

Refined Expectations for Remote Learning: A Guide for Teachers and Designated Early Childhood Educators

This guide provides a comprehensive framework and approach that will support all students and families in receiving common, expected and consistent learning experiences.

CONNECT

Prioritize the health and well-being of everyone; maintain relationships and connections to one another; engage all students especially those who have historically been marginalized and those who may not be able to participate effectively.



COMMUNICATE

Focus on the continuation of teaching and learning through a variety of ways to engage all students.



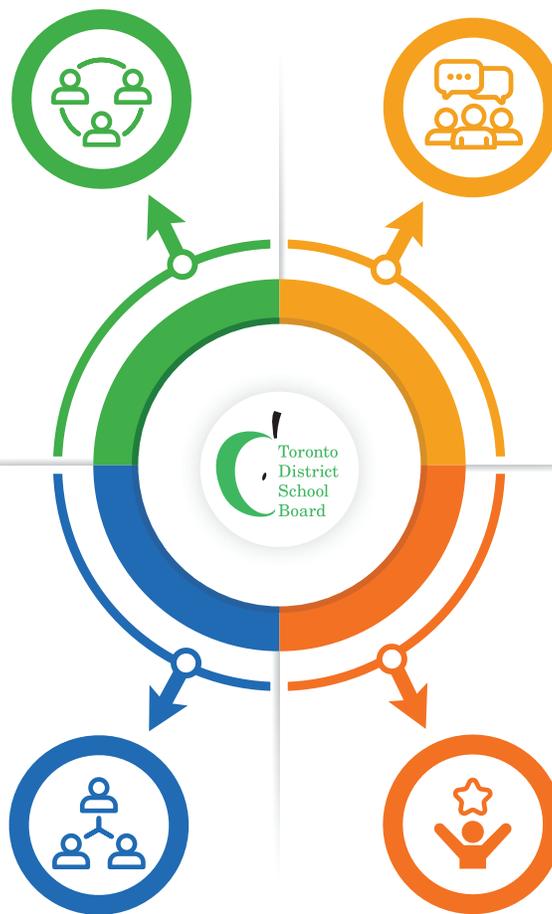
COLLABORATE

Work collaboratively to build staff capacity to ensure we are effective in this remote space learning experience.



CELEBRATE

Celebrate relationships, connections to one another and successes in achievement and well-being.



Refined Expectations for Remote Learning

Connect



- Connect (email, google meet, phone, etc.) with students and families regularly, with a clear focus on mental health and well-being, in more than two interactions per week.
- Consider student and family comfort levels with technology and the levels of [support](#) that may be required prior to planning a group online forum and ensure [privacy](#) considerations are followed.
- Know your learner and connect with them in a way that builds community. Organize a gathering of students as a whole group, of 15 minutes at a minimum, to provide a check-in (e.g., through a morning message, Google Meet, Office Hours, etc.). Connect as often as possible or twice a week at a minimum and as appropriate. Remind students of their choice and comfort on the levels of participation during online gatherings and respecting the online classroom environment.
- Ensure Students have regular access (at least twice a week) to their classroom educators as well as other staff and caring adults (non-classroom Teachers, Guidance, Support Staff, Student Success Teachers, Administrators, etc.).
- Develop a routine with a schedule, (e.g., posting a weekly schedule every Monday with tasks, scheduled virtual meetings, office hours, assignment due dates, etc.) and protocols (e.g., raise hand to talk, teacher is last to leave online session).
- Where possible, record sessions (perhaps with all videos off) so that the students can see their teacher and hear their voice. This will provide opportunities for students to be part of the learning on a regular basis should they not be able to participate in synchronous whole group learning.
- Clearly articulate timelines while providing flexibility and support for the diverse needs of students and their family.
- Be flexible, elicit feedback from students and families on the learning experience and what is working or not working.
- Stay connected to all students, even those who may not be able to engage online. Be flexible, and continue to seek alternative ways to connect with students and families. Principals and Vice Principals work collaboratively with staff, to facilitate supporting and building connections with families during remote learning.
- When you are connecting with students, be aware of different ways that students communicate (e.g., Augmentative and Alternative Communication (ACC devices), verbal and non-verbal, digital and non-digital and the use of [Assistive Technology](#)).

- Continue to build community through wellness checks (e.g., What is one good thing you did today? What is a favourite class memory from this year, etc.) and [share coping skills](#) and strategies (e.g., deep breathing, positive self talk, reminding how they've handled tough situations in the past, etc.).
- If you have a concern for a student's [mental health and wellbeing](#) follow the established procedures for [reporting](#) and responding. Consult with your Principal and school Social Worker for ideas and support on how to reach students and families who you may not connect with regularly.
- All staff should check-in often with colleagues to not only share learnings and problem solving opportunities but to connect with each other for support.
- Principals and Vice-Principals will connect with their staff individually and collectively on a regular basis to support and inform staff.
- Principal's, Vice-Principal's and school teams will work with support staff such as Child and Youth Workers, Community Support Workers, Student Success Transition Counsellors, Educational Assistants and Special Needs assistants may be involved in addressing well-being through connecting with students and families. Students and families should be regularly asked - "What is working well?".

