

# **Murdock Middle School**



## **Remote Learning Handbook**

Students, Families, Staff

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Students, Staff, and Families:

During this time of at-home remote learning, we will work as a team to help your child learn and grow. This handbook has been created to provide students, staff, and families with the information needed to experience success. Please read through this information before beginning the school year, and feel free to contact us if you have any questions.

This handbook is intended to supplement, and not replace, our existing handbooks. The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education released comprehensive guidance to provide direction to school districts during this unique time. Part of this guidance includes some specific requirements for students who will participate as learners through an at-home remote learning environment. We have included other applicable information in this handbook and would like to ask in advance for your participation and cooperation in meeting all requirements and guidelines, all to support the success of our learners.

### **Teacher Contact Process**

Please email your child's mentor teacher directly with questions, updates, and more. You should expect returned communication within 24 hours excluding weekends and school breaks.

### **Technical Support / Device Support Contact Information**

For technical/device support please send an email to [support@winchendonk12.org](mailto:support@winchendonk12.org)

## **STUDENT, STAFF, AND FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES**

We are all on the same team in helping your child experience success in both academics and in social-emotional development. To meet this goal together, we all have a role to play.

### **Students**

The student's role is to participate daily and learn to apply skills and concepts to the best of his/her ability. Additionally, students should expect to have some fun while also taking age-appropriate initiative and individual responsibility for their own learning. This includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Applying oneself to his or her studies in fun and focused ways
- Working hard each day to learn and apply information
- Staying engaged and participating fully in the lessons and activities
- Asking questions and participating in discussions
- Expressing and exploring personal interests
- Submit assignments and assessments by the due date set by the teacher

### **Staff**

Our teachers and staff are responsible for ensuring that students are provided with the content, instruction, support, and assistance they need to be successful. Teachers will proactively monitor each student's progress and a school staff member will initiate contact daily via phone or video conferencing. Teachers will also

provide feedback on the student's learning and success on an ongoing basis during the regularly scheduled school day.

## **Families**

Parents and guardians play a key role in their student's success in any learning environment, but even more so in an at-home remote learning environment. In order to be kept informed of their student's progress, parents and guardians will need to be available for ongoing contact with their student's teachers by phone, e-mail, text, and/or video conferencing. Additionally, parents and guardians should contact the student's building office for anticipated absences. In the case your son/daughter has special needs please contact their classroom teacher.

## **ACADEMIC ENGAGEMENT EXPECTATIONS**

### **Learning Expectations**

During Remote Learning, students will engage in both synchronous and asynchronous learning. Students will be guided (ie: a checklist) through completion of activities and projects, while deepening students' understanding of concepts relevant to the assignment.

Staff will lay out tasks each week which may include: instructional videos (by both teachers and the curriculum publishers), paper-based guided and independent practice, discussion questions for engagement with peers, lesson recap videos, formative assessments, projects, and more. Tasks are identified as either synchronous or asynchronous.

- ❑ For synchronous learning activities, teachers will schedule specific times for the class to come together and complete instruction and work in pairs, small groups, and/or all together
- ❑ During asynchronous learning, students will be able to progress at their own pace through the content. This may take the form of using instructional software or paper and pen work. Students will be asked to complete a short survey or another formative assessment method to check understanding and to take attendance

During each instructional day, students will be required to make progress towards completion of assignments through a series of synchronous and asynchronous actions. Teachers will be checking in with their assigned students and ensuring engagement and attainment during the instructional days.

Students will have opportunities for interactions with a teacher and peers daily via meetings, check-ins, community time, and/or synchronous learning time. Students will be able to interact with their teacher through mentoring, advisories, class times, office hours, extra help sessions and through small groups.

Students needing additional support will be able to have increased access to teachers and/or support staff. Using data, teachers will identify where small groups are collectively struggling on a topic area and provide targeted, direct instruction to the group on that matter.

## **Time**

Students are required to spend the same amount of seat time that they would experience if they were in person. A student must participate in a minimum of 330 minutes (5.5 hours) of learning activity each day.

## **Student/Family Communication**

Communication between student and teacher(s) is vital to the academic success and social-emotional development of the student. In order to facilitate communication, students and staff will abide by the following:

- Students will reply or respond to teacher-initiated communication promptly
- Students and at least one staff member will be available daily by phone or video conference
- Students are encouraged to initiate communication with questions

\*Please remember to inform teachers and/or the school if a change is made to your address, phone numbers, and/or email addresses.

## **Family Two-Way Communication**

Families will receive expectations and regular updates. Additionally, families and students can expect weekly touchpoints with school representatives and teachers.

