Digital Learning

To meet the needs of the 21st century student all students—K through 8—need to develop advanced critical thinking and information literacy skills and master new digital tools. At the same time, they need to develop the initiative to become self-directed learners while adapting to the ever-changing digital information landscape.

Digital technologies create new opportunities for accelerating, expanding, and individualizing learning. The appropriate use of technology in education improves student learning, quality of instruction, and teacher effectiveness.

Although digital learning will never replace the direct contact students have with their teachers and peers as members of the Ryan Academy community, it will allow students to continue to progress in their studies. The backbone of our delivery of digital learning is Office 365, our learning management system; we will also be using a videoconference platform, Microsoft Teams (formerly Skype), which is widely used by universities and businesses and is included in Office 365. There is no additional cost for these services. Ryan Academy will be using resources that are available when you log in to the Parent Portal. We are using resources with which students and parents are already familiar.

During digital learning, students will be expected to engage in lessons synchronously, with everyone learning at the same time using technology tools, and asynchronously, which means students learn the material at different times and locations. Digital learning lessons will take many forms, as teachers will employ a range of tools and techniques to facilitate learning and interaction. These may include real-time video instruction, pre-recorded video, group chats, and much more!

Parents and caregivers can help! Help your child establish and stick to routines. While your child may at first enjoy the freedom from some of the usual school routines digital learning allows, many will come to miss the boundaries and social connections that these routines provide.   
Depending upon your child's age, you may wish to help your child establish norms around getting up and getting dressed, setting up an organized space to work, staying organized, and taking breaks for physical activity.

Below are some of the terms that are used to describe how digital learning is delivered. They are:

**Synchronous:** Synchronous digital learning takes place in real-time using a video-conferencing platform like Teams to allow students and teachers to meet for instruction and community building.

**Asynchronous:** Asynchronous digital learning takes place through recorded video presentations and related learning activities posted to Class Notebook. This form of instruction does not involve real-time interaction.

**Blended learning:** Blended learning uses a carefully planned mix of synchronous and asynchronous strategies to combine real-time student-teacher interaction through video-conferencing and related learning activities.

**Video conference:**  A video conference is a virtual class meeting that allows all participants to meet with real-time audio and video. Our video-conferencing platform is Teams.

**Level 1 and Level 2 Digital Learning Days**

Level 1 Days would be for short term closures such as inclement weather days.

Level 2 Days would be for longer forecasted closures such as during the pandemic or a natural disaster.

**When in Level I**, teachers communicate with students and their parents via the school's Class Notebook student/parent portal. All teaching and learning is done through video presentations and related assignments that students **complete at home** **on their own daily schedules**.

**When in Level 2**, teachers deliver lessons through online videoconferencing in Teams, in real-time instruction. Teachers combine real-time lessons with related asynchronous learning activities to deliver high quality instruction within a predictable schedule of regular class meetings. For example, a student will be expected to "attend" his or her regularly scheduled classes from 8:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. Monday through Friday, via Teams. Outside of the Teams classes, the students will have additional work that they must complete and turn into their teachers, just as they normally would do. And resources, such as art, physical education, languages continue in this format!

Level 2 Schedule

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 8:30 a.m.-10:15 a.m. | Digital learning through Teams, including group activities,  resource learning and individual assignment completion. |
| 10:30 a.m.- 11:00 a.m. | Specials: K-4: Mon: Language, Tues: Art, Wed: PE, Thurs: Art, Fri: Language  5-8: Mon: Art, Tues: Language, Wed: PE, Thurs: Language, Fri: Art |
| 11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. | Lunch and Break |
| 12:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. | Outside time, nap time, play time, reading time, independent practice-  Virtual conferences available by appointment |

**Digital Learning Day Policy**

School closings can disrupt the instructional programs of Ryan Academy. To help students remain on pace with their studies during extended absences, administration and teachers of Ryan will implement Digital Learning Days (DLD) in the event of a school closure. During Digital Learning Days, students will use their school-issued email to sign into their class Notebooks and keep up with assignments posted by their teachers. All virtual meetings, coursework, and assignments are intentionally designed to keep student learning on track with the course curriculum. Students will be held accountable for logging into online Notebook, completing all assignments, and turning them in on time, as determined by the subject teacher. Please see more about DLD procedure below.