Communicate



Planning and Instruction

- Ensure that [privacy](#) considerations are addressed and that students are aware of best practices, including not giving out passwords, ensuring that teachers are the last person to leave a synchronous meeting, and respecting [board policies](#) on student conduct.
- Provide explicit instruction in all subject areas as defined by the [Ministry of Education](#) and adhere to the [recommended hours of instruction](#) per week. Plan for each task to take longer to complete at home.
- [Provide learning opportunities](#), with multiple entry points, that give students the freedom to creatively express their feelings, thoughts, interests and passions (e.g., choice boards, daily read alouds to support early literacy, digital reflections, journals etc.)
- Culturally relevant and responsive pedagogy should be central to program planning and delivery. Utilize educator resources to [Support for Developing Learning Resources and Well-being Experiences: Equity, Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression](#).
- Consider [UDL](#) and [IEP](#) ([Google+ Communities](#)) resources for accommodations, modifications and [alternative curriculum](#) planning and instruction. Utilize the [IEP Remote Learning resource](#) to effectively support and develop IEPs.
- Plan for regular synchronous learning activities (minimum of 15 mins in length) and asynchronous learning opportunities that allow flexibility for families and students to enter learning at different times within the day or throughout the week
- Provide opportunity for synchronous, whole class instruction, small group and/or one-on-one learning opportunities using various modalities:
 - Elementary schools a minimum of 15 minutes in length, two times a week;
 - Secondary semestered schools a minimum of 15 minutes in length, two times a week;
 - Secondary non-semestered schools a minimum of 15 minutes in length, once a week.
- Some examples of synchronous learning include:
 - Brightspace/Google Meet office hours once or twice a week
 - Audioconferencing using Brightspace/Google Meet
 - Phone call
 - Pre-recorded lesson available to students with scheduled Brightspace/Google Meet opportunity for discussion or Q and A with teacher and DECE where applicable (flipped classroom)
 - Staggered Brightspace/Google Meet times scheduled throughout the week where students sign up based on their schedules and availability for small group instruction and/or check ins
 - 'Week in Review' whereby teacher highlights the key learnings for the week and answers questions students may have (could be done to start or end a week)

- o Weekly check in with individual students
 - o Teacher assigned chapter reading and hosted literature circles/discussion groups of material read
 - o Community Circle with the whole class or small groups to build community and maintain connections between students and teacher
 - o Working with grade team/course team partners to share the synchronous opportunities (e.g. math team Brightspace/Google Meets where math teachers offer live help to students)
 - o Teacher, DECE and/or EA doing an audio conference (3 way call) with a student
 - o Virtual Resource Room or Student Success Room or Guidance Room where students join to get real time help from SERTs and/or Student Success teachers and/or Counsellors
- Provide [open-ended tasks](#) and platforms to capture student thinking and promote opportunities for student-to-student interactions and collaborations that are student-centered. With our younger students, encourage [inquiry, play and creativity](#).
 - Plan using big ideas so that work can be assigned in manageable chunks with flexibility on timelines. Listen to your students and adjust the task based on the needs of the learners you are working with.
 - To support students with Special Education needs the learning should be individualized with students' strengths in mind and with reference to the Individual Education Plan (IEP). Teachers and support staff can co-plan with families and include routines and preferred activities. Determine which digital [platforms](#) you will use to engage students and organize links and student passwords in one location. Be selective of the digital tools you use and be consistent so students can develop familiarity with it.
 - If a student cannot participate due to a lack of devices or internet connectivity, or where students require accommodations for special education needs, alternate arrangements must be made, including personal outreach through phone calls.
 - There may be exceptional situations where synchronous online delivery may not be possible for all students. Exceptions could include, for example, where a parent has excused their child from instruction or this form of instruction, in which case a parent's wishes should be respected. Alternate learning arrangements and opportunities can be discussed with families and provided for students.
 - Utilize [TDSB Learning Supports and Resources](#) and explore professional learning opportunities on [Key2Learn](#). To support educators' continuous remote learning, utilize [TDSB Resource Support and Remote Learning](#) site [Google+ Communities](#). Consider best practices for staff [online safety](#).

Feedback

- Provide regular, meaningful feedback to students on specific work and overall progress. Students need to understand how they are progressing and what opportunities for improvements may exist. Students benefit from regular opportunities to dialogue with their teachers and ask questions.
- Feedback should be timely, frequent and descriptive. Consider providing feedback in various formats (e.g., written, audio, video) and how it may be accessed by students and their families. Assessment for and as learning should be central for all feedback and grounded in [Growing Success](#), [Kindergarten Addendum](#), [Elementary Assessment](#) and [Secondary Assessment documents](#).
- Provide opportunities for students and families, where applicable, to give feedback and co-construct learning experiences.

- Consider changing the language of a document in google documents and use google translate if possible. Utilize the Remote Interpretations Ontario service.