Families will be expected to: support student transitions, engage in meetings with teachers, reach out to teachers and/or administration if they believe their student needs additional support, and read updates from the school/district. If students are unable to access certain aspects of the plan, please contact your student's principal and teacher(s).

Families have several supports and resources available. This will include asking what supports each family needs and working with families. Some of these resources could include:

- Physical Supplies: technology, hotspots, books, consumables, manipulatives, pens/pencils, notebooks
- Individualized Support: Connect parents to technological and academic help resources, which includes making sure that parents know where to get help for any items that are making learning more challenging
- Parent / Guardian Training: We will provide a set of online training and resources for parents and guardians on how to best support their students

Administrators, along with guidance and other school support personnel will take the lead on family outreach and community engagement as well as understanding what is happening with families and in the community at large. They will develop communications and be a resource for families and the community.

## **Attendance**

Students are required to spend the same amount of seat time that they would experience if they were in person. A student must participate in a minimum of 330 minutes of learning activity each day. When a student participates in a live class, the teacher can count attendance for that class. If a student were to watch a prerecorded class or complete school activities that are not with a live teacher, the student will be responsible for completing a Google form after each asynchronous block detailing what goal the student worked toward or achieved. All students are expected to attend school regularly. The attendance policy is as follows: On the day the student is absent, the parent should call the main office attendance line and state the reason for the absence. Parents of students who have been marked as “absent” will receive an automatic phone call from the school and any students who are habitually absent will be a focus of our Student Support Teams (SST).

## **Academic Integrity**

All students, whether at-home or in-person, are expected to submit only work that they have completed themselves through their own original efforts. Academic integrity is taken very seriously; cheating, copying, and plagiarism are all violations of academic integrity and are not acceptable. Plagiarism is presenting another person’s ideas or writing as your own. Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to: copying and pasting a whole sentence, paragraph, artwork, or paper into your own work; using someone’s original ideas in your work without giving them credit; using information from another source and only changing a few words here and there or moving around sentences.

## **Assessments and Progress Monitoring**

Students will be assessed and progress monitored regularly. Assessments could be administered via zoom, in a locked browser, or by proctor. Students will be allowed to take content assessments (CA) following the guidelines teachers have approved:

- Teachers will accept thorough notes or completed study guides that are shared with either their mentor or content area teacher ahead of requesting to take CA.
- Students must email their MENTOR before requesting to take a CA.
- Content Assessment Protocols:
  - Limited time frames (90-minute window for assessments on Wednesday or by appointment)
  - Students have 10 minutes to start the assessment once it has been approved.
  - Students then have 80 minutes to complete the assessment.
  - Students will take the CA while on a Zoom conference with the teacher.
  - The teacher will send out a Zoom link to students that request to take a CA. Students must log in to the Zoom meeting before taking the CA.
  - Special Education teachers will make 1:1 arrangements with students needing to take CA.
  - 1st time- notes/study guide
  - 2nd or more- additional notes and/or studying with a teacher via Zoom

## **Course Progress and Academic Support**

The student has the sole responsibility to complete the work for his or her courses. MMS teachers will remotely support and/or tutor students as needed over the course. Any student who needs support should inform the teacher and participate in virtual office hours/tutoring. Parents play a vital role in their child's remote education. Parental support and encouragement are critical for students working in online courses or completing work packets with videos. Monitoring of a student's progress will be a key component to student success and should occur at regular intervals during the day and week.

MMS teachers will make several individual contacts with students and parents during the academic term, but ultimately the student must take the initiative to complete the online work to stay on track for completion. Students who fall significantly behind or who struggle with completion may be required by the teacher to attend tutoring or academic support sessions to develop the skills needed to ensure their completion of the content.

## **Grade Monitoring and Progress Expectations**

Student progress is updated daily on the Summit platform. Parents should monitor their student's progress in each course. Student grading will adhere to our existing standards with a strong focus on the use of standards-aligned instruction and cognitive skills rubrics. Students will be provided with help sessions from teachers and parents will be using the ParentSquare portal in order to communicate effectively with teachers and staff.

## **Student Progress**

Students are expected to engage daily activities (including videos, instructional software, projects). In addition, they are expected to engage regularly with their core academic teachers and mentor.

