TCSD
Tonawanda City School District

VIRTUAL LEARNING
INSTRUCTIONAL PLAN

2020-2021

July 31, 2020

* This plan was developed in consultation with many school and community stakeholders. All areas of this plan address requirements and mandates as defined in the guidance documents from NYSDOH and NYSED. Additionally, this plan includes other recommendations and best practices as described in the guidance. This plan is subject to change based on future guidance and recommendations established by the NYSDOH and NYSED.

Table of Contents

The Virtual learning plan is updated on the district website and will be updated as necessary as the district receives guidance from New York State, New York State Department of Education, Erie County and other community resources[1]. The district website is located at www.tonawandacsd.org

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[1] "reopening plan - Albany County School District." 1 Jul. 2020,
https://www.acsd1.org/acsd/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/ACSD1-Reopening-Plan-070120-Version-1-2.pdf.

Plan Overview

The virtual instruction plan has three key components: *Content Delivery, Instructional Support* and Social Emotional Supports. The following table provides a concise overview of the components.

	Social Emotional Supports	Social and emotional learning (SEL) is the process through which children and adults **understand** and **manage** emotions, **set** and **achieve** positive goals, **feel** and **show** empathy for others, **establish** and **maintain** positive relationships, and make responsible decisions[2].
	Instructional Support	Instructional Support will be geared towards **supporting the content delivery** of the virtual learning experience. **Students, staff and parents** will be provided regular opportunities to grow and learn which allow a continuous flow of content delivery. Access to instructional supports will be provided in additional areas as needs arise.
	Content Delivery	**K-12** adapted learning experience via **Google Classroom** (District supplied device provided upon request) Students will access content for a blended virtual learning experience in which students will experience synchronous and asynchronous instruction.

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[2] "What is SEL? - casel." https://casel.org/what-is-sel/.

Content Delivery

K-12 adapted learning experience via **Google Classroom** (District supplied device provided upon request.)

GLOSSARY

Students will access content for a blended virtual learning experience in which students will experience synchronous and asynchronous instruction.

Adapted Learning –Adapted learning is providing learning experiences outside of the traditional classroom. Other terms also used include temporary virtual education and eLearning. All of these terms have the same meaning.

Asynchronous Learning—Asynchronous learning is when learners participate in an online learning course at different times. Asynchronous learning allows learners to go through a course at their own pace and on their own schedule.

Synchronous Learning— Synchronous learning is when learners participate in an online learning course at the same time but in different locations. Synchronous learning allows learners to interact with the instructor and other participants. [3]

EXPECTATIONS

In synchronous learning:
- Students attend class on time (per their class schedule).
- Students will follow the District dress code.
- Students are ready to learn.
- Workspace is designated for the student.
- Students will show their face on the screen to engage with the teacher virtually.
- Students will participate in the class.

In asynchronous learning:
- Complete asynchronous activities assigned each day.

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[3] "virtual learning - Albany County School District." 1 Apr. 2020,
https://www.acsd1.org/acsd/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/ACSD1-VLP-040120.pdf.

- Students show proof of participation in daily eLearning by satisfactorily completing assigned assignments to demonstrate evidence of student learning (i.e., video, picture, or activities submitted as lessons and/or completing assignments.) Please note, not all lessons must have an assignment, as there will be teacher discretion on the number of assignments, as they follow the District grading guidelines.
- Students and parents will communicate with the teacher when needing additional assistance, tutoring, etc.

Districtwide Virtual Learning Requirements for Google Classroom:

- Google meet link is displayed at all times;
- Topics will be labeled as weeks;
- Stream is to be used for Teacher Communication to students only; and
- Assignments, posts and requirements will be posted by 8:00 am daily

Elementary Program Kindergarten- Grade 5

All assignments are housed in Google Classroom and organized by week.

Districtwide programs:
- Eureka Math
- Reading Street
- Boces 4 Science
- NYS Framework for Social Studies

Direct instructional time guidelines can be found in appendix A.

Secondary (Grades 6-12)

Assignments are housed in Google Classroom and organized by week.

Secondary materials used will be based on the subject areas being taught.

Direct instructional time guidelines can be found in appendix A.

