

Dakota Valley Frequently Asked Questions

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Introduction

Based on recent questions and feedback received, the Dakota Valley School District has responded to many frequently asked questions below. The district is working to keep all stakeholders informed with the information currently available. Based on the guidelines provided, school leaders will be implementing practices in a way that is most conducive to their building. Please understand that this information is subject to change based on additional state and local health guidance. We will continue to update this page as more information becomes available.

Definition of Home Based Learning

- This form of education occurs when student(s) who attend school on a daily basis in-person are not able to attend school due to COVID.

Definition of Distance Learning (DV Online Academy)

- This form of education is provided to students who have chosen NOT to attend school in-person. The completion of the DV Online Academy registration form is required in order to join this educational model. The due date for this registration form is Wednesday, August 5th at 11:59pm.

Learning Models

What are the options for learning models for my child(ren) this year?

- On-Campus traditional schooling and Distance Learning as part of the Dakota Valley Online Academy are available for the 2020-21 school year

Can I change learning models at any time during the year?

- No. Budget constraints and staffing contracts require that families who select Distance Learning will be enrolled for a minimum of one semester during the 2020-2021 school year. Families who wish to enroll their children in the Distance Learning program must complete this registration form by 11:59 PM on Wednesday, August 5, 2020. Students in Distance Learning will have the option at semester to remain in Distance Learning or choose On-Campus learning for the second semester.

On-Campus/Home Based Learning Model

This is a full time, in person, at school learning model that would adapt to a home based distance learning model if the situation in regards to health concerns requires that a section of a grade, an entire grade, or an entire building would need to be quarantined for a period of time.

Will my child(ren) have a device for On-Campus Learning?

- Yes, all students Early Childhood-12 will be offered a device. 4th - 12th the devices are ready to be used. Early Childhood- 3 we are waiting on devices from the manufacturer, which were ordered in May.

Will my child switch classrooms/teachers during the school day?

- Elementary
 - Students will stay with their own class section through the day
 - Specials classes will be held in the homeroom classrooms with the specials teachers travelling to each classroom except for Art and P.E. which will be held in those respective classrooms but additional cleaning protocols will be put in place.
- Upper Elementary/ Middle School
 - Students will stay with their own section of students but will be switching classrooms as a group.
 - In some cases, teachers will switch classrooms instead of students.
- High School
 - Students will switch classes throughout the day.

Specials / Electives such as PE/Wellness, Music/Choir, Band

- There will be added safety procedures for specials including students using their own individual supplies as much as possible with cleaning of shared supplies between each student's use
- Band and Choir are still awaiting guidance from the National Federation of High School activities.

Will my child(ren) be able to check out books from the Library?

- Yes, students will be able to check out books from the library but there will be new protocols in place for check out procedures to eliminate shared contacts

What social distancing protocols will be in place throughout the school day?

- Students will be spread out whenever possible throughout the school day, including increasing distance between students at lunch tables, an additional section of lunch at the high school, utilizing one sided seating where possible at lunch tables

Will field trips be allowed?

- Field trips are suspended currently

Will after school programs be available?

- After school programs which ONLY serve DV students at this time are being allowed.

Will lockers be used?

- Lockers will be used sparingly with backpacks encouraged where appropriate by age level.

Do students need to wear masks?

- Masks are currently required as appropriate for the developmental level and age level of the students and whether social distancing is possible.
- Each building is considering procedures for the wearing of masks by students.
- Some students have medical conditions which impact their ability to wear masks.
- Students should plan on always having access to a mask.
- Age appropriate use of masks as an example means that Kindergarten students would not be expected to wear masks all day, but would put on their masks when traveling in a hallway for example.

Will staff be wearing masks?

- Staff will be required to wear masks if they are within 6 ft of others at all levels.

How will the classrooms be set up?

- All extra furniture will be removed from classrooms in order to spread students apart at tables and/or desks
- There will be limited large group activities and gathering spaces
- Plastic dividers are utilized to create barriers between students in small group settings
- Social distancing is being maximized in every classroom
- Student seating is being rearranged to accommodate all students facing forward and with maximum space between each desk.

What will Home Based Learning look like, if required?

- If a school or a cohort (one section of a grade or an entire grade) reaches the red level, those students will transition to Home Based Learning.
- Students would take their device home so they have their tools to transition quickly to digital learning.
- Various instructional strategies and tools will be utilized to facilitate digital Home Based Learning, including district approved curriculum, Zoom, purchased online programs, learning management systems such as Google Classroom and Seesaw.
- Rigor and expectations for Home Based Learning will be the same as On-Campus Learning in regard to attendance, assignments, pace, assessments, etc.
 - Students will be expected to have the equivalent academic time in home based learning as they do with on campus learning. For example, a high school student would be expected to be engaged in at least six hours a day of academic content where a kindergarten student would be expected to be engaged in at least three to five hours per day.

- The daily schedule will be provided to students and parents by individual teachers when necessary.

How will shared equipment (science labs, art, etc.) be adapted?