Active engagement means a student is active in his or her coursework. Student engagement will be tracked via any one of the three outlined methods:

- Teacher interactions: Attending synchronous (live lessons) with teachers and their class on a schedule defined by the teacher/school. Students will check-in with their mentor/advisor, at a minimum weekly
- Formative Assessments: This could take the form of a short quiz, survey or discussion board
- Assignment submissions: Completion of lessons- activities, assessments, projects on a daily basis

## **Student Conduct**

- Students are expected to show respect and good behavior while on the network.
- Use of obscene, profane, discriminatory, disrespectful, threatening or offensive language is prohibited.
- Students and guardians are expected to dress appropriately for zoom classes
- It is recommended that a separate space free of distractions is utilized to ensure the best learning environment for students

- Security is a high priority when involving many users, if you identify a security problem report it to an administrator immediately
  - It is prohibited to create harmful computer viruses or programs
  - Email or messaging to classmates and teachers should remain course related. Email is not private and administrators reserve the right to screen email and online communications.
  - Protect your passwords
  - Administration will fully cooperate with any investigation into illegal activities on school provided devices, platforms, or internet. Any violations may result in removal from distance learning, disciplinary, or legal actions.
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### **SPECIAL EDUCATION AND STUDENT SUPPORTS**

Students with an IEP, 504 Plan, and other documented student supports can be very successful in at-home remote learning models. Please continue to be in contact with your child's Special Education liaison and/or school administrator to determine if a meeting is necessary to develop or modify an existing plan to provide and implement additional supports as needed.

### **USE AND CARE OF DISTRICT-ISSUED DEVICES AND TECHNOLOGY**

Technology that we provide may serve as an important tool to support students who are at-home remote learners. If the district issues a device or devices to a student, we expect that students will follow the district's Acceptable Use Policy. If there are technical and software issues, concerns, or barriers, please report these as soon as possible by contacting our district's technical support contact via email at [support@winchendonk12.org](mailto:support@winchendonk12.org)

### **MATTERS OF NON-COMPLIANCE**

We understand that being an at-home remote learner may present specific challenges and barriers. We will do everything possible to be your partner throughout this experience, and we will also have high expectations for students. To that end, we cannot expect a student to be successful if he or she is not participating and engaged in his or her learning. If teachers or school administration have concerns about a student's participation or progress, attempts will be made to meet with the student and his or her family to discuss barriers and work together to remove those barriers.

## REMOTE SCHEDULE

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<b>7:30-8:00</b>	Office Hours	Office Hours	Mentoring, CA, Small Group Workshops, Office Hours, SDL	Office Hours	Office Hours
<b>8:05-8:55</b>	Period A	Period B		Period C	Period D
<b>9:00-9:50</b>	Period B	Period C		Period D	Period E
<b>9:55-10:45</b>	Period C	Period D		Period E	Period A
<b>10:50-11:40</b>	Period D	Period E		Period A	Period B
<b>11:45-12:15</b>	Lunch				
<b>12:15-1:05</b>	Period E	Period A	SDL	Period B	Period C
<b>1:10-2:05</b>	Mentoring/CA	Mentoring/CA	SDL	Mentoring/CA	Mentoring/CA

\*SDL- Self-Directed Learning      CA- Content Assessments

<p><b>Communication</b></p>	<p>School Leaders will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide weekly updates to families using the district’s various means of communication</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Prepare parent/guardian orientation sessions that support families to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Understand the structure/features of the learning model in which the school year will commence, and their own child’s schedule within that model</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Be able to use all key instructional platforms</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Access their child’s learning schedule for remote learning</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> How parents can support their child’s learning</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Access teachers’ feedback on work, and keep track of their child’s progress</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Communicate questions and concerns to their child’s teachers</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Understand the possibility that learning models and schedules may change</li> </ul> </li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> With parent permission, provide similar orientations and information for day care providers who will support student education</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Ensure that all family information is regularly updated in School Brains</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Craft a calendar of Common Planning Time (CPT) meetings as well as bi-weekly staff meetings to ensure clear and consistent communication</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Determine protocols and training for substitute teachers</li> </ul> <p>Teachers will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Consistently communicate with families using Parent Square, the district’s chosen communication platform</li> </ul>
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- Send the Communication Preference Form to mentee families before school begins.
- Provide parents with weekly assignments. The daily remote schedule should:
  - Lay out the day's assignments
  - Convey the appropriate time parameters for each of the day's assignments, per day
  - Identify the times during the day when the child is required to participate in synchronous whole class and small group lessons. Teachers will make every effort to create predictable/regular times for these sessions that families can build into home schedules
- Continuous student feedback will be provided

Students will:

