

Return-to-Learn Plan for Start of 2020-21 School Year

Hybrid Option 2: Online Overview



To prepare for the 2020-21 school year, West Des Moines Community Schools (WDMCS) assembled a leadership team dedicated to creating a 2020-21 school year that is safe and effective for students, families, and staff. The WDMCS Board of Education approved the Hybrid Option 2 return-to-learn plan to start the 2020-21 school year at its July 13, 2020, regular business meeting.

Hybrid Option 2 means...

- Families must choose for their student between on-site or online learning for the first semester.
- Families will be sent a survey to complete for EACH child. We ask that families make a decision by **July 31**.
- Both plans have students attending class Monday through Friday, either on-site or at home.
- Families **CAN** choose to switch to online if they start on-site. Families **CANNOT** switch from online to on-site.

Important Notice Regarding COVID-19

The 2020-21 school year's instructional format will remain flexible to ensure student and staff safety. WDMCS may adjust processes and learning environments at any given point throughout the school year. Depending on community health conditions, a temporary transition to online learning could take place at a classroom, school, or district level.

Online Learning Overview

Depending on the grade and needs of the individual student, students will connect online at various times each day.



Classroom Virtual Meetings or Remote Course Participation.

Teachers and students connect with each other using a tool like Google Meets or Zoom.

- Teachers provide social-emotional support and educational instruction, resources, and tasks.
- Students have time to collaborate, ask questions, and connect with teachers and classmates.
- Secondary students may remote into an on-site class depending on the course.



Canvas is West Des Moines Community Schools' official learning management system. A learning management system helps provide, track, and report on classes and assignments. Students and families can find important information like textbooks, resources, homework, discussions, and more in Canvas.

Secondary families may be familiar with Canvas, but elementary families may not have used Canvas yet. Building administrators and teachers will share more in the coming weeks about Canvas and explain how it will be used for their students.

[Read tips for managing a Canvas Parent Account >](#)



Independent Work.

- Teachers provide tasks for students to work on outside of the classroom virtual meetings.
- Students work on these tasks independently at a time that works best for their family.

How is this different from how we ended the 2019-20 school year?

- Attendance will be taken during classroom virtual meetings.
- Grade-level schedules will provide families, students, and teachers consistency and routine.
- Students will access more live-streamed instruction and collaboration with peers.
- Students will work more independently on learning activities.
- Regular feedback and grading will be given.

Example Daily Schedules

- WDMCS has created examples of daily schedules for elementary students. In a typical seven-hour school day, approximately 1-2 hours are set aside for classroom virtual meetings, dependent on grade level. Students learning online will have the opportunity to virtually connect with art, music, P.E., and library teachers; they will have one related art per day for 20 minutes.

[Example Elementary Daily Schedule >](#)

[Example Secondary Daily Schedule >](#)

Online Learning Environment



GRADES PK-3

Students will begin and end each day with a virtual class check-in. They may have one 20-minute online meeting a day. They may also participate in small group meetings. The rest of the day will consist of:

- Independent learning
- Recorded mini-lessons
- Collaboration with peers
- Engaging learning activities
- Breaks for creativity



GRADES 4-6

Students will begin and end each day with a virtual class check-in. They may have one 30-minute online meeting a day. They may also participate in small group meetings and meet online for arts and Spanish. The rest of the day will consist of:

- Independent learning
- Recorded mini-lessons
- Collaboration with peers
- Engaging learning activities
- Breaks for creativity



GRADES 7-8

Students begin the day with independent learning, small group instruction, or 1:1 meetings with the teacher. The rest of the day will consist of:

- 3-4 online meetings
- Independent work
- Breaks for creativity



GRADES 9-12

Students may remote into a classroom during the specific time a course is held on-site. Students will participate in online course meetings. They will also:

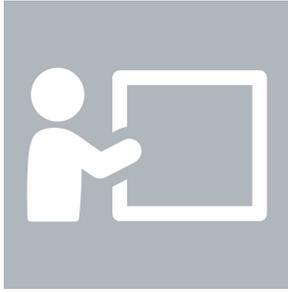
- Work independently
- Participate in small group instruction

NOTE: A course may require some on-site experiences that would be scheduled for students to receive the appropriate instruction and assessment to meet that course's Iowa Core Standards.

- Teachers will schedule times with students before/after school.
- Students will receive more information in August listing courses which may require limited on-site visits.
- Families who wish to drop a course can do so by filling out the standard Add/Drop Form available in August.

Teacher-Student-Parent Partnerships

WDMCS teachers, students, and families will partner to support student success.



How Can Teachers Support?

- Create lesson plans to provide virtual learning opportunities.
- Record virtual sessions for students/families to access.
- Provide timely feedback to students on progress.
- Use student evidence to document progress toward learning targets and standards, implementing WDMCS' [Effective Grading Practices](#).
- Communicate and maintain daily office hours.
- Communicate regularly with students and parents and respond to questions within 24 hours (excluding weekends).
- Establish routines for virtual learning and relationships.
- Create a sense of safety, connectedness, and hope.
- Support positive behaviors (PBIS) in a virtual space and incorporate essential life skills within learning opportunities.
- Provide accommodations for individual learner needs.

How Can Students Support?

- Engage in student/teacher connection and independent work learning opportunities.
- Complete assigned work by the due date.
- Ask clarifying questions and advocate for yourself if you don't understand.
- Share evidence of learning with teachers. (*How this can be done varies by grade and course but is intended to allow students to take ownership in their learning.*)
- Be respectful and follow agreed-upon expectations.

How Can Parents Support?

- Review work assigned to the student.
- Reserve a space for students to complete remote learning work.
- Encourage students to get enough sleep.
- Set sensible time limits for technology use.
- Connect with students about their learning.
- Help students establish and follow regular daily routines.

Learn More on Our Website

- [WDMCS Return-to-Learn Plan: Main Page >](#)
- [Hybrid Option 2: Online >](#)
- [Hybrid Option 2: On-Site >](#)
- [WDMCS Return-to-Learn Plan: FAQs >](#)