



IRVINGTON UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT

How Parents Can Support Distance Learning at Home

Parents and other family members will play a critical role in supporting distance learning at home. At the elementary level, support for distance learning can include the following:

- Choose and designate special work areas with your children; for example, a favorite corner or nook for reading may be different from the spot where math games are played.
- Establish a routine; as much as possible try to stick to a daily routine for eating, sleeping, learning, playing, and unwinding. The assignments posted daily at the elementary level are meant to mirror the flow of a typical school day as much as possible, allowing for breaks and subjects such as music, art, and physical education.
- Engage and share in the learning together; watching videos, playing math games, and reading together can spark conversations and inspire the exploration of topics in depth or new topics.
- Balance total screen time (schoolwork, gaming, TV watching, and social media) with other activities.
- Encourage outdoor time (where safe and possible).

In addition to the above recommendations, support for distance learning at the secondary level may also include the following:

- Speak daily with your children about what they are learning and doing in each class.
- Along with daily check-ins, consider having a weekly discussion about how your children's distance learning is progressing and what challenges or successes they have had that week.
- Encourage independent reading and writing (i.e., journaling) on a daily basis.
- Although it may be tempting to assist your children in their learning, especially if they are struggling, remember that struggling can be part of the learning process. In addition, encourage self-advocacy by coaching children how to reach out to their teachers and/or peers for assistance.
- Encourage your children to log in to their Irvington email account and Google Classroom daily.

Parental Involvement

Distance learning adds a new level of complexity to parental involvement, as there is no one right way to be involved in supporting your child with distance learning. To find the right balance of parental involvement:

- Try giving your child slightly more independence than you are accustomed to giving.
- Allow your child to struggle. Managing frustration is an important part of learning.

- Slowly step back as your child becomes more skillful.
- Consider teaching your child to self-advocate when your child encounters trouble. This could include your child reaching out to his or her teacher.
- With your child's input, establish guidelines for how often you will discuss schoolwork, what your responsibilities will be, and what your child's responsibilities will be.
- Ask specific questions rather than general questions.
- Encourage your child, offer praise and share that they encourage them to be proud of themselves for their hard work and efforts.

If Things Get Tough

There will be moments when spending so much of your time together will bring forth a wide range of emotions. Children and teens react, in part, on what they see from the adults around them. It is important to recognize that not all children and teens respond to stress in the same way. Being calm, confident, and reassuring can help ease anxiety. Sharing with your children the ways in which you deal with stress can serve as a model and help children learn coping skills. Consider taking planned breaks, limit your children's exposure to the news coverage of the pandemic, take deep breaths and meditate, get plenty of sleep, exercise, and eat well.

The District is here to support the community at all times. Our school counselors, psychologists, and the District social worker are always available for students and families. You may reach them through email or you may contact your principal for assistance in beginning a dialog.