

Remote Learning Plan Elementary Level, Forest Bluff School

The Forest Bluff Elementary Directors have created a daily schedule based on the normal structure of our classroom school day. We will use the online platforms Zoom and Seesaw to communicate with students, in addition to physical resources. The key components of this distance learning plan are:

- More daily structure
- Increased expectations of students
- Increased accountability
- Opportunities for peer learning and inspiration
- Maintaining individualized meetings and guidance on work plans
- Presenting new content through virtual lessons and recorded content
- Providing physical materials to aid at-home learning
- Ensuring that children are moving through the curriculum subjects with a work plan
- Maintaining detailed record keeping and weekly meeting notes of each student's progress
- Daily availability for parent correspondence
- Flexibility with screen time based on each student/family's needs

This document and plan may potentially evolve with AMI trainer suggestions, insights from other Montessori educators, and as always, with Directors' observations of how children respond.

Screen Time and Student Expectations

Our observations this spring made it clear that 30 minutes is the maximum amount of time an elementary child should spend on a screen in one sitting. That said, when operating remotely, we depend upon video conferencing to ensure student accountability and to maintain our close contact for high standards.

Thus, we expect children to be on screen for only three daily events, for a total of 60-90 minutes per day, to maintain their participation:

- Morning meeting
- Morning lessons Monday-Thursday when scheduled and individual weekly meetings on Fridays
- Afternoon read aloud
 - During this time children will be permitted to do handwork or sketch, so they can listen in, but do not need to look at the screen for the duration of read aloud

We will also be facilitating additional opportunities for children to use Zoom for peer connection and to check in with Directors, but using screens at these times will be **optional**. (Children who choose to work on their own, away from a screen, will still complete a full morning work period and a full afternoon work period.)

- Breakout rooms for working with peers during the morning work period (a Director will check in occasionally during this time)

- Midday class gathering
- Breakout rooms with peers during the afternoon work period (a Director will check in occasionally during this time)
- Director office hours during the afternoon work period

Daily Schedule

The daily schedule can be found below. Please note that the Monday-Thursday schedule differs from Friday's schedule.

Monday-Thursday Schedule

- **8:15am: Students log in to Seesaw and check their lessons for the day.**
- **8:30am: Morning All Class Check-In**
 - Review schedule for morning lessons.
 - Provide any general notes or group information.
 - Each child will be dismissed after sharing his/her first work with the Director.
 - Will he/she be working in a Zoom Room (breakout room)?
 - Will he/she choose to have a work period away from the screen and work on their own at home or outdoors?

**Note: Your child may also choose to spend one portion of the morning work period on their own and then join a Zoom Room group for the other portion*
- **8:50am-11:30am Morning Work Period and Lessons:**
 - Each child will receive a minimum of three lessons per week.
 - Children not in lessons are working at home independently, are in Zoom Rooms working in small groups, or may have a pre-recorded video on Seesaw to watch (usually a review of a scholastic concept).
 - Students working in Zoom Rooms will be visited by the Director throughout the morning, just as a Director would check in on students during their work period at school.
- **11:30am *Optional* All Class Check-In**
 - Just as we meet as a whole class before lunch at school, this is a time for students to touch base with the Director about the morning work period. It may also be used for:
 - An all class presentation or discussion
 - For students to deliver presentations or give performances
 - For an all-class activity such as singing, improv, yoga, or educational games

- **12:00-1:00pm Lunch and Silent Reading**
 - This will be a full hour away from the screen for students and Directors. Just as when we are in school, students should use this time to prepare their own nutritious lunch, followed by 30 minutes of silent reading. Some children may choose to spend a portion of this time outdoors as well, but it is important to read for 30 minutes during this midday break.
- **1:00-2:30pm Afternoon Work Period and Director Office Hours:**
 - Students are expected to continue their work into an afternoon work period. They may choose to work on their own off the screen or virtually with classmates. Additionally, each Director will be in a Zoom Room for this entire afternoon work period, to address any questions or needs that may have arisen. Students can pop in and out as needed. This office hour time includes but is not limited to:
 - An editing meeting
 - Checking in about a particular problem
 - Reviewing concepts or offering guidance on follow up work
- **2:30-3:00pm Read Aloud as a class**
 - Just as when we are in school, the Director will read a book to the children, pausing for discussion as needed. Children can do hand work or sketch during this time, so they do not need to be looking at the screen the whole time.
- **3:00pm Students are dismissed**
 - We will end our day 30 minutes earlier to ensure that children can get outside for exercise.
- **3:00-4:00pm Directors available for parent correspondence**
 - Because partnering with parents will be so critical, Directors have set aside a full hour Monday-Thursday to converse with parents.

