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# Kirby Hall School

## *Distance Learning Handbook*

### *(as of July 10, 2020)*

Middle and Upper School

*2020-2021*



## Kirby Hall School

*A place to belong. An education beyond.*

*[kirbyhallschool.org](http://kirbyhallschool.org)*

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# Approved Technology

## Google Classroom

Google Classroom will be used to assign and collect student work. Some classes will also use Google Classroom's "Stream" as a discussion board to foster dialogue among students.

## Google Meet/Zoom

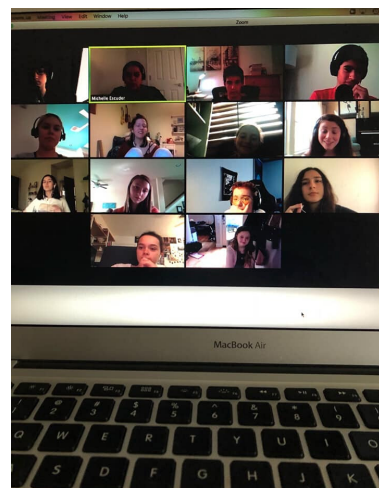
Teachers will use Google Meet and/or Zoom for live lessons and class connection. Lessons may be recorded and posted for review by students unable to attend live sessions.

## School Email

Teachers will continue to communicate with parents using school email. To reduce the volume of email parents receive, each grade level's advisor will compile information from all teachers into one email as needed; however, non-advisors will contact students or parents directly regarding individual student needs. Email will be used primarily for parent-teacher communications or to reach out to students individually about concerns or compliments. Google Classroom and not email will be the student's primary source for assignments and class updates.

## RenWeb

Teachers will continue to use RenWeb to post grades and lesson plans. Please check RenWeb on a daily basis.



# Online Class Etiquette for Students

- Students will behave in an online class in the same manner as they would in a physical class.
  - Proper attire is required.
  - It is important that a specific area is used as a student's classroom and only for that purpose to foster an atmosphere of learning.
  - All necessary school supplies (paper, pencil, books, etc.) must be gathered before joining.
  - Find a flat surface to work with minimal distractions.
  - Students must not have access to personal phones or Ipads/tablets (unless necessary to get online) during classes.
  - Video must be left on for the duration of the meeting, and audio must be available when a response is requested from a student.
  - Active participation is essential for successful online classes.
  - **Successful participation will involve: presence at each class meeting; prompt responses to emails from teachers; daily engagement in message-board conversations, if required by teacher.**
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# Weekly Schedule

As distance learning differs dramatically from the traditional classroom model of education, your child's day at home will not exactly mimic a day in the classroom. Kirby Hall teachers remain committed to providing the advanced curriculum along with a personal connection that is the hallmark of our small but mighty school. Teachers will offer a combination of resources for students, including regularly scheduled live online instructional classes, pre-recorded lessons, one-on-one video meetings, academic exercises, assignments, and large projects. Students will be expected to collaborate fully in the learning process while staying safe at home.

Parents will receive a master schedule of online class meetings at the beginning of the distance learning term. Teachers of core academic subjects reserve the right to add class days as curriculum and/or student need demand; however, these added classes will always be at the regularly scheduled time.

**Each Middle and Upper School core academic subject (Math, Science, History, Spanish, and Language Arts/Literature) will schedule between 2-5 live lessons per week and each lesson will last up to an hour.** As different academic courses require different amounts of lecture and independent practice, core teachers will carefully consider student needs before setting weekly live class requirements. These lessons will be spread out across the five academic days of the week, so that on each day students will meet with at least two core academic teachers. Teachers may add classes as curriculum or student needs demand; however, apart from extenuating circumstances, any changes made will require a minimum of one-week notice and will be communicated to students and parents.

- **Drama will be scheduled for three to four live 50-minute lessons per week.**
- **P.E. will be scheduled for three live 30-minute lessons per week for grades 6th through 9th.**
- **Art will be scheduled for two live 30-minute lessons per week for grades 6th through 9th.**

The administration will review each grade level's online teaching schedule before it is published to ensure that the student's day and week is balanced.

In all fields of learning, but especially The Humanities, as our students move into Upper School, Kirby Hall teachers focus on increasing critical thinking skills over memorization of facts. This means more projects than lectures; and more reading, writing, and conversation than tests. Our goal is to help our students think independently, critically, and confidently.

Despite the fact that distance learning demands that we primarily interact through screens, Kirby Hall teachers want to ensure that students are still spending time with books, notebooks, desks, quiet spaces, and the physical accouterments of learning. This means that sometimes, our "classes" will be structured time to complete assignments and projects, rather than "face-to-face" Zoom meetings.