**Procedure and Specifics Level 1**

* Digital Learning Days will be in effect beginning Day 2 of an Inclement weather closing. During this time, students will continue to keep up with assignments posted by teachers each day.
* On Monday-Friday students will log into the notebook for each class period and learning will be asynchronous. Students will have work to complete for their classes, but they may do so within their own schedule.
* Teachers will post all assignments, daily agendas, and links in Class Notebook by 8:00 AM.
* If a home is without power and connectivity, the parent must communicate with the teachers once the situation is resolved; students are still accountable for the assigned work per the late work policy outlined in each teacher’s syllabus.
* If a student is ill to the point that they will not be able to log on or complete their work, parents must email or call for approval as an excused absence.
* Teachers will be checking email regularly between 8:00 - 3:30 to address students’ questions.
* On these days, specific attendance will not be taken. However, students are expected to complete the work assigned to them in order to gain credit and stay on pace with their learning.

**Procedure and Specifics Level 2**

* Level 2 Digital Learning Days will be announced when the school needs to close for more than a day or two. During this time, students will continue to attend classes digitally and keep up with assignments posted by teachers each day.
* Each morning students will attend classes digitally, logging into a live Teams meeting for each class period.
* We will follow a consistent schedule on Monday - Friday. This schedule will allow for virtual instruction each morning, with asynchronous learning in the afternoon.
* On these days, teachers will post links to Team meetings on the Class Notebook calendar. Students will be expected to follow these links and log into these meetings per the Level 2 schedule.
* Teachers will post all assignments, daily agendas, and links in Teams by 8:00 AM.
* Students are expected to be on time for all class periods and follow all [Professional Standards for the Online Classroom (below)](https://docs.google.com/document/d/18g-zve5tBAEDxMgaz2Je4IiMCXgKSrNCt7V7Ja-fypE/edit?usp=sharing) when in Teams.
* Attendance will be taken in each class period. To be counted as present, students must log in on time, remain present for the entire class period, and complete any classwork assigned by their teacher.
* Students that are marked absent will receive an unexcused absence for the day. Student participation and attendance at each period is a requirement.
* If a home is without power and connectivity, the student must communicate with his/her teachers once the situation is resolved; students are still accountable for the assigned work per the late work policy outlined in each teacher’s syllabus.
* If a student is ill to the point that they will not be able to log on or complete their work, parents must email or call for approval as an excused absence.

Note for Parents

As we go into this new style of learning, parent support is an important aspect of student success. Teachers will communicate expectations and assignments with students through the Class Notebook streams. Parents are encouraged to check-in regularly on  the expectations and assignments by reviewing Class Notebook streams and discussing the content with their children.

**PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS FOR THE ONLINE CLASSROOM**

1. **Find the right location to attend class professionally.**
   * If a class is meeting virtually through TEAMS, students should set up a designated workspace. Ideally, the workspace is a desk or table with adequate lighting and a clear area for a charged computer and all school materials. An organized approach and workspace will be essential during DLDs. Students should be seated upright during class and not lying on the floor, in bed, walking back and forth, etc. The workspace must be free of background noise (TV, music, etc.) and distraction so that you can give your full attention to the class.  Neither you nor others should be distracted by your location or background.
2. **Always keep your camera on and dress/act professionally.**
   * Please keep your camera on throughout the duration of the class. You should be attentive and professional in front of the camera. This includes wearing clothing that is appropriate for a class session. A t-shirt or collared shirt with pants or shorts would be a good example of what would be considered appropriate. Pajamas, tank tops, bathing suits would be considered inappropriate.
3. **Remain attentive in class**
   * You should not be having side conversations, engaging with other devices such as a phone or iPad, or taking part in other distractors while in class. Creating side chats, engaging in off-topic chats, or distracting others when class is in session is not permissible.
4. **Mute your microphone when not speaking.**
   * When not speaking, your microphone should be muted to cut down on interference, static, and background noise.
5. **Arrive on time to class and remain for the duration of the period**
   * Students are expected to arrive at the virtual class on time and to stay attentive in the virtual learning setting until the teacher dismisses them.
6. **Use a set of headphones with microphone capability (if you have them).**
   * If you have them, these are often more reliable for others to hear you participate than utilizing the microphone built into your computer. If you do not have these, you should be able to use the microphone and audio built into your device
7. **Take ownership of your learning**
   * Digital learning requires a great deal of focus, organization, and maturity. Set high expectations for yourself each day behaviorally and academically and hold yourself accountable for them.

*If any of these protocols are consistently broken, a student may be dismissed from class, and the dismissal will be considered an unexcused absence. The student may receive a 0 for any graded classwork that day and will additionally be subject to further discipline (i.e. detention, and/or suspension).*