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MCS Family Expectations for Blended Learning in 2020-2021

For the 2020-21 school year, many students will learn in a remote environment at least part of the time. McDowell County Schools strives to keep high expectations for children and adults whether they are learning face to face or virtually. We will provide Chromebooks or tablets for our students to use at home, but it will be up to the families to make sure their children are doing school work daily so they don't fall behind. For those without strong internet access in their homes, we have partnered with churches and businesses to make sure there are wifi hotspots throughout the county, and our school campuses all have wifi that you can connect to from outside the buildings. If you don't have strong internet at home and your student is working virtually, you should plan to go to one of these locations at least once a week to upload and download schoolwork. MCS will coordinate live instruction on a staggered daily schedule and will also provide recordings of live lessons for those who can not access the internet during the school day.

1 Online Learning Management Sites (PowerSchool, Google Classroom K-5, Canvas 6-13):

- Parents can check attendance and grades in PowerSchool just as in years past. (More on attendance below).
- Elementary students will find their course materials in Google Classroom. Middle and high school students will find theirs in a site called Canvas. These sites provide organization for weekly class recordings and assignments, which will be labeled by the dates for that week.
- Teachers will provide links to videos, tutorials and any necessary tech tools in their course sites.
- Schools and teachers will have posted online a document that explains how to upload/download work once a week if you do not have internet access daily. Copies of these instructions will also be available at each school office.
- Teachers will use a tool called Google Meet each day at set times so students can watch their classroom live. If it is at all possible, parents should have their children participate at these times so they can have their questions answered in the moment and also connect with their classmates and participate in activities. These meetings will also be recorded to view later.
- Students will be expected to participate each week both in writing (via discussion boards or Seesaw) and orally (via Google Meets, Seesaw, and/or Flipgrids). Kindergarteners and first graders will need help from parents with both of these.
- Students will be expected to upload into Google Classroom or Canvas some work products like projects, videos, photos, or other items to show their learning. Teachers will give weekly feedback. Parents may need to help, but will definitely need to monitor this. Students on the A/B schedule, who do not have internet access at home can do this on Mondays when they return to school

2 Communication

- Parents must communicate high expectations to their children, and emphasize that the family expects daily participation and quality work.
- Each teacher will post on their website two daily "office" times of 30 minutes each. Parents can reach the teacher through phone calls, texts, or emails at these times and expect an immediate response. Families and students are NOT to expect an immediate response outside those times, but teachers will return calls, texts, and emails within 24 hours.
- When participating in live Google Meets, students do not have to turn their camera on, but they will need to communicate using the audio microphone or chat feature to be counted present.

3 Student Support:

- Families should have a place in the home where students can work without distraction. Computer headphones are recommended.
- Children should stay on regular routines such as meal times and bedtimes even when they are not coming to school face to face. They should also play outside daily. This is just what is best for their development.
- During school hours, teachers will put online students into small groups or work with them individually to answer questions and give feedback. Those who can not be online during the school day will have other opportunities to work with their teacher for special help.
- Students who receive special education or other types of contracted support will continue to do so. IEPs and 504 plans remain in place.
- This year, North Carolina has changed the process for referring students for special education. We will now use what is called the MTSS process instead of relying on tests. Your school principal can explain this in detail if you are interested.
- School counselors and others are available to families as needed for advice and support. They can also connect you to outside providers for things like mental health.

4 Attendance and Grades:

- Teachers and schools are required to keep attendance daily.
 - The NC Department of Public Instruction requires proof of daily attendance but allows this to be entered in PowerSchool later for students who are remote and can not access the internet each day. We will take remote "attendance" for these families each week.
 - Students will be counted present by "attending class daily" in person or virtually through one or more of the following:
 - phone calls, emails, or some form of text communication with their teacher about their assignments on that day
 - completion of the day's assignments in Canvas (6-13) or Classroom (K-5)
 - active written and/or oral participation in live Google Meetings
 - submitting all required work within a week will also count as attendance completion for students without home internet
 - Students and parents may still find themselves reported as truant during remote instruction days if the child does not participate..
 - For students who are participating remotely but not in a live daily format, submitting weekly assignments will count as attendance but may run a week behind the rest of the class. Make sure to communicate with teachers about your situation.
- Teachers will grade assignments, provide helpful feedback, and update Powerschool weekly. Parents should check each week to make sure assignments are being completed successfully and on time.

5 Blending Live Instruction with Remote:

- Times will be scheduled every day beginning August 24th for each class to use a Google Meet link for live participation. These live meetings will also be recorded and stored in Google Classroom or Canvas for later viewing. Times will be staggered slightly for different grade levels to allow families with more than one student to share devices and internet bandwidth.
- Teachers will post the times for their live instruction on their websites.
- If a student is participating online 50% and face to face 50% under the A/B week schedule, the family is responsible for making sure the student understands they are still doing school work during their remote week just like their classmates who are face to face.
- For A/B students, teachers will help them upload the next week's assignments on Fridays before their virtual week. They can also help them upload their work on Mondays when they return to face to face.
- Teachers will prepare kits of materials that may be needed for the next week's instruction and kids may take them home on Friday or for those who are 100% virtual, parents may come to the school at a pre-arranged time to pick up. These will NOT be packets of work like last spring.

We look forward to partnering with you this year to make sure no student falls behind.

Please complete this form once FOR EACH STUDENT IN YOUR HOME to indicate you understand your responsibilities

<https://forms.gle/uxwTFba6aq86ZwMMA>