

Valley Catholic Middle School Digital Learning Days (DLD)

Dear Valley Catholic Middle School Community,

We hope you are all staying healthy and are enjoying this wonderful weather. Since the Governor's announcement earlier this week, the middle school staff and I have switched our focus to providing the details about our comprehensive digital learning program. While we look forward to seeing our students in person in the future, the following information outlines how VCMS will address digital learning in the fall. We hope you agree that we are offering a rich and robust program that includes the spirit and heart of our program.

This information will be added as an appendix to the Valley Catholic Middle School Handbook.

Daily Schedule:

Classes will be 85 minutes long with four periods each regular scheduled day. There will be 30 minutes at the start of each day for office hours, meeting times, etc. Days will alternate between Blue and White days with a few special schedules – TBD – that will allow for community events, religious activities, prayer services and retreats.

Blue Day

8:00 - 8:30	Office Hours
8:45 - 10:10	Period 0
10:25 - 11:50	Period 1
11:50 - 12:30	Lunch
12:30 - 1:55	Period 2
2:05 - 3:30	Period 3

White Day

8:00 - 8:30	Office Hours
8:45 - 10:10	Period 4
10:25 - 11:50	Period 5
11:50 - 12:30	Lunch
12:30 - 1:55	Period 6
2:05 - 3:30	Period 7

Classroom Expectations:

Because we believe personal contact between teachers and students, and direct instruction is important and necessary there will be a minimum of 30 minutes of synchronous instruction per scheduled class.

Depending on the lesson, students may have an entire class be synchronous, may be working with peers in break out rooms, or may have the opportunity to mute their audio and video to work independently for part of the instruction time but the teacher will stay live on Zoom for the entire class.

Students and teachers are expected to be available during their scheduled class time. Both asynchronous and synchronous instruction will be used during distance learning.

Asynchronous instruction: Provides a learning environment that does not require teachers and students to be online at the same time.

Synchronous instruction: Real-time instruction that provides opportunities for students and teaches to participate and interact at the same time.

The DLD Lesson Requirements – What do the classes look like?

1. **Starting/Stopping Class** - DLD lessons will include at least 30 minutes of synchronous instruction. For most classes, the 30 minutes includes an initial 20 minutes at the start of class and 10 minutes at the end of class.
 - The first 20 minutes will include instruction.
 - Teachers will be on line the entire time their class is in session so that students may drop back in at any point to ask questions, receive clarification, or simply to socialize.
 - The last 10 minutes should be a check-in period before signing off from class.
2. **Instruction Time** - This is the when the teacher will TEACH the class through synchronous instruction.
3. **Reinforced Lesson** - This would be the loose equivalent of having the students work IN CLASS to reinforce the lesson. This might include:
 - Students taking notes on the content while watching/listening.
 - Students participating in a discussion board on topic
 - Students may attend supervised breakout rooms for small group work
4. **Check for Understanding** – This will typically be accomplished through the homework. Some examples might include:
 - Writing something such as a summary
 - Taking an on-line quiz
 - Processing the content creatively - maybe through a story board/comic
 - An assignment that would have been completed in class and can be completed digitally
 - Participation in an online activity
 - Work log demonstrating progress on a long-term project

Please Note: The DLD lesson requirements (*Instruction Time, Reinforced Lesson, Check for Understanding*) may be covered in one class period or over the course of a few days depending on the individual lesson content.

Attendance

All students must be “in class” ready to go at the published start time and complying with the following requirements otherwise the student will be considered absent.

To be considered “in class” students must:

1. Have the audio muted upon entry
2. Start the live video feed upon entry
 - a. (Do not start class with the video hidden/on a blank screen)
3. Be seated in a location so the teacher can see the student’s entire face during synchronous instruction.
4. Student’s full name must be accurately listed on the device (no joke names or iPad registration numbers).

