

May 1, 2020

Dear King David Parents,

Now that we are back into the flow of school in the form of emergency remote learning, we are looking to have a great finish to the year whether that means staying at home, or perhaps, returning to school before the end of June. For now, our staff and teachers are working hard to continue to provide learning opportunities for all our students through our temporary online classes.

With our students learning from home, our partnership with you, our parents, has never been so integral. “Going” to school at home is a challenging switch to make for both students and teachers. Having the same habits and discipline required for school is not a natural state for our students; they are required to self-regulate in an environment in which they are used to having more independence.

Teaching is also challenging because teachers are limited in their contact and connection with students and in a relationship-based school such as ours, it is difficult at times to maintain a learning environment that students are used to.

Here’s how you can help. Have a look below at some tips for how you can set your kids up for success and ensure they are getting the most from our virtual classes.

Establish and maintain a routine

Adolescents need routine and structure. Keeping to a schedule that closely mimics a “regular” day helps students with self-regulation and independence. Important parts of a daily schedule can include the same morning wake-up time, meals and unstructured time. Adolescents need time set aside for connecting outside of school, physical activity, time outside and time for personal pursuits.

“Send” your children to school as if they are leaving for the day

In order to maintain the learning environment for all our students and our teachers, please ensure your students are dressed, have had a good breakfast and have what they need for the day. Have a space where your teen can work in a space without distractions, at a desk or table.

Classroom Decorum

We ask all students to consider their work/study area at home part of the classroom. Our expectation is that our students are dressed for school (no pajamas, please), and adhering to all the typical requirements of their classes. This includes having their phones away, not learning while in bed, and arriving on time.

A word about being “on screen”

We ask all our students to have their screens on when they are in class. Being in class is about connecting with both peers and the teacher and learning is about engaging with both the content and each other. We understand that some may feel self-conscious about their appearance or being on screen. We are asking students to be present and engaged in a virtual classroom in the same way they are in an actual classroom.

Time for wellness

Check in with your child about what they are hearing and feeling. There is no shortage of news coverage and information about COVID-19 and it can be overwhelming no matter what ages your children are. Add to that, the disruption of their regular lives and their isolation from others. Try to strike a balance

with talking openly about feelings and allowing distractions and new possibilities as a relief from what is happening around them. This time of uncertainty can lead even mature adolescents to feel unsafe and without control. Work with them to come up with solutions to what they're feeling (other than more screen time).

We can't say how much longer we will be using emergency remote learning as there is no clear direction yet from the Ministries of Health and Education when we can expect a return to in-school classes. We do expect that when we return, it will not be to 'teaching as usual' as physical distancing will be in place with many other changes to keep students and staff safe. We are hopeful that we will get to see our students in person before the end of the school year. Allow us to emphasize that the priority must be safety, and when the time comes to welcome our students back, in whatever form that may take, we will be ready.

Be well and stay safe.

Regards,
Alex