with families
- To ensure continuity between all classes and within all grades in a digital learning environment
- To provide a means to maintain school connection with families and students
- To provide enhanced Interim Learning Opportunities with support considerations for families and students
- To preserve our Workshop instructional format focused on mini-lessons, practice, video conferencing and providing high-quality actionable feedback to students

# Distance Learning Considerations

Reflections have been made upon the distance learning we completed during last year. We understand there were areas that operated very well and others that could use improvement. Based on feedback from parents and new state guidelines, the expectations for all involved in distance learning will consider the following:

- Andover Elementary's distance learning approach begins with the assertion that the learning experiences that teachers design when students are physically present cannot simply be replicated digitally through our best efforts. In particular, the invaluable social interactions and discourse that occur naturally among students and between teachers and students cannot be recreated in the same way. Consequently, teachers must find new methods for providing timely and specific feedback to support student growth and learning.
- Attendance will be expected and recorded in accordance with state guidelines. Students will be expected to attend to their class work each school day. If they are unable to attend, a parent will need to notify the main office.
- In an effort to help maintain a balance between online and offline learning opportunities, parents will be encouraged to exchange materials on a developed schedule so the teacher may provide materials and receive completed work back to provide feedback.
- Instruction will be provided in various forms including scheduled live video conferencing via Zoom (synchronous learning) and recorded lessons (asynchronous learning) that the student may access at any time. Attendance at the scheduled Zoom meetings will be expected.

**Synchronous:** Students and teachers working together and interacting in a digital space concurrently.

**Asynchronous:** Teachers post direct instructional videos and learning materials online. Students engage with class materials and complete work at their own pace within a given time period.

## **Distance Learning expectations:**

### **Communication:**

Communication between all distance learning team members will be critical. Teachers will offer hours of instruction, will make themselves available for individualized support and will be responsible for monitoring online communication. Parents will be expected to communicate with their child's teachers on a regular basis to share thoughts, questions, ideas and solutions. Forms of communication such as email, Google Classroom, Seesaw, Zoom, or telephone will be used to foster a strong parent/teacher relationship. All students will have access to a Google Account and email. They will be responsible for checking this on a daily basis as well as navigating to all Seesaw and Google Classrooms depending on their grade level. With their school email account, students have the ability to email their teachers only, not other students.

### **Collaboration:**

We are approaching Distance Learning as a team effort. Teachers recognize that parents play a critical role in the effectiveness and efficiency of distance learning. Teachers will provide instruction through a variety of means such as live and recorded lessons, online resources and offline work. Students will be provided with ELA and Math work daily and lessons in all other subject areas will be delivered on a weekly basis. Parents are encouraged to seek unique learning opportunities and work together with us and their students to help them achieve their academic goals.

### **Critical Thinking:**

Teachers should approach Distance Learning as a way to design experiences and facilitate learning for their students. When school is in session and students are opting to remain at home, their learning opportunities will be modeled after what is happening in the classroom, however, their assignments may need to be modified to meet the limitations of distance learning.

### **Creativity:**

We recognize that it will be necessary for all stakeholders During Distance Learning to think creatively as new challenges emerge. Parents are encouraged to communicate challenges they

are experiencing so creative solutions can be sought. Teachers are encouraged to create authentic learning experiences that allow for individual creativity. Assessing student understanding will need to be approached creatively and with the understanding that traditional assessment methods may not fit distance learning.

**Flexibility:**

The Connecticut State Department of Education will be providing guidance that may change throughout the school year. As teachers navigate new forms of instruction, flexibility will be critical to improving our understanding of how to best educate students.

## Distance Learning Resources

In order to provide students with a varied and enriching online learning experience, various online websites and tools will be utilized. It should be noted that all students will have Google accounts that allow them to correspond with their teachers via gmail. Students will be provided with a master list of all their account login information. All student, both in-school and at home will receive training on how to utilize these tools. Personal Chromebooks will be available for every student from Kindergarten through 6th grade.

The following are just some of the sites that will be used:

	Kindergarten	1st Grade	2nd Grade	3rd Grade	4th Grade	5th Grade	6th Grade
Main Learning Platform	Seesaw			Google Classroom			
ELA & Math		Freckle					
Multi Subject	Brainpopjr.com & Brainpop.com						
Reading	Raz-Kids				Newsela/ Readworks		
Math	Think Central (Go Math!)						
Math	ixl.com						
Typing Skills		Typing Club					

## **There are two basic types of assessments:**

**Formative assessments** occur within a course or lesson and are used to determine how well a student is learning the material. They are most effective when they are ongoing, consistent, and provide critical feedback to learners.

**Summative assessments** are sometimes referred to as a final exam and measure what the student has learned after completing a course.

Students participating in Distance Learning will be assessed using a variety of methods to include but not limited to the following:

- Online Quizzes
- Learning journals
- Independent projects
- Student Reflections
- Oral presentations
- Self- Assessments
- Online Discussions
- Performance Tasks
- Essay Questions
- Drag-N-Drop Activities
- Online Poll
- Game-Type Activities
- Simulations

Three times a year, students at AES participate in benchmark assessments in reading and math using STAR Renaissance. This information measures growth and guides instruction in meeting student needs. Efforts will be made by AES to schedule these assessments to be taken on site, if feasible.

### **Students receiving Special Ed/Support services:**

Andover Elementary School will regularly communicate with families, providing an appropriate, team determined remote learning model to stay connected. Each student's IEP and/or 504 plan will be utilized to create support opportunities for students and families, while remaining flexible and sensitive to the needs of students, staff and family.