If a student logs into class after the class has started:

1. The student will be marked tardy in Powerschool.
 - a. If there were reasons beyond the student’s control, the student and parent should send both the teacher and the Vice Principal (Mr. French) an email with an explanation. We understand there can be issues but we need to know about them in order to help.
 - i. If the reason provided by the parent falls within excused absences, the absence will be changed in PowerSchool to an excused tardy.
 - ii. If no reason is provided, if the reason is not excused by the parent, or if the student has a pattern of absences/tardies, the absence will be changed to an unexcused tardy.
2. Attendance will also be taken again at the end of class during the check-in time (typically the last ten minutes). The same procedures listed in item #1 apply at the end of class as well.
3. Student may attend only classes that the student are enrolled in – no popping into other classes.
4. Students must email the teacher and school counselor, Sarah Moyer smoyer@valleycatholic.org, if the student misses a class. The teacher can help with class specific instructions, make-up work, and other clarifications. The school counselor will help the student navigate all of the classes and help the student develop a re-entry plan whether it was one or more days missed (See the VCMS Handbook for specific details on absences).

Student Expectations

1. Students should expect to receive a blend of daily and long-term assignments.
2. Students should expect up to 30 minutes of homework per class each day.
3. Students are expected to wear clothing that meet the free dress guidelines (as outlined in the handbook). Students should dress as if going to school for the day: No pajamas, tank tops, etc.
 - a. Students DO NOT need to wear their uniforms, spirit wear, or their badges.

Expected Etiquette on Zoom (or other on-line video platforms)

- All students must be ready to go at the published start time, sound muted, video live
- Students may only attend classes to which they are enrolled
- Students must use their official first and last name as their screen name
 - This would be the same name the student would use when heading an assignment to submit for grading.
- While the classes are being held on-line, the time the students are “in class” should mirror as much of the same behavior that the teacher would expect if the student was sitting in a classroom. So, unless the student has permission from the teacher, behavior on Zoom (or any other on-line video service) is expected to be respectful for the learning environment.
 - This is not time to be silly (again, unless pre-approved by the teacher).
Student should not:
 - Turn their image upside down
 - Have inappropriate backgrounds (see handbook's description for locker decorations for further explanation of inappropriate)
 - Post an image (of themselves or of something else) instead of being on live video
 - Do something on screen during a lesson or discussion that is distracting (such as dance, bring in an animal, eat during synchronous instruction, be in bed, etc.)
- Check Google Classroom for each of your classes at least three times a day: by 8:30 a.m., to ensure the student has all materials that will be need for class, during class as instructed by the teacher, and after school as the student is completing homework.

Time Expectations:

Since DLDs are considered full school days, plan on spending up to two hours per class each day, including homework. This would include class time of 85 minutes and the time needed to complete homework (for an average student).

Due Date:

All work, unless otherwise stated, is due the next day that class is in session. In addition, work is due at the start of each class unless the teacher specifies a different homework collection routine. For example, a math teacher may want the students to keep the assignment so the student can self-correct it before turning the assignment in to Google Classroom.

Connection Issues/Power Outage/ Illness:

Individual accommodations will be made for those who are not able to complete the DLD lessons as assigned. Regardless of the reason, if a student misses participation on a DLD, the absence will be treated the same way as if the student was absent from school. The same practices and policies would apply (please refer to the student handbook for details).

Should this happen, the student will need to contact each teacher directly for a make-up assignment.

Academic Integrity:

The expectations for academic integrity are exactly the same for distance learning as they are for in-person learning. Students are always expected to complete their own work unless otherwise instructed. They are expected to cite sources and cite them as instructed. Violations of academic integrity are taken seriously and can lead to consequence including receiving a zero on the assignment up to expulsion for a third offense. Please review the complete policy in the Handbook.

Communication:

School communication with students will be carried out via a student's vstudent email account. Students should check their vstudent account daily.

Teachers will communicate with students via their vstudent account and/ or Google Classroom. Teachers will establish parameters for regular contact with students and postings for assignments.

The chain of communication, whether during distance or in-person learning, remains the same. Academic questions/ concerns should first be raised directly with the teacher involved. If there is no resolution then the issue should be brought to the attention of the department chair.

