

PRESTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Preston Plains Middle School
Parent Guidance for Distance Learning

While parents have always played a significant role in our success, parents are truly our partners now as you coordinate, support, and monitor the education process for all PPMS students! On a weekly basis, your child will be participating in virtual learning experiences that include accessing live Google Meets, prerecorded Google Meets, online assignments, and independent activities for all of their subject areas. We are communicating the following guidance to help you facilitate your child's remote learning experiences, whether they are distance learners engaged in remote activities every school day or participating in our hybrid learning schedule and engaged in remote learning activities three days out of every school week. Three areas of greatest importance for distance learning are: establishing a routine, considering the environment, and monitoring engagement. Please be aware that parents/guardians and students are prohibited from audio recording, video recording or photographing virtual instruction sessions conducted via video conferencing.

Establishing a Routine – establishing a routine will enable your child to follow his/her virtual learning schedule and successfully complete assignments at home:

- If your child is participating in our hybrid schedule, he or she has a weekly schedule for in-person learning days and distance learning days (Cohort A are engaged in distance learning on Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays; Cohort B students are engaged in distance learning on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays). Set a start time and an end time for the school day based on your child's weekly school schedule.
- Review this schedule with your child at the beginning of each virtual learning day.
- Create ways for your child to communicate with you during the workday, i.e., set up a mid-morning, lunch and afternoon break time when your child can ask questions or receive help from you.
- Track your child's progress through the school day (i.e., your child can check off progress through classes for your review later in the day).
- Celebrate moments when your child shows greater independence and responsibility.

Considering the Environment – a dedicated space to complete school work facilitates your child's engagement in and attitude toward distance learning:

- Create a learning space that your child will use whenever he/she is engaged in school work – if possible, this space should be used only by one child.
- Choose a space that is free from distractions and away from busy areas in your house. Also, be mindful of what is visible to others on the wall or space behind your child. Individuals present in the home other than the student should not participate in the video conference session.
- Important features of this space are: access to power outlet for Chromebook charging, access to school supplies, and a comfortable flat surface to write on.
- If your child takes part in making this space, he or she will be more invested in using it.

Monitoring Engagement – checking in with your child during the distance learning day is likely to prevent minor issues from becoming problems or barriers to success.

- Students should join the video conference on time, dress appropriately, and follow all rules and guidelines established by the teacher.
- During live instruction your child's camera should be on to evidence engagement with the lesson.
- If available, encourage your child to use a headset or headphones to filter out other sounds from within the household.
- Talk with your child about his or her distance learning experience; make sure he or she knows how to ask for help from you and from teachers.
- Identify with your child those classmates who can answer questions about assignments and tasks.
- Monitor and check in with your child on how they are connecting with peers – find ways for your child to regularly connect with peers.
- Check in on your child's digital safety practices.
- Identify ways to recharge, rest, and exercise during challenging days.