Friday Schedule

- **8:30 am: Morning All Class Check-In**
- **8:50am-11:30am Morning Work Period (as in Mon-Thurs) and Individual Weekly Meetings**
 - Each student will have a regular weekly time for a 1-on-1 meeting with the Director via Zoom on Friday morning or afternoon. The Director will meet with students in 15 minute increments to:
 - Ask about current silent reading book
 - Discuss successes and challenges of the previous week
 - Review work completed
 - Create an individualized plan for the next week
 - Guide the child to any pre-recorded content and other resources if needed
 - Collect any lesson requests
 - Address any other questions or concerns

- **11:30am Optional All Class Check-In**
- **12:00-1:00pm: Lunch and Silent Reading**
- **1-2:30pm Afternoon Work Period and Individual Weekly Meetings Continue**
- **2:30-3pm: Read Aloud as a Class**
- **3:00pm Students are dismissed**

Accountability

This spring was an unexpected and new experience for students, parents, and Directors. Because there were abundant challenges and differing needs, our offerings were optional. As we settle into our “new normal” this fall, expectations and student requirements will increase to ensure that students are progressing and making their way systematically through the curriculum. Students are expected to participate in the full day’s schedule, with the previously mentioned flexibility built into morning and afternoon work periods. As is always the case at Forest Bluff School, if any issues arise that limit your child’s participation, please inform us as quickly as possible. We are happy to make alternate arrangements, especially under these unusual circumstances.

Accountability should be kept between student and Director as much as possible. In our classrooms, students are only able to develop their time management and executive functioning skills when Directors are not constantly hovering over them, so we certainly do not expect a high level of parental involvement when working from home. In fact, it is detrimental. A certain amount of freedom to experiment, explore, and even to make mistakes is absolutely critical to maintain intrinsic motivation and to develop a strong work ethic.

As is also true in the classroom, our primary tool for accountability is the student’s individual meeting with the Director. Our daily class check-ins and small group lessons will provide insights to the Director, along with any observations parents are able to share. Just as is true in our classroom, if additional measures are needed to increase accountability, they will be implemented. We are fortunate to operate within a system that honors individual needs, and allows for as much freedom or as much support as each child needs.

Online Resources

Zoom

Zoom will be used for all video conferencing including:

- all class meetings
- small group virtual lessons
- Director “office hours”
- individual weekly meetings.

We will utilize the Zoom Room breakout rooms to allow for small group learning and discussion. Using this feature, Directors can pop in and out just as they would check in on students in a physical classroom.

Seesaw

Seesaw is a means for students to:

- share their work with the Director
- share their work with and inspire classmates
- see the work of classmates

It allows the Director to:

- check problems
- edit written work
- offer general feedback
- post any notes or necessary materials/resources for students to bring to a group lesson
- post any notes or necessary materials/resources for students to aid in the required follow up
- create an online resource library which includes general resources such as
 - word problem pages
 - language work
 - blank maps
 - templates/grids/charts
- create a library of pre-recorded lessons for additional academic content
- post recordings of live lessons to be reviewed if needed

Physical Resources

Student Work Bag

In addition to the online resources provided by the school, we will also be providing each child with a work bag to ease the process of transferring work between home and school as children transition between our building and your individual houses. This will include, but is not limited to:

- a work journal
- folder to hold finished work and work in process
- maps
- graph paper
- lined paper
- handwriting paper

Access to Montessori Materials

We are in the process of formulating a plan that will allow students to work with the physical Montessori materials. There will be opportunities for students to borrow materials from the school occasionally and also to practice daily with homemade materials created by our staff and by the children themselves.

Elementary Support Staff

We are fortunate to have Montessori trained Support Directors at Forest Bluff to assist us with tasks such as recording and uploading content to Seesaw and to provide editing and other support to our elementary students. All Directors working with the children will be in close contact with one another, with the administration, and with parents.