



Harbor Country Day School

Embracing the extraordinary in every child.™

**Parent Handbook for Online Learning Program
Upper School Division
Grades 6 - 8
2020-2021 Academic Year**



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Online Learning: Introduction

The goal of our online learning program is to provide students with the same academic rigor, intellectual engagement, and character development that students and families have come to expect from Harbor Country Day School (HCDS). The HCDS Online Learning Program allows students to successfully learn from home when necessary by providing engaging and interactive lessons that are designed to allow students to flourish academically and socially. Maintaining the student/teacher and student/student relationship(s) while learning online is the foundation of this program. We know that every interaction between teachers and students contributes to their success.

Harbor Country Day School believes it is critical to continue to inspire students to become independent, self-aware, and joyful members of our learning community. With these core values in mind, we will continue to provide a learning experience online that will allow students to feel comfortable taking risks, asking questions, and challenging themselves to go further than they ever thought possible.

On the following pages we have laid out guidelines for online learning should we be required to cease face-to-face learning and return to online learning due to COVID-19. We hope to transition seamlessly to online learning, if need be. Your reading through this handbook ahead of time will help allow for that transition for your child.



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Online Learning: A Seamless Transition

At the start of the school year, each family will receive a schedule specific to their child's class. The schedule will go into effect if the school is closed due to an emergency that lasts for more than two days. This includes, but is not limited to, closure due to:

- A contagious outbreak
- A snowstorm (if wifi is available)
- Natural disaster (if wifi is available)

The online school will take place between the hours of 9:00 am and 3:00 pm. Teachers will also offer daily office hours for parents and students by appointment.

Students will bring all necessary supplies home on the last day of in-person instruction.

Should we need to transition to online learning without warning, the school will organize a supply pick-up schedule.



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Online Learning: Guidelines

To ensure a successful online learning experience :

1. Please check Google Classroom with your child daily. This site will keep students and parents up to date with assignments, schedules, and classroom announcements.
2. Please have a workspace set up for your child. The workspace should:
 - A workspace should be located in a quiet area of the house and, if possible, free from siblings, pets, and toys.
 - A workspace should have supplies and materials organized and ready to access.
3. Meals should be provided before or after a Zoom session.
 - Please try to avoid your child eating on screen.
4. During synchronous learning (ZOOM), students should be fully engaged with the teacher.
 - Parents should be close by to assist with technology *but* students should be working independently with the teacher and class.



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Online Learning: Expectations and Etiquette

1. Students should log-in on time and wait for the teacher to begin the session.
2. If the student will not be attending the Zoom Session please let the teacher know ahead for time, so the class is not waiting.
3. Students should keep their screens muted until the teacher instructs them to unmute.
4. Students should use the “chat” feature only to ask questions about the class, not for chatting with friends or sharing non class related comments.
5. Students are expected to be sitting at a work space with their camera on and their face in full view. Laying in a bed is not an appropriate space for learning.
6. Students should work in a space free from of potential distractions (i.e. TV, Video Games).
7. To avoid talking over one another, students should raise their hand if they would like to speak.



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Online Learning: Assignments and Class Communication

1. All Upper School students, grades 6-8, have a gmail account. Parents can access each teacher's Google Classroom through their child's account and can also sign up for daily or weekly updates.
2. All assignments will be turned in through Google Classroom unless otherwise indicated.
3. Co-Curricular classes will also post assignments and Zoom links on Google Classroom.
4. Teachers will post the materials that are required for upcoming classes in advance so students can prepare for the lesson.
5. Schedules and other class specific announcements will be posted on Google Classroom.



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Online Learning: Grading and Assessments

Student learning will be assessed in several ways during online learning which will include:

1. Daily observations by the teacher
2. Tests, writing assignments, labs and projects administered through google forms and other platforms determined by individual teachers
3. Participation will be a significant percentage of upper school students'

grades during online learning. The participation grade will include but will not be limited to:

- a. Attendance
- b. Arriving to zoom sessions on time and prepared.
- c. Attending extra help when requested to by a teacher
- d. Keeping cameras on with face in full view
- e. Participating in class discussions



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Online Learning: The Role of Parents

Parents play a critical role in students' online learning success. The goal of this program is to provide your student with a mostly synchronous learning experience that keeps them engaged and fosters independence and a sense of responsibility.

Parent Tips

1. Read over the Online Learning Guidelines as well as the Etiquette and Expectations sections with your child.
2. Please let the teacher know if your child is missing any materials.
3. Make sure your child checks Google Classroom daily.
4. Monitor your child and correct any behavior that does not display appropriate online etiquette.
5. If there are multiple learners in your household, try to separate each child or provide them with headphones to listen to their lesson.
6. Resolve any technical issues as soon as possible so your child can seamlessly transition to online learning.
7. Talk with your child daily about their online experience. Share any concerns or insights with the classroom teacher as soon as possible.
8. Charge devices necessary for online learning each night.
9. The teachers are here to support your children, if everyone follows the guidelines, children should be able to have a successful online learning experience.
10. Do your best, we are all in this together!



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Online Learning: Building a Classroom Community

Building a classroom community is essential to the success of an online program. In order to connect and build a relationship with parents and students, we will be hosting some fun social events for Upper School students. Some examples of this will include:

- Class and advisory lunches through Zoom
- Class Spirit Days
- All School Meeting
- Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) with Mrs. Decker.
- Student Lounge through Zoom.



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Online Learning: Technology Checklist

Required:

- Desktop Computer with a camera or a Chromebook, Macbook Laptop, Windows Laptop, or iPad.
- Internet access at home. If using WiFi be sure that you have a strong signal where your child/children will be working.
- An area for your child/children to work interruption-free.

These items that are *not required* but will help with the online learning experience:

- External monitor (second screen)
- Headphones or Earbuds
- Printer with a scanner

If you are in need of a laptop for your child/children please contact Artie Weissbach for a loaner at aweissbach@hcdsny.org.