- Extra safety and cleaning protocols will be in place for any equipment needed for classes such as Science, Art, CTE classes, PE, etc

What will recess look like?

- Only grade alike or cohort alike groups will be in the same area of the playground at any given time
- Students will be encouraged to distance 6 feet apart when playing on the playground
- Students will not be required to wear masks on the playground.

What happens if students are quarantined or get CoVID? How will the Absence Policy be enforced?

- Students who are quarantined or miss school for any excused absence will have make-up work to complete and will be supported by teachers while they are out with any sickness
- Absences will be reviewed as in the past with considerations for excused absences
- We have always worked with students who have extended medical absences such as flu, pneumonia, hospitalization, etc, and we will continue to work with parents and students for all medical situations

Distance Learning Model Through The Dakota Valley Online Academy

Will I be able to switch my child to Distance Learning at any time?

- No, if you chose Distance Learning to start the school year, your child will need to remain in Distance Learning for the entire first semester
- Students in On-Campus Learning cannot switch to Distance Learning after August. 5th registration deadline.

How do I register for Distance Learning?

- Completion of this registration is your commitment to participating in the DV Online Academy for the first semester for the 2020-21 school year.
- If you have additional questions about Distance Learning through the DV Online Academy, please contact the building principal.
- [HERE](#) is the link to register for Distance Learning.

When is the deadline to register?

- Wednesday, August 5th at 11:59 pm.

Will attendance be taken for Distance Learning?

- Yes, attendance will be taken for all courses daily. In some cases, attendance will be taken at the beginning and end of the course period each day. Students will need to engage in classes during the normal school day/normal school schedule.
- Distance Learning is NOT intended to be a “less intensive, less time spend on academics” method of learning

Will my child(ren) be given a device to use for Distance Learning?

- Yes, all students in Distance Learning will be issued a school owned device

We do not have internet access

- We will strive to help find a solution, but we can not guarantee that every situation with limited or no internet access can be resolved
- If we have to move to Home Based Learning, your child might have to utilize packets
- An internet solution is REQUIRED to sign up and participate in the DV Online Academy

Will my child(ren) be able to check out books from the Library?

- Yes, protocols will be put in place to give students access to books from the library

What classes will be offered in Distance Learning?

- Not all classes can be offered in the Distance Learning through the DV Online Academy. For a complete list of courses offered, please refer to page 14 of the District Restart Plan

What will the Distance Learning schedule look like?

- Students will be expected to maintain daily routines and schedules similar to if they were on campus
- Elementary
 - Elementary minutes of expected instructional time are listed on page 14 of the Restart Plan
- Middle/High School
 - MS/HS students will be expected to log into Zoom or other platforms during their regularly scheduled classes each school day in order to interact with their teacher and peers
 - In some cases, depending on course and instructor availability, MS/HS may be enrolled in a combination of online learning platforms in order to meet the needs of learners, such as South Dakota Virtual High School, Odysseyware, and live stream courses within the Dakota Valley School District. In-district live stream courses will be the preferred method of instruction, where possible.

Will Distance Learning students have attendance requirements?

- Yes, students will be required to sign in daily for each scheduled course

Will teachers provide support for Distance Learning?

- Yes, teachers will be assigned to each Distance Learning course to support students **unless a student is assigned to coursework through the South Dakota Virtual High School**. In those cases, the SD Virtual School provides and assigns teachers to facilitate the course. Students will have to communicate all questions about the course and the course content to those assigned teachers. The teachers facilitating the SD Virtual School courses are state certified but are NOT Dakota Valley employees.

Do I have to choose the same instructional model for all of my children?

- No, you can choose a different learning model for each of your children.

Can my child(ren) enroll in the DV Online Academy and participate in activities?

- Yes, students in Distance Learning can participate in activities and they will be held accountable for all the same eligibility requirements for grades, attendance, etc as On-Campus students.

Will IEP, 504 and EL accommodations be available in the DV Online Academy?

- Yes, IEP, 504 and EL plans will be followed as written. Please refer to the District Startwell Plan for specific details.
- IEP, 504 and LAP meetings may be conducted in person, over the phone or via Zoom

What platforms for digital/distance learning will be used?

- Some of the tools our staff will use are instructional videos, live and recorded lessons, online curriculum resources approved by the district, and Zoom

How will students take district and state assessments in the DV Online Academy?

- As required by state & federal law, students in the DV Online Academy will be required to take district and state assessments. Staff will put proctoring procedures in place according to district, state and assessment guidelines.

What happens if students get CoVID or another illness?

- Attendance will be taken similar to on-campus attendance policies regarding illnesses. If a student is sick, there will need to be communication and verification of the illness between the school and the parent/guardian.
- Students will be given make-up time for assignments in the same manner as if they were on-campus

Will the DV Online Academy include opportunities for students to work in small groups?

- As possible, courses facilitated by the DV staff may set up small group sessions for learners to collaborate with each other via Zoom or with other digital platforms.

- Students who are assigned coursework through the SD Virtual School may not have opportunities to work in small groups