



## **Taos Academy Virtual Learning Handbook for Families**

*Our learning goes on!*

*Dear TA Families - As we enter this time of virtual learning to start our school year, we want to thank you for being part of our learning community. Now, more than ever, parents and teachers are partnering together to support our kids. This comes with challenges as we all work to juggle education, work schedules, childcare, and simply all that need to be done to keep our families intact and healthy in these difficult times.*

*We will be reaching out to all of you by phone and email prior to the start of school. There is also a Family Support Coordinator on each school day who will be providing support and working to connect families to any community resources they may need. Please also see our Community Resources page, which will be updated weekly.*

*This document is a set of tools and resources designed to help you support your students and preserve your own sanity as we work through our Virtual Learning Plan.*

*We are in this together! With thanks - TA Team*

## Profile of a Successful Virtual Learner

Adapted from our friends at Michigan Virtual Learning Research Institute: <https://michiganvirtual.org/resources/guides/student-guide/>

### Use this guide to check in with your child and family to create a learning plan:

- **Good Time Management:** Can your student create and maintain a study schedule throughout the semester? How much help do they need to create a weekly calendar? How can you as a parent help them manage their time effectively?

Sit down as a family and figure out when student learning can occur - taking into account the need of multiple student households in terms of Internet bandwidth, number of available devices, and adult supervision of learning. For Taos Academy, students are asked to log in and participate in two classes (Advisory and 21st Century classes) two mornings/week (M/W for MS students and T/TH for HS students).

Students should plan to engage with their online coursework (Edgenuity and assignments from their 21st Century classes as well as individual tutoring times) for 20 hours/week of active learning time.

#### **SAMPLE SCHEDULE:**

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday - Sunday
8:00 AM Morning				8-12 Noon

Meeting				
8:15 -10 Advisory	Any homework for 21st Century	8:15 -10 Advisory	Any homework for 21st Century	Catch up on any lessons needed to maintain 70% AG
10:15-12 21st Century	10-12 Two lessons in Edge	10:15-12 21st Century	10-12 Two lessons in Edge	
LUNCH 12-1	LUNCH 12-1	LUNCH 12-1	LUNCH 12-1	
1-2 Individual Support ELA (Essay)	2-4 Two lessons in Edge	1-2 Small Group Support Math	2-4 Two lessons in Edge	
2-3 One lesson in Edge		2-3 One lesson in Edge		

- **Resources:** Do you have what you need for effective learning?

- ☒ Consistent home Internet access

- ☒ A computer device that can access Edgenuity and TA Google Suite

- ☒ Paper, pen/pencil, calculator

- ☒ Snack and water bottle

☒ A focused work space

What other resources might you need?

Please reach out to the school if you need Internet access at home, a computer or learning device, or some other support to keep your child engaged in their education. We are here to help!

- **Effective Communication: Can your student ask for help? Do they know how to contact their adviser?**

Academic advisers will be reaching out during HS Orientation and MS Orientation weeks respectively to make contact with their individual students and to conduct a Wellness Check as well as to explain their schedule, course load and answer any questions that the student or family may still have. The adviser should give the family clear ways of contacting them throughout the school year.

- **Independent Study Habits: Can your student study and complete assignments without direct supervision and maintain the self-discipline to stick to a schedule? If not, consider setting specific learning goals to help them in becoming more independent in their work.**

This might mean setting task or progress-based goals (such as finishing one lesson with a 90% or higher on the quiz) versus simply spending 1 hour online. Holding students accountable to completing work to a high degree is one way to help them focus on how they use their time.

- **Academic Readiness: Does your student have the basic reading, writing, math and computer literacy skills to succeed in the class?**

One of the most important aspects of Taos Academy is our flexibility. We can help remediate in one area to catch a student up to grade level while we accelerate the student in another area or class that is a strength for them.

However, engagement is KEY. The student must take advantage of the classes, Homework Hotline and tutoring sessions offered by Taos Academy and must work to complete all lessons to a mastery level.

## **Advice for Parent/Guardian:**

### **Before class/school starts:**

- Reinforce that their online class meetings are just as important as their regular, face-to-face classes
- Help your student connect with their adviser and ensure that they can log onto their Advisory and 21st Century classes.
- Help your student establish and maintain a regular schedule for working on his/her digital assignments daily
- As soon as classes are open, start working through lessons to get a sense of how long it takes to do one full Edgenuity lesson start to finish (with notes and with high grades!)
- Use the Edgenuity assignment calendar to see what work is due each day
- Set concrete goals for achievement (both progress and quality) and agree on weekly incentives and consequences
- Set up a study space, including the technology required, and be prepared to resolve technical issues that may come up.
- Monitor your student's progress weekly. We pull a weekly report at 5 pm every Sunday evening and the goal is to have all classes at or above 70% Actual Grade at that time.

## **Check-in Questions to Support Learning:**

### **In the morning, you might ask:**

- What classes/subject do you have today?
- Do you have any assessments?
- How will you spend your time?

- What resources do you need?
- What can I do to help?

**At the end of the day you might ask:**

- How far did you get in your learning tasks today?
- What did you discover? What was hard?
- What could we do to make tomorrow better?

These brief grounding conversations matter. Checking in helps students to process instructions they received from their teachers, and it helps them organise themselves and set priorities – older students too. Not all students thrive in distance learning; some struggle with too much independence or lack of structure. These check-in routines can help avoid later challenges and disappointments. They help students develop self-management and executive functioning that are essential skills for life. Parents are good life coaches:)

**Tech Resources for Monitoring Student Tech Use at Home:**

**Securely:** <https://www.securly.com/>

*Allows parents to customize web filtering rules when school devices go home.*

**Bark:** [www.bark.us](http://www.bark.us)

*Bark is a parental control phone monitoring app to help keep kids safer online. Bark monitors social media, text, and email on Android and iOS devices.*