



*Holy Trinity Catholic School, a ministry of Our Lady Star of the Sea Parish, offers to early childhood and elementary school students of diverse ethnic, economic, and religious backgrounds a superior academic program based on Gospel values. Within a family atmosphere, the school strives to develop the spiritual, academic, personal, creative, and physical growth of each student.*

*Holy Trinity Catholic School students will be fully prepared to transition to middle school possessing critical thinking skills, an ability to work independently as well as collaboratively, and an awareness of what it means to actively live the Gospel values.*

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# Distance Learning Plan

## Remote & Digital Learning for K4-5<sup>th</sup> Grade

At Holy Trinity Catholic School, we are dedicated to making sure that students continue to experience the care and commitment of our faculty and staff, and the routine of daily learning, even in the event of a school closure. It is important to note that distance learning cannot replicate what happens in the classroom during the regular session. The prayer, socialization, face-to-face interaction, in-person feedback, community, and extracurricular events, and much more are what make HTCS such a special place. Still, we do intend that quality learning continues, even from a distance.

The purpose of this document is to describe the actions Holy Trinity Catholic School will take to continue instruction in the event of an extended campus closure as well as the roles and responsibilities of all those involved in the process of Distance Learning. We strive in our Distance Learning Plan (DLP) to accomplish three goals:

- Live Student-Teacher Contact Time
- Offline & Online Content Delivery
- Online Monitoring of Student Progress/Student Assessment

It is our intention with this DLP to continue to live our mission, vision, and strategic plans, which together assert that we will consider the well-being and growth of the whole child. The act of creating this DLP provides us with a unique opportunity to reinforce what we assert through our founding documents.

If Holy Trinity Catholic School's campus is closed and this DLP is implemented, the Principal will send email communications to both parents and faculty/staff announcing a timeline for implementation. An exact date will be designated when distance learning will begin for Holy Trinity Catholic School students.

The Leadership team will periodically send email updates to parents and faculty/staff apprising them of any pertinent information about when Holy Trinity Catholic School might reopen for regular classes. As with the decision to close campus, the decision to reopen school for regular classes will be made with close consultation with the Diocese of Charleston, the Department of Health, and other schools in our area.

We hope that implementation of this DLP will never be necessary. However, in the event of school closure, it is important that this DLP describes Holy Trinity Catholic School's approach to distance learning, the channels we will use for communication, the online platforms we will employ by grade, the roles, responsibilities, and expectations Holy Trinity Catholic School has for faculty, parents, and students, guidelines for how parents/guardians can support their children's learning, and a host of other priorities and considerations tailored to make the best of challenging circumstances.

We hope to create a DLP that ensures equity. This includes doing our best to provide students with devices if they do not have access to a computer at home. We also will be happy to help families access online tutorials as we are able through email and phone contacts. While we will

not be able to help families troubleshoot all problems, we will do our best to make sure all students have equitable access where we have control.

**Short Term Closures**

For unexpected one- or two-day closures of the school, teachers may elect to send home a work packet with their students. They will do a morning check-in on each day the school is closed to take attendance and answer questions. Students will spend the rest of the day completing the work packet which must be turned in by 8 AM on the first day back on campus. If the student returns the packet on time, he/she will be counted present for the day(s).

**Technology Systems to Support Longer Term Distance Learning at HTCS**

Regarding the school’s core technological and communications systems, Holy Trinity Catholic School offers the following FAQs to describe how we will communicate and manage learning in the event this DLP is implemented.

**How will Holy Trinity Catholic School communicate with parents, students, and faculty/staff in the event of an extended campus closure?**

Holy Trinity Catholic School will continue to use the same channels it employs for normal day-to-day communications with parents, students, and faculty/staff. All these systems are remotely accessible and will function in an emergency situation. The table below describes these systems:

<b>Channel</b>	<b>Audience</b>	<b>Description &amp; Access</b>
Email	Faculty, Staff, Parents, Students	Email will be used for all major communications and announcements, including those from the Leadership team and teachers. Faculty will also use email to communicate, although they will use other platforms to interact with their students as well. Please make sure all parent emails are up to date and correct.
Facebook	Faculty, Staff, Parents	Daily posts from Leadership will be posted to keep the school community united.
Google	Faculty, Staff, Parents, Students	Google GSuite (including Docs, Forms, Classroom, and Gmail) will be the platform used.

Zoom	Faculty, Staff, Parents, Students	Zoom is an online video conferencing platform that allows for live group meetings, hosted by teachers.
IXL	Students in grades PK-5	IXL is an online program that provides practice and reinforcement in Math and ELA for students in K-5. <a href="https://www.ixl.com">https://www.ixl.com</a>

### **How will Holy Trinity Catholic School ensure that students have access to these tools from off-campus?**

Most of our technology tools are not device-specific, which means students will be able to access learning through nearly any electronic device. Students will be asked to utilize home electronic devices to access these tools. If your family does not have access to a laptop, computer, or tablet, please notify us and you will be allowed to sign out Chromebooks or iPads from the school provided that you sign a waiver and the device is returned in similar condition (costs associated with lost, broken, or stolen devices will be the responsibility of the family). Please only sign out devices if it is absolutely necessary.

