

Valley Preparatory School
DISTANCE LEARNING ALTERNATIVE PROGRAM
(Study from home while the campus is open)

Last updated: July 3, 2020



ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Understanding that some parents may be reluctant to send their child(ren) back-to-school when the campus reopens, we have developed this *Distance Learning Alternative Program (DLAP)* to allow students to “learn from home.” The plan will be implemented in two stages.

- **STAGE-1 (2020-21):** For the 2020-21 school year, our **DLAP** will allow students to become an active participant (via Zoom) in regular classes that are held on-campus between 8am and 3pm, including core and specialist classes. Regular tuition rates apply. However, interested families can apply for Tuition Assistance at any time.
- **STAGE-2 (2021-22 and beyond):** The **DLAP** established during the 2020-21 school year will be expanded to include: (1) More individualized instruction; (2) A flexible schedule that allows students to attend some classes on-campus and others online; (3) More in-person (or virtual) meetings between the student and teacher; (4) Potential use of a particular learning platform such as Edgenuity or Odysseyware.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

Why is this Distance Learning Program offered?

As Valley Prep prepares to re-open its campus following the Spring 2020 closure, it is expected that some families will prefer to have their child(ren) remain at-home, out of an abundance of caution. Accordingly, our **DLAP** provides a means for students to continue their learning from home.

How do students attend classes?

During Stage-1, the school will use the Meeting Owl (<https://www.owllabs.com/meeting-owl>) to allow students to “attend” classes virtually, following the regular daily schedule. The Owl will “follow” the class to different rooms, allowing students to attend both Core & Specialist classes from home.

How do students participate in classes?



The *Meeting Owl* is a 360° smart video conferencing camera (that can operate thru Zoom) that automatically shifts focus to different people in the room when they speak, allowing a student at-home to feel as though they are active participants in the class. It combines a mic, camera, and speaker into one device that sits on a desk. Students could be at-home, but still have a front-row seat!

Can students participate in group activities?

In most cases, yes. If the teacher divided the class into groups, the Owl can join one of those groups. But for certain activities, such as most Science labs (in Middle School), the virtual student will be exempted. The virtual student would likely be exempted from the following activities: Winter & Spring Concert rehearsals & performances, some PE activities, some Art activities, and some classroom group-work. In some instances, the virtual student would be given an alternative assignment.

How do students receive (and submit) their assignments?

Students will receive (and submit) their in-class and homework assignments in one or more of the following ways, to be determined by the teacher: (1) email; (2) on-campus pick-up; (3) via other platforms (such as Powerschool). DL-students will be expected to complete the same work as those students who are on-campus (with occasional exceptions).

How are students assessed? When possible, assessments will be completed through an online format (such as Powerschool). Occasionally, an assessment will be pencil-and-paper, in which case the student will need to be on-campus in an isolated room at a designated time indicated by the teacher.

How are students graded? Students will be graded in mostly the same way as students who are attending regular classes. However, the virtual student may be exempt from certain activities (see above). In such cases, grades would be modified to reflect this exemption.

Does a DL-student have to participate in all classes, including Specialist classes? Yes. However, a family can elect to modify the schedule, in which case the classes not selected will appear blank on the Report Card.

Does the DL-student have any one-on-one time with the teacher? A weekly check-in time via Zoom will be scheduled by the teacher.

How is attendance taken? Students are expected to attend all virtual sessions. Absences can impact grades.

What is the tuition for this Distance Learning Program? The tuition-rate for the VPS-DLP is the same as the regular program. However, families can apply for Tuition Assistance at any time.

Is this Distance Learning Program compliant with FERPA laws? Yes. Particular attention is given to ensuring that *Personally Identifiable Information* (PII) is never disclosed.

Is this Distance Learning Program open to non-VPS students? Yes. Prospective students must follow the same application procedure as on-campus students.

What grade-levels are available? K-8 (Preschool & Pre-Kindergarten may be considered)

What is the daily schedule? 8am – 3pm via Zoom

As the parent, am I expected to oversee my child's work? Yes. You will need to encourage, motivate, and monitor your child to ensure they attend classes and submit required assignments on-time.

Can I use the program while our family is on-vacation (or away from school for any reason)? Yes, but only if there is already an Owl in-use in your child's classroom.

Can we begin the year using the DLAP and then return to campus? Can we start the year on-campus and then change to the DLAP? Yes, to both questions!

Beyond COVID-19, what are the advantages of Distance Learning?

Many parents around the world are hesitant to send their child back to school amid the COVID-19 crisis. But Distance Learning is beneficial in other ways, too. Is your student looking to get ahead? Is your student bored in his or her traditional classroom? Is your student self-motivated and self-disciplined? Does your student want a safe and bully free environment? Does your student need flexible school hours? If you have answered yes, then the VPS-DLP might be for you! See below for further details.

IMPORTANT DISCLAIMER

It is important to note that Valley Prep's *Distance Learning Alternative Program* (in its current form) is not an equal substitute for in-class instruction. Two key components of Valley Prep's overall program are student collaboration & hands-on instruction. Neither of these can be perfectly replicated via Distance Learning.