At all levels of instruction, if a student receives special services, the classroom teacher will collaborate with the appropriate service provider to ensure the correct accommodations are in place for student success. Each teacher and service provider will communicate, follow-up, and check-in with these students.

Assessment

Grading for all courses will follow the same grading policy as the courses in the Face-to-Face model. Courses that earn high school credit will count in GPA calculation and class rank.

Elementary and Secondary assessments will be both formative and summative.

Formative assessments are a flexible and informal way to monitor student progress and understanding of content, to provide ongoing feedback to students, and to allow educators to enhance and adjust their teaching methods in order for students to improve their learning. Many times these assessments are impromptu and fit seamlessly into the instruction process.

Summative assessments are a means to evaluate student learning and academic achievement at the end of a marking period, year, or semester.

Elementary Assessment Guidelines:

Formative assessment data for elementary students will be collected through completed assignments and content presented in Google Classroom. Some of these assessments include, but are not limited to, journal entries, discussion threads, assignments, or projects to name a few. Various means of formative assessments will be given in all subject areas, specifically ELA (Reading and Writing) and Math.

Summative assessment data will be collected at the conclusion of the virtual learning experience and will be conducted by the students' teachers. This data will measure students' acquisition and retention of essential learning targets throughout the academic year. Reporting on student learning will be based on formative data collected over the course of the virtual learning experience, and will be considered in progress until summative data is collected. Summative assessments include, but are not limited to iReady Diagnostics in ELA/Math, Running Records, and Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI).

Secondary Assessment Guidelines:

Formative assessment data for secondary students will be collected through completed assignments and content presented in Google Classroom. Some of these assessments include, but are not limited to, journal entries, discussion threads, assignments, or projects that are completed through Google Classroom. Teachers will offer written and verbal feedback as appropriate to help the students gain understanding and proficiency.

Summative assessments will be built into the online platform of Google Classroom.

Attendance Requirements:

Teachers will take attendance daily, but the meaning of attendance changes—virtual/hybrid learning attendance is more about ENGAGEMENT than physical presence. All students are expected to have contact with their classroom teacher each day. During a remote or hybrid setting, daily classroom attendance must be taken and entered into eSchool.

Daily attendance participation includes, but is not limited to:
- Attending Google Meet sessions
- Participating in threaded discussions
- Submitting work
- Taking an assessment online and/or paper/pencil
- Uploading a video
- 1:1 communication via phone/email/Google
- Meeting with Service Providers

If attendance requirements are not being met, the District will contact the student and parent/legal guardian. The District will consider safe welfare checks that maintain social distancing to deliver supplies and transfer assignments if applicable. The District may involve attendance officers if attendance is not documented within five school days.

Accountability:

Elementary and Secondary teachers will be expected to continue to meet in their grade level or departmental teams and answer the following questions:

- What is it we need students to know?
- How will we know when they've learned it?
- What will we do if they have not learned it?

All staff will be expected to make weekly contact with students, monitor progress, and offer assistance as needed.

Elementary and Secondary instructional staff will be expected to be available between their normal hours of operation of the building they work in.

All instructional staff will be expected to maintain a gradebook.

Students with individualized learning needs:

The district is committed to provide and support an equitable education for all students and provides the following guidelines for students with disabilities, English Language Learners, and students in Housing Transition.

Individualized Learning Providers:
- Special Education staff will engage in learning best practices for specialized instruction in a "distance learning" format.
- Special Education teachers will collaborate with General Education teachers to determine individual student needs and to design and provide instructional supports and accommodations to address those needs.
- Special Education teachers will provide instructional opportunities utilizing online and/or web-based programs that were previously used by individual students.
- Special Education teachers, paraprofessionals and related service providers will make direct contact with students and/or parents minimally two times per week.
- Special Education staff members may provide "hard copy" educational activities for students to engage in at home either through USPS or by delivery to home address.
- Special Education staff may identify additional learning programs to provide differentiated opportunities to students to access remotely as determined by student progress.
- Related Service Providers (RSP) will provide services as closely as outlined on the student's IDP. Teachers will be encouraged to invite RSP to classroom meets.