If you do not have wireless internet access, we recommend using a hotspot and data from your phone. <https://www.pcmag.com/how-to/how-to-turn-your-phone-into-a-wi-fi-hotspot>

### **Eight Distance Learning Guidelines for Teachers**

*The transition to distance learning will not be simple or easy. Teachers will need to think differently about how to communicate, give instruction, and provide feedback, how to design lessons and assignments that are authentic and meaningful, and how to ensure students continue to collaborate and communicate with others. The eight guidelines provided below are intended to help teachers across all grade levels reflect on challenges they may confront in shifting to distance learning.*

#### **1—At Holy Trinity Catholic School, we know our students and they know we care**

Our commitment is to nurture relationships and demonstrate deep care for our students and one another. In the event of a crisis that leads to implementation of this DLP, your students may be stressed or worried. Before diving into the curriculum, take the time to assess your students' mental, physical, and emotional well-being. How are they doing? How are their families?

#### **2—Evaluate your students' conditions for distance learning**

While most students will have reliable online access at home and the necessary devices to shift to distance learning, others will not. Teachers should remember that each family's

circumstances will vary, and they should avoid assumptions about limitations or restrictions students are facing. Ask your students and/or their parents whether their online access is reliable and what devices the student has at their disposal. Determine which students will need to sign out a device. Open a dialogue with students and families and avoid assumptions that all students' circumstances are the same.

### **3—Stick with the familiar**

Especially in the first weeks after moving to this DLP, teachers should continue using existing communication channels and learning management systems. In other words, **stick with what's familiar to your students.** Teachers should remember that while many students will thrive with distance learning, others will struggle. If the school remains closed for a longer period of time, it may become necessary to explore new or different learning platforms that provide different experiences.

### **4—Less is more**

Should Holy Trinity Catholic School implement this DLP, one challenge confronting teachers will be how to best streamline content and elevate the most essential learning for students. In other words, teachers need to take a less-is-more perspective, including the pacing of lessons and volume of assignments and assessments. It can also be hard to know exactly how long school closure might last, which makes longer-term planning difficult.

### **5—Seize the moment; embrace new opportunities and possibilities for your students**

Years or decades from now, how will your students remember the emergency that resulted in school closure? While distance learning should attempt to bring some normalcy and routine to students' lives, teachers should not ignore the opportunities resulting from school closure either. Teachers might require students to keep a daily journal or diary for the duration of the crisis. Personal journaling and/or other creative writing assignments can help students process their thoughts, worries, and emotions, particularly in times of crisis. Students might use other media as well, including video, drawing, painting, and music. Moreover, the crisis might also provide other real-life opportunities to study scientific phenomena associated with the crisis, and media/government responses.

### **6—Design asynchronous learning experiences**

When school is closed and students are learning from various locations, teachers can still connect them asynchronously (not all students at the same time). For example, teachers can use familiar discussion forums/thread or tools to allow for student responses and dialogue during a set time, knowing that students might not all be online at the same exact time.

### **7—Design synchronous learning experiences**

When it comes to student engagement and learning, relationships matter as much online as they do in person. If Holy Trinity Catholic School's campus were closed, students will be able to gather for synchronous learning times via Zoom, an online video conferencing platform or

Google Hangouts. Collaboration remains important and there are many ways teachers can foster it through synchronous (all students at the same time) learning. This is a good time for discussion, class meetings, sharing, show and tell, and more.

### **8—Think differently about assessment**

Assessment is one of the most challenging adjustments for teachers new to online learning. Distance learning should be an opportunity for students, individually or collaboratively, to complete writing assignments, design infographics, make video presentations, or complete oral assessments via video chat. Teachers are encouraged to **think differently about the frequency and end goal of assessment** instead of forcing a traditional assessment method that doesn't fit distance learning. Thinking differently about assessment will positively influence the experience for students, leverage the strengths of distance learning, and prevent frustration on the teacher's part when traditional methods do not work.

