

# A QUICK GUIDE TO LEARNING VIRTUALLY FOR THE 2020-2021 SCHOOL YEAR

It is impossible for us to shine a flashlight into what the future of this school year holds. Hopefully, this quick guide will answer some of the questions you and your family may have regarding curriculum and instruction.



## ELA

### ***What curriculum will be used this school year?***

The **Units of Study for Reading Workshop (K-8), Writing Workshop (K-8), and Phonics Workshop (Grades K-2 only), and Words Their Way (3-8).**

### ***How will a typical workshop lesson look like in a virtual learning environment?***

Students will participate in **recorded minilesson** to go along with every workshop lesson. These minilessons tend to be about **five to eight minutes long**. This can be synchronous or asynchronous. For each unit, there are a small number of **print materials** that your children will need that will be pre-printed and sent home. After each minilesson, the teacher will **schedule** a time to meet with students individually, in **partnerships**, and in **small groups** (*this will be based on student needs*).

### ***How will Phonics Workshop occur in a virtual classroom Grades K-2?***

Students will participate in a workshop model that will assist with the transfer of phonics across their reading and writing. For each unit, there may be a small number of **print materials** that your children will need that will be pre-printed and sent home.

### ***How will Words Their Way occur in a virtual classroom Grades 3-5?***

Your child is already familiar with the word work instruction from previous years. Students in grades 3-8 will receive paper copies of word sorts to complete Words Their Way activities.

### ***What other resources will our family see?***

Each virtual unit includes a **video message for your family**, helping you to understand the goal of the unit, and the main trajectory of work and ways you can support them at home.

### ***How will the teacher address the missed instruction from last year?***

Each grade level will **revisit units** of study in reading, writing, and phonics from the prior grade level.

### ***What does a typical ELA (Reading, Writing, Phonics/Words Their Way) instructional block look like?***

#### **Primary ELA Sample Schedule**

**Morning meeting** (Live)  
15-20 minutes

**Reading/Writing/Phonics Workshop:**  
Minilessons (via a pre-recorded video) 5-8 minutes  
Individual Conferences/Small Group/Independent work  
(*teachers will schedule conferences and small groups based on student needs*)  
90 minutes

#### **Intermediate ELA Sample Schedule**

**Morning meeting** (Live)  
15-20 minutes

**Reading & Writing Workshop/Working With Words:**  
Minilessons (via a pre-recorded video)  
5-8 minutes  
Individual Conferences/Small Group/Independent work  
(*teachers will schedule conferences and small groups based on student needs*)  
90-120 minutes

***How the essentials in workshop structure do--and do not--change with virtual instruction?***

To teach reading, writing, or phonics virtually, teachers will **establish the structures and expectations** that ensure that all students will work with engagement and tenacity. Simple and predictable structures and systems that will make it possible for children to carry on as independent readers and writers, working productively with independence and rigor.

***What will student work time look like?***

Work time is an opportunity for students to put into **practice the strategies demonstrated in the minilesson** within their own independent reading selection or piece of writing. They will be given **work at their level to complete independently at home**. You can help by providing places and resources (pencils, paper, etc.) that they will need at the start of the school day and make work time go well for their children. Teachers will follow up through small group and individual check-ins via Google Meet.

**Math**

***What curriculum will be used this school year?***

EnVisions 2020 for Grades K-5 is the curriculum that will be utilized.

***How will a typical workshop lesson look like in a virtual learning environment?***

Each lesson will have a Mathematical Objective tied to an Essential Understanding. Within this there will be a “Lookback”, “Today’s Lesson”, and then a “Look Ahead”. Throughout the lesson students will be expected to build mathematical rigor through Conceptual Understandings found within the lesson, as well as Procedural Skills also found within.

***What resources will our families see?***

A digital account will be provided for each student.

***How will the teachers address the curriculum missed next year?***

Through the teachers content guide, each Topic ties back to where it was taught (or should have been taught) within a previous grade. If a student demonstrates a weakness with new material, his/her teacher may access previous grade level material(s) to reinforce this new material.

**Science**

***What curriculum will be used this school year?***

Science kits, aligned with the Next Generation Standard, will be utilized.

***How will a typical science lesson look like in a virtual learning environment? (3-5 sentences only)***

WSCSD is currently working with Erie 2 BOCES to adapt the Science Kit program for a virtual experience.

***What resources will our families see?***

Reading assignments, as well as writing prompts that will complement the ELA Program.

***How will the teachers address the curriculum missed next year?***

There is currently a NYS delay on the Next Generation Science Standards being assessed. Any missed material will be introduced as we evaluate student progress.

## **Social Studies**

### ***What curriculum will be used this school year?***

Our Social Studies Program follows the NYS Social Studies Framework. Students at each grade level explore key ideas found in the framework modeled through learning activities that feature the six Social Studies Practices (also found in the framework). For the 2020 – 2021 school year, Scholastic Readers, Studies Weekly Readers, and pre-printed student spirals have been purchased/created to support the Social Studies Programs. These resources will be available in both print and digital format for students.

### ***How will a typical workshop lesson look like in a virtual learning environment?***

Each Social Studies lesson or learning activity will spotlight grade/course appropriate key ideas and social studies practices. The type of activity a teacher uses will determine which social studies practice, or skill, they are modelling for the class. For example, if an activity features a map, students are practicing Geographic Reasoning. Each year, as a student progresses through the Social Studies program, key ideas become more and more chronological by nature.

### ***How will my child be assessed?***

Teachers will assess your child's strengths and progress multiple times throughout the unit. They will communicate the type and purpose of assessments with you. Teachers will schedule one-to-one times to complete some of these assessments.

### ***How will my child's teacher communicate with me?***

Your child's teacher will use a number of tools to communicate with you: email, phone, Remind, and Google Classroom. Please take advantage of the teacher's regularly scheduled "office hours" to ask for technology assistance. Please make sure you have a working email account to receive correspondences.

### ***How does Google Classroom work?***

Google Classroom will be new to many students and parents during distance learning. For Google Classroom tutorials, please visit the **How To** section of the West Seneca School District Webpage at <https://www.wscschools.org/go>. Within Google Classroom, teachers will post assignments, provide resources, send Google Meet codes, etc. You will also be able to hand in student work through Google Classroom. Expect a Google Classroom invite (with a unique Class Code) by email.

### ***Tips for Parents for Learning Virtually***

1. Find a good spot to work. Having a designated space for both synchronous and asynchronous learning will help maintain good learning routines.
2. Help children keep a schedule. Use a visual so you know how and when they are going to class.
3. Read emails from teachers with your child. Use the teacher's office hours to reach out for assistance.
4. Give children the space to be a student and make mistakes.
5. Be patient with everyone, and ask for assistance if needed. We are here to help.

Thank you for being our partners in education!