- Know how to seek assistance from teachers during remote learning
- Be expected to adhere to consistent norms for Synchronous Learning
  - Present, on time
  - Camera on
  - Correct name attached to their Zoom image
  - Appropriate dress
  - Seated at a table, facing the camera
  - Following behavioral expectations set by their teacher
  - Responsive during virtual synchronous learning time:
    - Responding promptly when called upon
    - Using thumbs up/thumbs down when asked
    - Typing in chat when invited to do so
    - Responding to others' chat comments when asked to do so

Parents/guardians/daycare providers will:

- Have the option to attend an orientation session before school begins
- Read communications from their child's teacher(s) and weekly updates from their child's principal
- Support their student's learning by:
  - Creating a structured learning schedule with sufficient time to complete the remote learning schedule provided by the teacher
  - Ensuring their child is logged in for every required synchronous remote class and small group session
  - Supporting their child's learning to the extent that their own schedule and comfort level allow, including encouraging their child's productive struggle with appropriately challenging material
- Reach out with questions and concerns

**Social and Emotional Well-being and Support**

School Leaders will:

- Put care and compassion first.** Ensure that the Social Emotional Health of teachers is a top priority and that structures are built in for their well being. This includes establishing a schedule which provides teachers sufficient time to plan, communicate with families whose students are in remote mode, and carry out their classroom hygiene responsibilities so that teachers feel they can manage the expectations of education in the pandemic
- Plan for experiences that ensure that the schools place adult and student wellness first to establish a positive, safe, and supportive learning environment
- Develop an online form for Student Support Team (SST) referrals so that if teachers are working remotely, they can still make SST referrals
  - If needed, adjust the form so that teachers can report on concerns associated with remote learning
  - Review the protocols to make sure that timelines for observation/action make sense, given the reduced face-to-face opportunities for interaction and data collection
- Establish structures to conduct SST meetings remotely as needed. Consider holding them more frequently to ensure necessary evaluation and intervention activity can take place during the limited time when children are in school
- Ensure there is an adult who will check in as frequently as needed for students with the highest level of social emotional needs, whether those students are in school or remote
- Ensure consistent communication with district School Adjustment Counselor/School Resource Officer in order to determine when home visits are necessary
- Continue the food service program that is delivering food to the community
- Support teachers as needed to integrate Social Emotional Learning (SEL) content and experiences into the start of the school year and beyond, that helps children to self-regulate, persist, and articulate their needs
- Determine which SEL lessons/content will be addressed by guidance counselors, and which will be addressed by classroom teachers

Teachers will:

- Start the year with activities that:
  - Build community and relationships
  - Help children to develop growth mindset, self-regulation, academic tenacity, agency and persistence
  - Promote equity and diversity
- Regularly utilize structures to communicate student concerns
- Reach out to parents/guardians when children seem to be struggling emotionally or behaviorally

	<p>Parents will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Reach out to teachers when they have concerns about their child’s social/emotional well-being or notice concerning behavioral changes</li> </ul>
<p><b>Instruction and Curriculum</b></p>	<p>School Leaders will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Create instructional schedules for fully remote model</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Establish and review/explain clear teacher expectations</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Establish clear routines and processes aligning their own responsibilities, and the responsibilities of teachers, students and parents respectively</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Establish a clear system for tracking student academic progress/engagement</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Develop a system for families to receive remote packets</li> </ul> <p>Teachers will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Plan for engaging remote learning experiences</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Ensure that all lessons and assignments are aligned to standards. Given COVID-generated learning gaps, teachers may be explicitly addressing prioritized prior year standards as well as grade-level standards</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Create and maintain a record of student work and progress. This may include work and/or grades maintained on the Learning Management System as well as work/grades maintained in the classroom</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Create remote packets for those students who do not have access to the internet, and deliver them in a timely fashion to the building principal for distribution</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Monitor student progress and welfare. Teachers will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Take daily attendance for morning and afternoon sessions and document any student who is not present</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Monitor which children are not completing remote work in a timely fashion, and reach out to families of children who are falling behind</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Report student absences to the Main Office, and higher-level concerns re: progress to the Student Support Team (SST)</li> </ul> </li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Grade students in relation to attainment of grade-level standards. Base grades upon a variety of student work and assessment data</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Teachers will lead regular Habits of Success- focused lessons that include time for student reflection and goal setting.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide onboarding lessons for Summit. Record lessons for student and parent review. Post on our website</li> </ul> <p>Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Students will be asked to complete a short form or another formative assessment method to check understanding and to take attendance</li> </ul>

Parents/guardians of remote learners will:

- Ensure that their children are logged onto the Learning Management System (Summit) and that their children are logged on and ready to learn for each subsequent/scheduled/required remote synchronous lesson
- Establish a schedule for independent remote school work
- Ensure that their children complete their assignments on time