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## Weekly Schedule, cont.

In a study by the National Institute of Health, researchers found the following while studying adolescent brains:

- MRI scans found significant differences in the brains of some children who reported using smartphones, tablets, and video games more than seven hours a day.
- Children who reported more than two hours a day of screen time got lower scores on thinking and language tests.

Even if that screen time is spent on educational activities, the medium of learning through a screen affects the way young adults think.

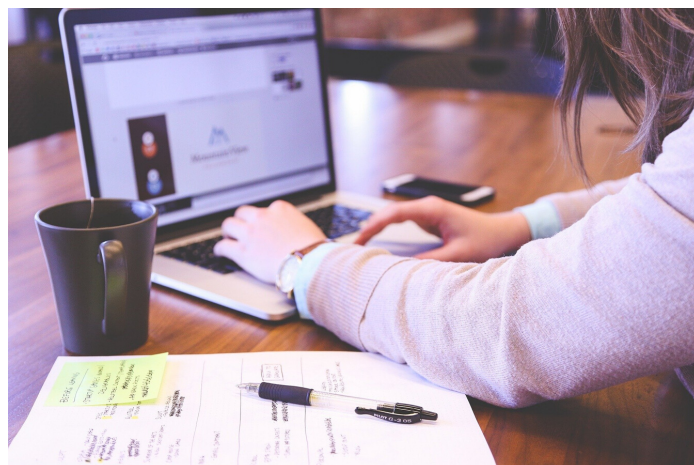
Focused, daily, quiet time alone with a book and paper and pencil will go a long way in helping these children increase attention span, sit with ideas to notice detail and ambiguity, and begin to articulate their own ideas in a more thorough manner.

Much of Kirby Hall's Middle and Upper School curriculum is project-based and not lecture-based. Students need ample time to work on assignments. During distance learning, the ideal is for student work to be completed during typical school hours without evening homework.

Our teachers will always meet with their classes at least twice weekly via Zoom. During these meetings, new skills will be directly taught and specific assignment requirements will be reviewed. These meetings will occur at the same time on the same day of the week for the duration of distance learning.

Monday through Friday, teachers will be available for students with questions or concerns.

We will provide daily contact with students and feedback on assignments, and each teacher will conduct weekly one-on-one meetings with each student.



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## Grading

Each teacher will communicate grading details as applicable to his/her course. Adjustments to standard grading as detailed in course syllabi will be communicated.

Student engagement is our priority and participation is essential.

Teachers are very cognizant of the fact that distance learning differs from traditional learning. As such, assignments will be modified to fit the changing academic environment

All assignments are required, and a grade will be promptly posted to RenWeb.

Students or parents should reach out to teachers if any extensions on deadlines are needed.

## Student Expectations

- Log in daily to see assignments. Utilize some sort of planner to facilitate completion of assignments and reminding of important events such as tests or project due dates.
- Complete all schoolwork to the best of your ability. Contact the teacher to discuss any issues you may have completing work or for general questions.
- If a class is not meeting live on a particular day, work on the independent assignment at that time to maintain a consistent schedule.
- Complete and submit assignments in the desired format for each teacher.
- Follow all rules in *Online Class Etiquette for Students*.
- Attend all of the live lessons and actively participate!
- Remember that behavior online should be consistent with school rules and general online etiquette.

## Support Resources

### **Executive Director: Helen Roberts ([hroberts@kirbyhallschool.org](mailto:hroberts@kirbyhallschool.org))**

Contact Helen if you have questions about our approach to distance learning, and/or school policies or procedures, or questions related to RenWeb.

### **Director of Admissions: Emily Gonzales ([egonzales@kirbyhallschool.org](mailto:egonzales@kirbyhallschool.org))**

Contact Emily for any questions regarding admissions or school-wide special events.

### **Financial Officer/Librarian: Claire LaChance ([clachance@kirbyhallschool.org](mailto:clachance@kirbyhallschool.org))**

Contact Claire for questions regarding tuition or fees, or for any needs related to the library.

### **Academic Dean & Curriculum Coordinator: Allie Thrall ([athrall@kirbyhallschool.org](mailto:athrall@kirbyhallschool.org))**

Contact Allie with questions regarding curriculum and how it translates to distance learning.

### **Dean of Upper and Middle School: Bradley King ([bking@kirbyhallschool.org](mailto:bking@kirbyhallschool.org))**

### **Technology Director: Jared Daily ([jdailey@kirbyhallschool.org](mailto:jdailey@kirbyhallschool.org))**

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