**Campus Ministry
and Religion**
Nick Hegwood

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English
Paul Caballero

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Fine Arts
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Health/ PE
Kara Moore and
Mike Segerdahl

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**Math and
Learning Support**
Lanie Toth

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Science

Sarah Zinzer

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STEM

Melissa Iserson

*On family leave until
Nov. 13

Social Studies

Courtney Ferrari

cferrari@vstudent.org

If there is a question about behavior or attendance then the issue/ questions/ concerns should first be raised directly with the teacher involved. If there is no resolution then the issue should be brought to the attention of the Vice Principal, Dale French at dfrench@vstudent.org.

For questions or concerns regarding counseling needs please contact our counselor Sarah Moyer at smoyer@vstudent.org.

Staff Availability:

Teachers will be checking their emails throughout the day to answer any questions, starting at 8:00 a.m. Full time staff members will be regularly checking email between the hours of 8:00am and 3:30pm and occasionally checking after 3:30p.m.

Additional Questions:

Please do not hesitate to email your teachers if you need help or have a question. You may also consider posting your question to Google Classroom for help so your teacher and/or classmates may respond with answers or further questions.

Calendar:

The calendar will be adjusted to reflect our shift to distance learning. Some events may be cancelled, other postponed, others offered digitally.

VCMS Counseling Department Digital Learning Steps of Support

During this time, the Counseling Department is committed to doing their best to support the students, as well as teachers/staff. The hope is to be able to track students and ensure that no one falls through the cracks. We believe the following steps will help us achieve this.

Minor Student Concerns

For minor student concerns or issues, such as late to class or unexcused absences (absences not reported to the school by a parent), not turning in assignments, poor academic performance or achievement, or small behavioral issues, staff will follow these steps.

1. **Contact the student.** Staff will contact the student by email or private correspondence on Google Classroom where the staff member will address the concern or issue with the student first, before involving parents, counselor or administration unless another issue arises from this interaction.
2. **Contact the student's parent/s.** If the concern or issue is not resolved or continues to occur, the next step is for staff to contact the student's parents. Staff members will contact the parents via email to inform them about what the observing.
 - a. The school counselor and school administration may be copied on the email.
 1. This allows the counselor and administration informed in the event that the student needs additional support.
 2. This also allows the counselor and administration to track the student to see if the concern/issue is isolate to a single class or is a pattern that is developing in two or more classes.

Academic Support

1. There will be an hour of additional support after school hours at no additional cost.
 - a. These study sessions are not tutoring sessions. They will provide guided/monitored study sessions for all students.
 - b. The after school support is a drop in program so students may choose to attend as needed.
 - i. For returning students, this is the equivalent to the after-school study hall program we typically offer when school is in-person.
2. Students who are struggling academically, especially with the transition to digital learning, will also be provided with a staff member who will check in with the student at

least weekly. This staff member will offer support by helping the student take full advantage of the opportunities provided within the VCMS program as a way to support students who struggle with one or more students.

- a.** In most cases the school counselor, the academic support teacher, or in some cases, the STEMinar teacher will be the staff member providing academic support for those who are struggling.

Social Emotional Support

1. There will be an hour of additional daily support, programs, breakout rooms, and other opportunities designed to help support the social emotional health of the students. These opportunities are provided at no additional cost.
 - a.** This support might be embedded into orientation or academic classes, before school, during the lunch break, or after school time, and there will be several extend blocks of time during the school day that will be set aside over the course of the quarter that will address social emotional needs of the students.
2. Students who are struggling with social emotional issues (feeling accepted, being included, managing conflict, anxiety, transitions, friendship issues, etc.), especially with the transition to digital learning, will also be provided with a staff member who will check in at least weekly and offer support in helping the student take full advantage of the opportunities provided as a way to support students who struggle with one or more students.
 - a.** In most cases the school counselor and the academic support teacher will be the staff members providing academic support for struggling students.
 - b.** In addition, the student will be asked to identify a teacher they feel particular close to who will become part of their support system.