*The guidelines above are modeled directly on the DLP of the American International School of Japan and 'Iolani School, as well as Our Lady of Guadalupe with our gratitude.*

## **Ten Guidelines for Parent Support of Distance Learning**

*The transition to distance learning can be challenging for families. Parents will need to think differently about how to support their children; how to create structures and routines that allow their children to be successful; and how to monitor and support their children's learning. Some students will thrive with distance learning, while others may struggle. The ten guidelines provided below are intended to help parents think about what they can do to help their children find success in a distance learning environment.*

### **1—Establish routines and expectations**

From the first day Holy Trinity Catholic School implements its DLP, parents need to establish routines and expectations. We encourage parents to set regular hours for their children's schoolwork. We suggest students begin their studies at 8:00 a.m. Keep normal bedtime routines for younger children and expect the same from your older-aged students, too. (Do not let them stay up late and sleep in!) Your children should move regularly and take periodic breaks as they study. It is important that parents set these expectations for how their children will spend their days starting as soon as distance learning is implemented, not several days later after it becomes apparent a child is struggling with the absence of routine.

### **2—Define the physical space for your child's study**

Your child may have a regular place for doing homework under normal circumstances, but this space may or may not be suitable for an extended period of time, as will be the case if this DLP is implemented. We encourage families to establish a space/location where their children will learn most of the time. This should be a public/family space, not in a child's

bedroom. It should be a place that can be quiet at times and have a strong wireless internet signal, if possible.

### **3—Monitor communications from your children’s teachers**

Teachers will communicate with students/parents through email, as necessary. The frequency and detail of these communications will be determined by your children’s ages, maturity, and their degree of independence. When you need to contact teachers, please remember that teachers will be communicating with many students as well as other parents and that communications should be essential, succinct, and self-aware.

### **4—Begin and end each day with a check-in**

Parents are encouraged to start and finish each day with a simple check-in. In the morning, ask what is your child learning today? What are their learning targets or goals? How will they spend their time? What resources do they require? What support do they need? This brief grounding conversation matters. It allows children to process the instructions they have received from their teachers. It helps them organize themselves and set priorities. Parents should establish these check-ins as regular parts of each day. Not all students thrive in a distance learning environment. Some struggle with too much independence or lack of structure. These check-in routines need to be established early before students fall behind or begin to struggle.

### **5—Take an active role in helping your children process and own their learning**

During a regular school day at Holy Trinity Catholic School, your son or daughter engages with other students or adults dozens if not hundreds of times. These social interactions and opportunities for mediation include turning to a peer to exchange a thought or idea, participating in small or large group discussions, asking questions for clarification, collaborating on group projects, and countless other moments. While some of these social interactions will be re-created on virtual platforms, others will not. Human beings learn best when they have opportunities to process their learning with others. Beyond the check-ins recommended at the start and end of each day, parents should regularly circle back and engage with their children about what they are learning. However, it is important that your child own their work; do not complete assignments for them, even when they are struggling. This is not a benefit to anyone.

### **6—Establish times for quiet and reflection**

A huge challenge for families with multiple children will be how to manage all their children’s needs, especially when those children are different ages and have different needs. There may be times when siblings need to work in different rooms to avoid distraction. Parents may even experiment with noise-canceling headphones (no music necessary!) to block out distractions.

### **7—Encourage physical activity and/or exercise**

Make sure your children remember to move and exercise. This is vitally important to their health, well-being, and to their learning. It is important for parents to model and encourage exercise! Think also about how your children can pitch in more around the house with chores or other responsibilities. Do not let your children off the hook – expect them to pitch in!

#### **8—Remain mindful of your child’s stress or worry**

One thing is for certain: Holy Trinity Catholic School will only implement this DLP if a serious emergency has occurred. Should this happen, it is imperative for parents to help their children manage the worry, anxiety, and range of emotions they may experience. Difficult though it may be, do your best not to transfer your stress or worry to your children. They will be out of sorts, whether they admit it or not, and need as much normal routine as parents can provide. Please reach out to your child’s teacher or contact us should you feel your child needs a counselor if they are expressing extreme worry.

#### **9—Monitor how much time your child is spending online**

Holy Trinity Catholic School does not want its students staring at computer screens for 7–8 hours a day. We ask that parents remember most teachers are not experts in distance learning and that it will require some trial-and-error before we find the right balance between online and offline learning experiences. Administrators or teachers will periodically check in with you to assess what you are seeing at home and what we need to adjust. We thank you in advance for your patience and partnership!

#### **10—Keep your children social, but set rules around their social media interactions**

There’s always excitement and uncertainty when there is a significant change to a routine, like school. If Holy Trinity Catholic School implements this DLP, the initial excitement of school being closed will fade quickly when students start missing their friends, classmates, and teachers. Help your children maintain contact with friends and see them in person when circumstances permit. Please also monitor your children’s social media use, especially during an extended school closure. Older students will rely more on social media to communicate with friends. Social media apps such as SnapChat, Instagram, WhatsApp, or Facebook are not official, school-sanctioned channels of communication.

Holy Trinity Catholic School asks parents to monitor their children’s use of social media. Remind your children to be polite, respectful, and appropriate in their communications and to represent your family’s values in their interactions with others. A student’s written words and tone can sometimes offend or cause harm to others. Our [Student Technology Use](#) applies even in home use!