Assessment

- Opportunities should be built in to check for understanding. Evidence collected that shows significant improvement in learning may be taken into consideration by the educator when assigning a final grade in a subject area.
- Provide opportunities for students to co-create learning goals and success criteria and monitor progress to the learning goal. Students should document their thinking and learning and share it virtually with peers and/or educators.
- Gather evidence of student learning in the form of conversations, observations and products (e.g, google meet, conferences, digital work samples, video responses, reflections, etc.).
- Ensure students are clear of their current grade and provide multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate their learning to improve their final grade.
- Principals and Vice-Principals should communicate regularly with the school community through emails, social media or School Messenger.
- All staff must complete appropriate documentation specific to job expectations as outlined in [Remote Learning and Working Guidelines and Expectations](#).

Collaborate



Collaboration with Students and Families

- Provide opportunities for students to work with each other on rich tasks or inquiry projects.
- Use digital resources available to facilitate collaboration between students and families as well as colleagues within the grade or subject area (e.g., Google Meet, Brightspace, phone, email).
- Make efforts to collaborate with students and families, in the teaching and learning process, valuing home language and community knowledge and embedding their perspectives and interests, strengths and ideas into the experiences provided.
- Solicit and include family and student voice in teaching and learning. Gather information virtually from student and families and use this information to continue to drive learning opportunities.
- Grade, division and school transitions need to be a whole school approach and family and student voice must be considered in the planning process to minimize student disruptions and support well-being.
- Ensure tech [support at-home](#) is accessible to all students and may include [TDSB Assistive Technology](#).

Collaboration with Colleagues

- Professional Support Staff can co-facilitate various learning opportunities with students and families in consultation with school Principal and classroom educators.
- Elementary staff, look for opportunities to integrate subjects as well as options for students to express understanding through music, art dance, and drama in all subjects. Support, specialist, prep teachers and instrumental music instructors (IMI) will connect with homeroom teachers to develop ideas and support learning experiences.
- Secondary staff, look for opportunities to collaborate with colleagues in subject departments, curriculum leaders, k-12 coaches, Student Equity Program Advisors, etc., in the school and across the system.
- [Central staff](#) partner with school based staff to critically challenge biases and assumptions through the development of programming, the use of resources, and pedagogical documentation that aligns to the strengths, needs and interests of students.
- Educators may use office hours and establish a schedule with colleagues to avoid conflicts with Class Meetings. These informal sessions offer an opportunity to connect with students and strengthen relationships.

- Work with your colleagues to co-plan and co-teach. Connect colleagues to your virtual learning environments (e.g., SPED, ESL teachers, rotary teachers, k-12 coaches, support staff, Administration, etc.)
- Work with colleagues to provide opportunities for students to have regular access to all of their teachers as well as those individuals with whom they have strong relationships (e.g., DECE, rotary teachers, EAs, CYW, guidance, student success, etc.).
- Coordinate your family check-in and schedules with your colleagues to avoid conflicts and to not overwhelm families and improve student engagement.
- Partnerships in the Early Years between our teachers, DECEs, and support staff can support students in remote learning settings. More information on how this partnership applies in a remote setting can be found [here](#).
- Elementary educators and [Prep/Specialty Teachers](#) should consult regularly to determine best possible learning opportunities for students. Special collaboration can occur to support early reading goals.
- Secondary educators should connect regularly with Special Education, Guidance, Student Success colleagues to determine best possible learning opportunities for students.
- Remind [ESL teachers](#) and other subject teachers who teach English language learners (ESL and LEAP) to establish a plan of support for ESL/ELD learners based on their current level of English proficiency and needs. Remind staff to check the [TDSB ESL](#) website for resources.
- Share over the phone interpretation service [Remote Interpretations Ontario](#) information with teachers to support communication with families.
- Special Education Inclusion Consultants, ASD team members and BRS Team members are available for consultation and have a wealth of information and resources to support all learners.
- Ensure Educational Assistants, Special Needs Assistants, CYW, School MART, Special Education PORs, Guidance, and Student Success teachers collaborate to stay connected with students and support their engagement in the learning.
- Utilize TDSB Special Education Remote Learning [Resources](#) and [Google+ Communities](#), [Autism Services Google Site](#) and [Special Education Google Site](#).
- Ongoing [professional support and development](#) will be provided for all teachers, support staff and educators to fulfill the Ministry's expectation of synchronous learning

Celebrate



- Through feedback, educators can provide information to students on key learnings and growth and celebrate this with students and families.
- Take time to focus and share good news within the classroom, school and the local community.
- Honour the process of the learning and highlight it in various ways throughout the week.
- Continue connecting with families and celebrate individual successes.
- Weekly celebrations of birthdays/special days can continue and new reasons to celebrate can be co-constructed.
- As a return to school plan is being developed, school staff and central staff will work together to highlight strengths of students and families. There will need to be specific opportunities provided to address critical learning needs, the continuation of learning at school as well as a continued focus on well being.
- Connect with the larger TDSB Community through [Google+ Communities](#) and [Twitter](#) to share successes! (e.g., #TDSBGoodEgg)