

Guidance for Supporting Families during Remote Learning

This is an unprecedented time in our country's educational history. We applaud the way our Utah educators have responded so quickly to adjusting their practice to provide remote learning opportunities for students and the increased support provided by parents and guardians. Given the Governor's directive to continue with school dismissal until the end of the year, it is important for us to consider our future interactions with our students and their families.

Families want their students to learn and they want to be able to provide them the support they need in the learning process while balancing their other responsibilities. Yet, not all parents have the resources (e.g., time, emotional support, knowledge, skills, technology) to be able to provide this support.

As such, the Utah State Board of Education compiled a few ideas to consider supporting students, parents, and teachers during remote learning. These considerations may help focus priorities and reduce stress while still developing the academic and social emotional skills of our youth.

Focusing Learning on the Essentials

- Differentiation is always one of the most challenging aspects of teaching; at this time, teachers also need to consider differentiation for circumstances beyond differentiation for student ability.
- Be targeted with learning objectives, assignments and activities, ensuring they are essential.
- Keep appropriate expectations regarding the quantity of learning that can occur, the time required for learning to occur, and the resources required for learning to occur.
- Remember the importance of connections and relationships in learning as well as the impacts the trauma of COVID-19 is having on the families of your students.
- Focus on competency rather than time and activities.
- Allow students to demonstrate mastery in a variety of ways, through means that are accessible and available to them.
- What was successful in the classroom may not translate to the home; take time to adapt for the current remote learning circumstances.

Scaling Learning Time

- Do not try to replicate a typical school-day schedule at home.
- Condense online engagement to a couple of hours a day with scheduled breaks away from the device for self-directed learning, activity, and time with family. This helps to address access challenges when families have multiple children and parents sharing devices.
- Keep schoolwork contained to the hours of the school day.

Providing Parent and Family Supports

- Provide families with a point person to reach out to if they have questions about the continuous learning process.
- Acknowledge and validate the challenges families may be experiencing in their daily life, including their health, caregiving, employment, finances and housing, etc.
- Consider what you are asking of families to support their student's learning. Be aware that families may lack the time and ability to engage in continuous learning, or it may be a sibling or neighbor that is responsible for the child's supervision and continuous learning.
- Multiple logins and platforms can be difficult for students and families to navigate; consider ways to streamline.
- Communicate with families; consider scheduling office hours for parents to reach out with questions.