English Language Learners:
- ENL teachers will collaborate with General Education teachers to determine individual student needs and to design and provide instructional supports and accommodations to address those needs.
- ENL teachers will provide instructional opportunities utilizing online and/or web-based programs that were previously being used by ELL students.
- ENL teachers will make direct contact with students and/or parents/legal guardians on a bi-weekly basis.
- ENL staff members may provide "hard copy" educational activities for students to engage in at home either through USPS or by delivery to home address.

- ENL staff may identify additional learning programs to provide differentiated opportunities to ELL students to access remotely as determined by student progress.

Students in Housing Transition:
- Liaisons will be in contact at least two times per month or more frequently with students and families to check on basic needs (food, shelter, other basic needs).
  - If a need is identified, the liaison will work with families to provide resources or connect with community needs. Students experiencing housing transition will be assisted by the liaison to be prepared for virtual learning with a focus on communication from the student and family with their teachers and schools.
- Liaisons and teachers will adjust instruction if a digital format is not workable for the student's location.
- Student progress will be monitored by teachers and liaisons. Monitoring and support will include academic progress and social-emotional needs.

Instructional Support

Instructional support will be geared towards **supporting the content delivery** of the virtual learning experience. **Students, staff, and parents/legal guardians** will be provided regular opportunities to grow and learn which allow a continuous flow of content delivery. Access to instructional supports will be provided in additional areas as needs arise.

Staff instructional support will include:
- Ongoing professional development
- Designated times to attend both optional and required PD sessions to enhance online learning/application for staff
- Google Classroom Cheat Sheet

Student instructional support will include:
- On-going feedback
- Class lectures/notes/discussions
- Self-directed learning
- Small group work
- Projects
- Collaborative Learning
- Google Classroom Cheat Sheet

Parent/legal guardian instructional support
- Provide schedule and workspace

- Pacing support and keeping child on track
- Facilitate support and encouragement
- Maintain communication with teachers and administrators
- Encourage independence
- Google Classroom Introductory Video

The following are some guidelines or helpful hints to help parents/legal guardians support students becoming learners at home. It is important to remember that home is not school, so things will look and feel different for your children as they transition into this model.

- Explain the need for the changes that are occurring at home and with school. Talk about how school will look for them now and that it is important that they are still learning and participating in an educational experience.
- Set up a daily schedule for your family. This will be very important not only because schedules provide consistency for young children, but also for families who have multiple children working and learning from home.
- Post the schedule in a common area so everyone knows the expectations and can reference it when there are questions. Find a space for your child that will be conducive to their learning. This may be at the kitchen table, in the family room or in a place where you can monitor and provide help when needed.
- Remember, this isn't going to look like a typical school day. Some students may go quickly through daily learning assignments and some may need extra time to complete them. You know your child best. Don't make this a power struggle, though. Let them work at their pace, set the expectation that they do the work, but in the end, after that set amount of time, know it is okay to be done for the day.
- If your child is confused about something and you are unable to help them, reach out to their teacher – that is what they are there for! It is okay to ask for help. We know that our children often work better for the teacher than a caretaker at home. Let the teacher know!
- Adhere to a daily schedule as a family; bedtimes, wakeup times, baths, outside time, game time, school time. Keeping things consistent and letting children know what to expect and when, is helpful in helping them to accept where we are at this time in our world.

Resources for Staff and Student Use:

Devices
All staff will use their home computers and/or their work laptops/chromebooks. Students will use their home computers OR will check out one of the District's chromebooks to use at home. Parents/legal guardians will complete a survey from the District which will indicate the need for additional devices.

Distribution of Digital Resources
Parents/legal guardians must first contact the building principal to obtain a device from the District. They will then be directed to the appropriate location for pick-up or drop-off.

Google Classroom
Elementary and Secondary students can access ALL Core Program materials and Special Areas materials through Google Classroom.

Internet Access
Parents/legal guardians will complete a survey from the District which will indicate the need for internet access. The District has identified a number of internet providers who will provide access to the internet for families who do not already have access to the internet. In addition to commercial internet providers, the district is identifying and sharing Internet Hot Spots throughout the community.

