

Remote Learning: Together, We Can Do This

The Kansas State Department of Education's resource, *Navigating Change: Kansas' Guide to Learning and School Safety Operations* was created to help support schools as they plan for reentry into the 2020-2021 school year. In the guidance, remote learning is defined as learning from home and not entering the school building at all. This resource, *Together We Can Do This*, was developed to support educators in the engagement of families in their child(ren's) learning from home.

Research and practice have long recognized the importance of engaging families and caregivers in learning. This is true now more than ever as a strong and supportive partnership between schools and families is the foundation upon which success for this new kind of learning rests.

As families work through the challenges of making transitions, educators must use best practices for family engagement in order to give emotional and technical support, compassion, and encouragement as they partner on facilitating learning from the home.

1 Provide Positive, Supportive, Compassionate and Encouraging Messaging.

Just as educators are in uncharted waters, most families are nervous about managing the logistics and content of their children's education. If expectations feel rigid or learning feels pressured, students and families will not be able to keep up for long.



2 Provide Regular, Frequent, Multimodal Communication.

Utilize innovative ways to engage families. Tools such as Seesaw, Class Dojo, and Remind provide effective ways for schools and teachers to continue to connect with students and families. With the daily school pickup and drop-off routines gone and a lack of face to face interactions, communication will be fundamental for families to feel connected and supported.

3 Recognize the Unique Potential of Remote Learning.

Remind families that activities that spark learning need not feel like traditional homework in order to create high-quality, effective learning experiences.



4 Encourage Joy in Learning.

Remote learning will be more sustainable if it feels good for everyone. Novelty goes a long way. Learning under a tree, or using stuffed animals as reading buddies can help sustain feelings of happiness while learning.



Families Together, Inc.
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Kansas Parent Information
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(866) 711-6711
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5

Empower Families During a Time When Many Feel Powerless.

Provide guidance to families on how to integrate check-ins with their children. Encourage parents to invite their children to ask questions about what is happening. Remind them to offer reassurance that any range of emotions is okay. Consider providing conversation prompts to families.

6

Share with Families the Importance of Establishing a Flexible Schedule as well as Taking Regular Breaks.

Encourage families to establish a flexible schedule with expectations for their children. Guide them that if something is not working, to walk away for a moment. If families feel stress bubbling up, encourage them to initiate a few minutes of independent playtime or a preferred activity, and set the pencils or computer aside.



7

Encourage Life Skills That Can Be Taught in Day to Day Interactions.

Remind parents that doing chores-such as cleaning, sorting laundry, washing dishes, making beds-are meaningful, real-world learning experiences. Extra time at home can foster valuable life skills.

8

Share Nontraditional Academic Learning that Bolsters Cross-Curricular Skills.

Educators can encourage families to engage in critical thinking cross-curricular activities such as planning a dinner meal, calculating the costs or creating an original board game for their family to play. Older students might write letters or emails to elected officials advocating for policy or position.



9

Teach Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) Opportunities.

Homes are filled with opportunities for SEL growth. SEL is rooted in creating and maintaining relationships and friendships through managing emotions and making responsible decisions. Use opportunities such as playing a board game, learning to patiently wait, or other experiences that happen every day.

10

Teach the Arts.

Encourage families to foster creative and friends and relatives. Families might also listen and dance to music to create some fun in tough moments. Art can be a creative outlet for all the BIG emotions that kids and families are experiencing at this time.

