

A Message from Superintendent Chambers

Parents,

As stated in my March 22, 2020 letter, I'm sending out documents and links providing guidance on online education. I hope these help to make this transition a bit smoother. Be patient with your online learners and with yourself. In the coming days it will help to talk with your student frequently in order to make adjustments if necessary. I know that it will take a few days for everyone to settle into a schedule that is both relaxed and operational. Initial schedules may need to be adjusted for the changing needs of families and online learners. Please view the following video [Tips for Parents Distance Learning](#). Amy Bowden is an Adjunct Professor at Northwest Florida State College and a former Okaloosa County teacher. This video includes *more detailed information* about online learning. I'd like to personally thank Mrs. Bowden for her generous assistance in providing this information.

OCSD elementary online learners are being issued iPads and secondary online learners are receiving laptops or Chromebooks. If you have a device already, please use that device if at all possible so that students without devices may access their courses and assignments. I realize that many families will have multiple students sharing an electronic device. Online learning doesn't require students to be on devices as long as an average day at school- in fact, it is a much shorter time. While one student is practicing music or logging activities for a physical education class, another can be online working on a math assignment. Some students learn better at different times of the day. After observing students over the course of a few days, scheduling device time-sharing should be easier.

Personalizing the learning environment is yet another consideration. A designated space for learning and completing assignments is suggested. This space should be in a quiet, low-traffic area if at all possible. If students are included in the organization of their learning space and schedule, they will be more willing participants in the process as a whole. Feel free to reach out to your student's teachers for questions regarding pace setting and timing for course completion. Teachers have been directed to contact parents if students are not making sufficient progress through their courses. Communication between parents and teachers, teachers and students, and parents and students will be of the utmost importance for ensuring a successful online learning experience.

There are three attachments to this letter. Please read the ***Introduction to Online Learning*** letter. This document answers questions related to the new learning platforms, screen time for students, and device sharing. The Helpdesk number for all things technology related is located at the bottom of the ***Introduction to Online Learning*** letter. The ***Sample Online Learning Schedules*** are examples what a day ***could*** look like for grades K-2, 3-5, and 6-12. You'll find hours listed on the side instead of times as learning and activity times are flexible. The highlighted areas show the approximate amount of time students need to be on electronic devices in a given session. The other blocks contain sample activities and are just suggestions. Electronic device times (highlighted areas) are staggered so that students in multiple grades can

share devices. And lastly, I've included an ***Online Learning Questions and Answers for Families*** document. This is where you'll find more detailed information on how to get started with online learning. I hope that you find these attachments helpful during the process of moving forward.

As I've said before, we will get through this together. Thank you for your continued messages of encouragement, prayers, and support. They mean more than you know. There is no other community I would rather be part of during this challenge, as I know we will rise to the occasion...together!!

Warmest regards,

Marcus D. Chambers
Superintendent of Okaloosa County Schools