# *Social Emotional Learning Supports (SEL)*

SEL for Students

Even before COVID-19 dramatically changed the context of teaching and learning across the country, there was a growing consensus in education that schools can and should attend to students' social-emotional development. The social-emotional learning skills or the five core social-emotional competencies, as identified by the Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL) are the foundations for young people's well-being: self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making.

Learning does not happen without social connection. We recognize that in light of the social disconnections that have occurred in the wake of COVID-19, distance learning cannot occur without first addressing the social-emotional needs of our students, teachers and families. Furthermore, we recognize that to attend to these social emotional learning needs, we will provide the necessary support and resources to all District stakeholders to build a community of collective understanding of how we can attend to students as well as each other. To address the additional needs of students due to the experiences surrounding COVID-19, the District will offer counseling, community circles, and in-class lessons and support.

SEL is the process through which children and adults understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions.

Relationships will be key to the success of the virtual environment. The first week of instruction will be building relationships and understanding the virtual environment. Community building activities will occur and continue throughout the course of the school year.
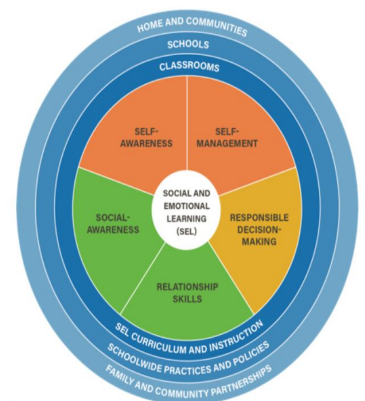
Five Core Competencies of SEL:[4]

Self-awareness: The ability to accurately recognize one's emotions and thoughts and their influence on behavior. This includes accurately assessing one's strengths and limitations and possessing a well-grounded sense of confidence and optimism.

Self-management: The ability to regulate one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviors effectively in different situations. This includes managing stress, controlling impulses, motivating oneself, and setting and working toward achieving personal and academic goals.

Social awareness: The ability to take the perspective of and empathize with others from diverse backgrounds and cultures, to understand social and ethical norms for behavior, and to recognize family, school, and community resources and supports.

Relationship skills: The ability to establish and maintain healthy and rewarding relationships with diverse individuals and groups. This includes communicating clearly, listening actively, cooperating, resisting inappropriate social pressure, negotiating conflict constructively, and seeking and offering help when needed.

Responsible decision-making: The ability to make constructive and respectful choices about personal behavior and social interactions based on consideration of ethical standards, safety concerns, social norms, the realistic evaluation of consequences of various actions, and the well-being of self and others.

Student Support

SEL for Elementary

To support students with needed mental health support due to the experience of the pandemic and now continued remote learning, supports will be as needed remotely and in person. Administrators, Guidance Counselors and Social Workers will connect with students regularly.

- Virtual Office Hours
- Students with services will continue to receive weekly counseling sessions with Social Worker.
- Teachers will integrate SEL activities and practices into lessons via Second Step Curriculum.
- Provide support for high risk students to regularly check in with an adult daily (as needed) as well as opportunities for students to reflect upon and practice various social emotional competencies.

SEL for Secondary

To support students with needed mental health support due to the experience of the pandemic and now continued remote learning, supports will be as needed remotely and in person. Administrators, Guidance Counselors and Social workers will connect with students regularly.

- Virtual Office Hours

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[4] "Core SEL Competencies - casel." https://casel.org/core-competencies/. Accessed 7 Jul. 2020.

- Weekly Updates regarding resources, programing and post graduation planning
- Support with securing outside resources if necessary.

Adult Support

SEL for Parents

Provide opportunities for families/parents to check in regularly with a staff member in the event additional SEL support is needed.

- Virtual Office Hours
- Supports may include making a plan with the family individually (i.e., Crisis Plan)
- Provide families with additional outside resources
  - Mental health connections

SEL for Staff

Opportunities for employees to check in regularly with a mental health staff member or colleague in the event additional SEL support is needed will be available at all times.

- The District will provide and offer ongoing professional development which may include:
  - Superintendent Conference Days
  - GCN training modules
  - EAP support for professional assistance and services
  - Erie 1 BOCES professional development
  - Mental health training for faculty & staff, restorative justice training for faculty and staff
  - NYSIR

In effort to further support staff and parents/legal guardians, the following SEL materials can be connected to via clicking the links below.

