



## Family Discussion Questions

Many parents ask us if distributed learning would be a good fit for their family. One of our key school goals is to set your child and family up for success by ensuring that you know some of the unique aspects of an online learning environment. Here are some discussion questions that you and your family could reflect upon to determine if you feel this would be a positive fit for your learner and your family. After discussing this as a family, please reach out if you have further question.

## Let's Discuss!

- Will there be a parent or guardian who can help support the student in their learning? This may be help with individual subjects, time management, or contacting a teacher for help.
- Do you feel comfortable working with your child to help guide their academic growth?
- In regular day-to-day activities, does your child respond well to direction and guidance from you, and/or is your child self-motivated and able to work independently?
- Many families have shared that the best success has happened when there is a consistent daily routine for their child's schooling at home. Are you able to set this up for your child? (We are happy to provide examples and guidance with this part.)
- Will your child have access to and be able to use a computer/laptop or Chromebook with an internet connection for some portion of every school day? A smartphone or tablet will not be sufficient for all courses.
- Are you or your child able to contact the teacher as needed via email, phone, or in-person throughout the year?
- Is your child comfortable with asking questions as needed?
- Will you or your child check emails weekly? This is our primary method of communication.



**Next Step:** Please take some time to read the most Frequently Asked Questions.

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**Here are the answers to some of our most frequently asked questions:**

**Is Island ConnectEd a public school?**

- Yes, we belong to Nanaimo-Ladysmith Public Schools (SD# 68).
- There is no cost for BC students to enroll.
- Our students and their courses work towards the same graduation diploma as brick and mortar schools.



**What does Grade 8-9 look like?**

- All courses are either completely or primarily online.
- Each student will have multiple teachers as different teachers teach different subjects.
- Students work independently at their own consistent pace, submitting work regularly.
- Teachers are available via email and in person to help students. Individual teachers may use additional methods of communication such as phone, text, and virtual meetings.
- Students work through a teacher-created curriculum with at least 50% of the work done at home.
- Students are encouraged to meet regularly online or onsite with their teacher.
- The courses follow the BC Curriculum as outlined here: <https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/>.
- Students must read, watch, and type content that students in a brick-and-mortar school might get via listening and conversation. Because of this, some students may find that online courses feel longer than in-class courses, depending on their preferred learning style.
- Teachers send regular email communications to families.

**What is each course like?**

- All courses are found in an online platform called Blackboard.
- English, social studies, and career education will primarily involve reading or viewing information and then answering questions or doing activities related to the online material.
- French will include reading, writing, listening and speaking using digital tools.
- Math and science include video lessons, practice questions, tests or quizzes, and other online activities. The packages that go with each unit can be printed at home or requested from the school.
- Fine Arts, Physical and Health Education (PHE), and Applied Design, Skills and Technologies (ADST) include choice activities which students will find and complete independently (often offline), and then will provide evidence and reflections online. There are funds available for students to put toward lessons or activities for these courses. For example, if a student wanted to take an art class or swimming lessons, the school could pay for that on behalf of the student. More information can be found here: <https://ic.schools.sd68.bc.ca/third-party-vendor-guidelines/>.
- Courses are often updated in the summer, so some aspects of these courses may be different by the time your child starts them. Updates will be communicated to families.

**What do live classes look like?**

- There are no structured live classes planned at this time, but families will be notified via a JupiterEd email or other email if in-person or virtual classes are planned.

- In-person drop-in time will be available. This is an optional unstructured opportunity for students to have a quiet place to work and ask questions. The amount of in-person drop-in time available will be determined early in the school year, but it will not exceed 50% of a normal school week.

### **How much time do students need to spend each day on work?**

- The amount of time each day focused on learning will vary based on numerous factors such as their learning style, curriculum content, and their ability to focus and ask questions as needed.
- Generally, we suggest that students plan to work a similar amount of time as they would if they were at a brick-and-mortar school (about 6 hours per day). This could be divided into about three hours of academic work and three hours of elective work. For example, in a given day, a student might spend 1.5 hours on math, 1.5 hours on English, and then three hours going on a family hike for PHE.
- We recommend creating structured routines to follow and will provide examples of daily and weekly schedules that you can follow at home.

### **What will the assessment and reporting practices be?**

- Assessments will generally be of work submitted to the online courses, though other opportunities for students to show learning may be organized throughout the year.
- Teachers will provide regular feedback both through Blackboard and through JupiterEd. Official marks will be in JupiterEd, but some teachers will provide more feedback in Blackboard.
- Students will receive their February report card and their June report card in the same format as all other students in the District (MyEd Family Portal). Any courses completed in January will receive a final mark on the February report card, and incomplete courses will receive interim feedback.

### **Do I need a computer?**

- Students will need access to a laptop, computer or Chromebook each day.
- Many of the lessons include video or interactive components requiring online access.
- There are also online subscriptions your child may access such as BrainPOP and Pixton.

### **What are some qualities of successful Island ConnectEd students?**

- Ability to navigate technology or openness to learning how to do so.
- Self-motivation or responding well to parent direction.
- Feeling comfortable contacting teachers with questions as needed.
- Ability to work independently for a sustained period of time.
- Participation in-person and/or virtual opportunities.
- Submits work regularly.

