

Ascension Catholic Academy
Board Report
Distance Learning Plan
April 21,2020

“Despite the necessity of staying physically apart, we have an opportunity to activate the specific type of collective resilience that can emerge when faced with communal prolonged uncertainty and potential widespread trauma. A powerful antidote to loneliness and fear is purpose. A mantra for these strange times: we are all in this together.”_Esther Perel

ACA Distance Learning Journey:

On March 17, the ACA community started a journey towards a distance learning model that focuses on the education of the whole child. Teachers, assisting parents, in providing the social, emotional, intellectual and learning needs of their child. Our model was developed in two phases and was guided by clear principles.

Phase 1: March 17th-April 5th. (Spring Break 3/27-4/5)

Phase 2: April 6-Return to school date not known

Guiding Principles for ACA Distance Learning

Open ourselves to Continuous Learning

Start with Love before Lessons

Patience before Programs

Understand Less is More

Provide Quality over Quantity

Value Relationships over Rigor

Seek Grace before Grades

Do the Right thing before doing things Right

Phase 1:

We decided early in the process to move away from strict adherence to “regular” conditions and norms and structure our distance learning around providing a rich experience to all learners who are suddenly without traditional teachers standing beside them in a classroom and may have limited access to a strict learning schedule.

To ease the transition from in person class to distance learning, paper packets were sent home with scholars and we began ensuring each family could access our Google Classrooms, our HPLP online components and had wifi at home.

Phase 2:

Our goal in developing Phase 2 was to provide continued learning for all scholars while being flexible to the changing circumstances of each family.

Teachers are creating weekly lesson plans that utilize our online components (Google Classroom, I-Ready, Lexia Core 5, etc.), which are programs our scholars were already familiar with using. We asked the parents to have the primary role of keeping their child focused and engaged. Teachers are available from 9:00 am - 3:00 pm each day to help with questions.

The general format includes:

Ascension and John Paul II	St. Peter Claver
<p>Grades K-2 Daily learning time: 2.5 hours (frequent breaks) 45 minutes: Math (includes 20 minutes I-Ready) 1.0 hour: Reading, Phonics (20 minutes of Lexia Core5 or I-Ready) 15 minutes: Religion/SEL/Community Building, Read-A-Loud 15 minutes: Independent Reading 15 minutes: Specialists, Science, or Social Studies</p>	<p>Grades K-4 Daily Learning Time: 3 hours 1 hour: Math (includes instruction time, homework, IXL or other online practice) 1.5 hour: Reading (PAF teacher-created lessons, Wit and Wisdom videos, IXL, Independent Reading w/Reading Logs) 15 minutes: Religion/SEL/Community Building 20 minutes: Specialists, Science, or Social Studies</p>
<p>Grades 3-5 Daily learning time: 3.5 hours 1.0 hour: Math (includes 20-30 minutes I-Ready) 1.0 hour: Reading, Grammar, Spelling (20-30 minutes I-Ready) 30 minutes: Free Reading 20 minutes: Religion/SEL/Community Building 30 minutes: Specialists, Science, or Social Studies</p>	<p>Grades 5-8 Daily learning time: 4 hours 45 Minutes: Math 45 Minutes: Reading, Grammar, Spelling 45 Minutes: Science 45 Minutes: Social Studies 30 minutes: Religion/SEL/Community Building 30 minutes: Specialists</p>
<p>Grades 6-8 Daily learning time: 4.25 hours 1.5 hour: Math (includes 20-30 minutes Imagine Math) 1.5 hour: Reading, Grammar, Spelling (20-30 minutes of Lexia, CommonLit) 30 minutes: Independent Reading 15 minutes: Religion/SEL/Community Building 30 minutes: Specialists, Science, or Social Studies</p>	

Digital Learning Early Wins and Challenges:

Wins:

We were able to utilize our ACA Helpline to distribute chromebooks, ensure scholars had access to the internet and answer questions prior to Phase 2 of the implementation. This allowed scholars and teachers to be better prepared for the new platform.

The growing cohesiveness of the Academy Leadership Team around a unified purpose. The ACA Leadership team met daily during the initial three weeks to organize and mobilize resources. This resulted in touch points with 100% of Academy families, a well resourced helpline and the development of both a parent and teacher resource guide. See Links below:

Teacher Guide: <https://sites.google.com/view/lisas123/distance-learning-guidelines>

Parent Resource Guide:

<https://sites.google.com/ascensionschoolmn.org/aca-family-guide/home>

A strong teacher “buy in” to doing whatever it takes to serve our scholars and families. From the very start, it was “how can I help?”, “let me learn what I don’t know” and “how can I support other teachers?”

Challenges:

We continue to be challenged to adapt curriculum and instruction to ever changing conditions in our families homes. This includes but is not limited to poor internet connection, parent’s working multiple jobs, the stress of many families being out of work and multiple children in limited space.

The integration of technology was an early hurdle but it has now mostly been worked out.

We are challenged to find the right balance between communicating to families without overwhelming them and providing an equitable learning platform with many disparities in households.