VIRTUAL LEARNING PLAN

Adult Self-Care:

- Flexibility in the Midst of Crisis (via Psychology Today/Dr. Gil Noam)
- Managing Anxiety Around COVID-19: Tips for You and Your School Community (via Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence/RULER)
- Regulating Emotions in a COVID-19 World (via Tom Hollenstein)
- Virus Anxiety Resources
- Mindfulness Resource Pack for District Leaders (via Panorama)
- Adult SEL Toolkit (via Panorama)

Resources for Educators and School Communities:

- 8 Strategies for Building a Sense of Belonging With Students and Families Virtually (via Panorama)
- 5 Equity-Centered SEL Strategies for Addressing Learning Recovery (via Panorama)
- 17 Apps to Help Kids Stay Focused (via CommonSense Media)
- Apps That Act Like Math and Science Tutors for Homework Help (via CommonSense Media)
- 5 Online Learning Resources to Build Belonging and Connectedness with Students and Families (via Panorama)
- How Student Services Leaders Can Adapt to Distance Learning (via Panorama)
- CommonLit Resources to Support Teleschool Plans: COVID-19 (via CommonLit)
- Distance Learning Reflection and Planning Toolkit (via Achievement Network)
- E-Learning Tools for Distance Education (via Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence/RULER)
- Free BrainPop Access for Schools Closed Due to the Coronavirus (via BrainPop)
- Free SEL Activities and Practices (via Greater Good in Education)
- Managing Anxiety Around COVID-19: Tips for You and Your School Community (via Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence/RULER)
- Movement Apps, Games, and Websites (via CommonSense Media)
- Most Schools Are Not Ready For Coronavirus, But They Can Be (via Digital Promise)
- Navigating Uncertain Times: How Schools Can Cope With Coronavirus (via EdSurge)
- SEL and COVID-19 (via CASEL)
- Top Time-Management Apps (via CommonSense Media)
- Digital and Civic Literacy Skills (via Teaching Tolerance)
- Trauma-Informed SEL Toolkit (via Transforming Education)

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion:

- Speaking Up Against Racism Around the New Coronavirus (via Teaching Tolerance)
- Coronavirus: Countering Biased Responses (via Morningside Center)
- The Coronavirus Surfaces Fear, Stereotypes and Scapegoating (via Anti-Defamation League)
- 3 Key Equity Considerations for Distance Learning From Education Leaders (via Panorama)

14

Student Privacy and Safety

Digital software platforms that are used by students in the Tonawanda City School District are in compliance with FERPA standards to protect the personally identifiable information as well as Education Law 2-D.

The documents cited below from the Federal Department of Education provide compliance standards and guidance for administrators, teachers, and parents.

FERPA and the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

The purpose of this guidance is to answer questions that school officials may have had concerning the disclosure of personally identifiable information from students' education records to outside entities when addressing the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19).

Protecting Student Privacy While Using Online Educational Services

This document addresses privacy and security considerations relating to computer software, mobile applications (apps), and web-based tools provided by a third-party to a school or district that students and/or their parents access via the Internet and use as part of a school activity.

Examples include online services that students use to access class readings, to view their learning progression, to watch video demonstrations, to comment on class activities, or to complete their homework. This document does not address online services or social media that students may use in their personal capacity outside of school, nor does it apply to online services that a school or district may use to which students and/or their parents do not have access (e.g., an online student information system used exclusively by teachers and staff for administrative purposes).

Many different terms are used to describe both the online services discussed in this document (e.g., Ed Tech, educational web services, information and communications technology, etc.) and the companies and other organizations providing these services.

This document will use the term "online educational services" to describe this broad category of tools and applications, and the term "provider" to describe the third-party vendors, contractors, and other service providers that make these services available to schools and districts.

Staffing

The district is committed to taking care of all employees during this crisis, and a part of that responsibility is ensuring continued employment. Duties and responsibilities have invariably shifted, but district and school building administrators will ensure that all personnel can contribute and work remotely as much as possible.

Assignment and transfers of classified personnel shall be made under the direction of the Superintendent in accordance with the approved hiring guidelines.