### **Roles & Responsibilities During Distance Learning**

*Many stakeholders will contribute to the effective implementation of this DLP. The roles and responsibilities of students and parents are delineated below.*



## Student Roles & Responsibilities

- Establish daily routines for engaging in the learning experiences (e.g. following your daily schedule or establishing an 8:00 a.m. start)
- Identify a comfortable, quiet space in your home where you can work effectively and successfully
- Regularly monitor online platforms check for announcements and feedback from your teachers
- Complete assignments with integrity and academic honesty, doing your best work
- Do your best to meet timelines, commitments, and due dates
- Communicate proactively with your teachers if you cannot meet deadlines or require additional support
- Collaborate and support your Holy Trinity Catholic School peers in their learning
- Comply with Holy Trinity Catholic School's [Student Technology Use Contract](#), including expectations for online etiquette
- Proactively seek out and communicate with other adults at Holy Trinity Catholic School as different needs arise (see below)

For questions about ...	Contact
a course, assignment, resource, or technology related concern or issue	the relevant teacher
a personal, academic, or social-emotional concern	Mrs. Erica Hines, Director of Student Services; ehines@charlestdiocese.org

## Parent Roles and Responsibilities

Provide support for your children by adhering to the 10 Guidelines for Holy Trinity Catholic School's Parents as well as:

- Establish routines and expectations
- Define the physical space for your child's study
- Monitor communications from your children's teachers
- Begin and end each day with a check-in
- Take an active role in helping your children process their learning
- Establish times for quiet and reflection
- Encourage physical activity and/or exercise
- Remain mindful of your child's stress or worry
- Monitor how much time your child is spending online
- Keep your children social, but set rules around their social media interactions

### PK-5 School Priorities & Considerations

- After receiving initial notice from the Leadership team about school closure and timelines, families will receive an email from their homeroom teacher with specific information.
- The primary tools for communication between teachers and families will be via email, video, and assignments emailed to families.
- Students will have both off- and on-screen learning activities designed to engage learners in experiences that connect to the current curriculum.
- Resources will vary by class and lesson, but will include links to videos, graphic organizers, scanned material to read and engage with, independent research material via online sources or our library databases, and reading materials including e-books.
- Learning tasks and activities will provide direction to families on how best to support student learning and the expected level of adult involvement. It is expected that students in grades PK–2 will need higher levels of support than students in grades 3–5.

### Elementary School: Approximate Daily Time Frames for Learning (varies by lesson)

K4	
10 minutes	Calendar activities (days, months, weather)
15 minutes	Language Arts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Letter recognition and letter sounds</li> <li>• Printing/Handwriting (assigned work)</li> </ul>
15 minutes	Read Aloud (parents/guardians read books to your child)

15 minutes	Math (Practice identification, writing numbers, and assigned work)
15 minutes	Science & Social Studies (assigned work)
15 minutes	Art and craft activities (assigned work)
10 minutes	Religion (practice prayers, read Bible stories, pray together)

**Kindergarten**

30 minutes	ELA (assigned work): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Writing (stories)</li> <li>• Printing/Handwriting</li> <li>• Foundational skills</li> </ul>
20 minutes	Read Aloud (parents/guardians read books with your child)
30 minutes	Math (assigned work)
30 minutes	Science and Social Studies (assigned work)
20 minutes	Religion (assigned work)

**First & Second Grade**

10 minutes	Handwriting (assigned work)
60 minutes	ELA (assigned work): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foundational Skills</li> <li>• Independent Reading Practice</li> <li>• Reading Activities</li> <li>• Vocabulary</li> <li>• Spelling</li> <li>• Grammar</li> <li>• Writing</li> </ul>
30 minutes	Mathematics (assigned work)
30 minutes	Science and Social Studies (assigned work)
30 minutes	Religion, prayer, faith formation (assigned work)

### Third to Fifth Grade

60 minutes	ELA (assigned work) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Independent Reading</li> <li>• Reading Activities</li> <li>• Vocabulary</li> <li>• Spelling</li> <li>• Grammar</li> <li>• Writing</li> </ul>
45 minutes	Mathematics (assigned work)
30-45 minutes	Science and Social Studies (assigned work)
30-45 minutes	Religion, prayer, faith formation
<b>Specials (Art, Music, PE, Spanish, STREAM)</b> <b>Times listed are per Special once every week (NOT daily)</b>	
10-15 minutes	K4
15-30 minutes	K-2
30-45 minutes	3-5

**Final Note:** All school closures are an ever-changing situation... this plan is subject to change and will for sure be adapted and used in ever changing ways as we journey together in our mission *“to develop the spiritual, academic, personal, creative, and physical growth of each student.”*