

VIRTUAL INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

DeSoto County Schools Full-Time Distance Learning Program: Description and Considerations

In order to give flexibility to families during the 2020-2021 school year, school officials are offering students the option of participating in the DeSoto County Schools Virtual Instructional Program.

Students in the Virtual Instructional Program will still be enrolled at their regular school, but they will participate in virtual learning and complete their assignments at home. Teachers will assist students in working through weekly assignments with a mix of interactive and independent activities. The content and the pace will match traditional school curriculum expectations.

Please note the following when determining if applying for distance learning is the best option for your child:

- Online/digital learning will be the primary method of working towards competency in a grade level and/or content area. Because distance learning will not be delivered through paper packets, students must have access to adequate Internet services. Students will use the district-approved online learning management system, Schoology.
- Distance learning students will follow the academic calendar approved by the school board. Classes will start on the first student day in August 2020 and end on the last student day in the spring of 2021.
- Best practices for distance learning will be employed to include rigorous instruction, high expectations of student performance, and meeting all grade-level standards.
- Distance learning students must be committed to online learning. While distance learning is an option for students in unique situations, distance learning does not serve as an equitable alternative to the traditional classroom setting.
- Attendance will be taken in accordance with the Mississippi Department of Education's attendance guidelines regarding distance learning.
- Some elective courses and opportunities may not be offered to full-time distance learning students. For example, extracurricular activities such as athletics and fine arts will not be available because full-time distance learning students will be working off-campus.
- All Desoto County grading policies and procedures will apply during distance learning.
- A unique partnership must be established between all educators, students, parents and caregivers. It is imperative that all parties communicate to pay close attention to the development of each child and ensure that appropriate grade level growth takes place at a distance.
- Grab-and-Go meals will be available for distance learning students. The Child Nutrition Department will follow a schedule similar to the Spring 2020 Grab-and-Go meal distribution plan.
- Approved applications will be in effect on a semester-by-semester basis. There will be an opportunity to transfer from full-time virtual learning to the school/traditional classroom setting at the end of each nine weeks.
- Expressing intent to participate constitutes a commitment to virtual learning and acknowledgement to all the statements in this document, the DeSoto County Schools Distance Learning Description and Considerations.
- Universal screener and state assessments are required by the Mississippi Department of Education and/or state law. Benchmark assessments, Advanced Placement assessments, and other assessments due to the student's classes or grade may also be necessary. At this point in time, students in a distance learning environment may be required to participate in any or all of these assessments. These assessments will be completed at home if possible. Details regarding these assessments will be discussed with guardians when they become available. Safety for the students will be the top priority.

For any questions please contact us at distancelearning@dcsms.org.