Assignments may be changed whenever the best interest of the District will be served.

Some possible changing of roles and responsibilities during times of crises may include and is not limited to some of the following:

Specialists: Collaborate with classroom teachers to determine what accommodations and/or modifications can be made to make the lessons more accessible to students with disabilities, language concerns, or second language learners. Provide services through online methods such as: Google Meet, email, phone conversation, etc.

Related Services Providers (RSP): Conduct counseling or consulting services with students via Google Meet, email, or phone.

Paraprofessionals: Assist in student contact. Prep and prepare paper/pencil copies to be distributed to students. Help classroom teachers with tracking attendance.

The New York State Department of Labor has provided some guidance for employers regarding sick leave and FMLA guidance, and this information can be obtained from Central Office.

Appendix A: SAMPLE Staff and Student Schedules

K-6 Elementary Student Virtual Schedule

Block includes 30 minutes of direct instruction

(Please note that these schedules may vary depending on the grade level/department)

	Mon/Thurs (Cohort A)	**Tues/Fri (Cohort A)**	**Wednesday**	**Mon//Thurs (Cohort B)**	**Tues/Fri (Cohort B)**
9:00-10:15	Block 1	Specials Teacher Assigned Videos/Work Interventions iReady/Comp Programs	Teacher connection with individual students Office Hours Small Group Instruction Specials RTI Assigned work	Specials Teacher Assigned Videos/Work Interventions iReady/Comp Programs	Block 1
10:15-11:00	Break/Groups				Break/Groups
11:00-12:00	Block 2				Block 2
12:00-1:00	Lunch/Recess				Lunch/Recess
1:15-2:30	Block 3				Block 3
2:30-3:30	Office Hours				Office Hours

Cohort A: Mon/Thur: Synchronous Instruction   **Cohort B:**   Tues/Fri: Synchronous Instruction

Tues/Wed/Fri: Asynchronous Instruction   Mon/Wed/Fri: Asynchronous

Instruction

SAMPLE K-6 Elementary Teacher Virtual Schedule

Block includes 30 minutes of direct instruction

	Mon/Thurs (Cohort A)	**Tues/Fri (Cohort A)**	**Wednesday**	**Tues/Fri (Cohort B)**	**Mon//Thurs (Cohort B)**
8:00-8:45	All work posted by 8:00am Planning & Meeting Time				
9:00-10:15	Block 1	**Cohort A:** Specials Teacher Assigned Videos/Work Interventions iReady/Comp Programs	Teacher connection with individual students Remediation Specials Office Hours Home visits Meetings PD Planning	Block 1	**Cohort B:** Specials Teacher Assigned Videos/Work Interventions iReady/Comp Programs
10:15-11:00	Break/Groups			Break/Groups	
11:00-12:00	Block 2			Block 2	
12:00-1:00	Lunch			Lunch	
1:15-2:30	Block 3			Block 3	
2:30-3:30	Office Hours			Office Hours	

SAMPLE Secondary Student Digital Schedule
(Please note that these schedules may vary depending on the grade level/department)

Period Time	Monday/Thursday	Wednesday (No New Teaching Time)	Tuesday/Friday
7:50- 8:50	Period 1	Students follow their normal classroom schedule independently for periods 1-9 to complete work assigned.	Period 9
9:00-10:00	Period 2		Period 8
10:10-11:10	Period 3		Period 7
11:15-12:00	Break/Lunch		Break/Lunch
12:10:1:10	Period 4		Period 6
1:20-2:20	Period 5		Warrior Workshop
2:30-3:10	Office Hours/ Interventions		Office Hours/ Interventions

SAMPLE Secondary Teacher Digital Schedule

Period Time	Monday/Thursday	Wednesday (No New Teaching Time)	Tuesday/Friday
7:50- 8:50	Period 1	Student Connections Office Hours Home visits Meetings PD Planning	Period 9
9:00-10:00	Period 2		Period 8
10:10-11:10	Period 3		Period 7
11:15-12:00	Break/Lunch		Break/Lunch
12:10:1:10	Period 4		Period 6
1:20-2:20	Period 5		Warrior Workshop
2:30-3:10	Office Hours/ Intervention		Office Hours/ Intervention