

Remote Elementary Class, Forest Bluff School

Director: John Dickson

The Forest Bluff Elementary Directors created a daily schedule based on the normal structure of our classroom school day. We will use the online platforms Zoom and Seesaw to communicate with students, in addition to physical resources. The key components of this distance learning plan are:

- Daily structure
- Increased expectations of students
- Accountability
- Opportunities for peer learning and inspiration
- Maintaining individualized meetings and guidance on work plans
- Presenting new content through virtual lessons and recorded content
- Providing physical materials to aid at-home learning
- Ensuring that children are moving through the curriculum subjects with a work plan
- Maintaining detailed record keeping and weekly meeting notes of each student's progress
- Daily availability for parent correspondence
- Flexibility with screen time based on each student/family's needs

Screen Time and Student Expectations

Our observations this spring made it clear that 30 minutes is the maximum amount of time an elementary child should spend on a screen in one sitting. That said, when operating remotely, we depend upon video conferencing to ensure student accountability and to maintain our close contact for high standards.

Thus, we expect children to be on screen for only three daily events, for a total of 60-90 minutes per day, to maintain their participation:

- Morning meeting
- Morning lessons Monday-Thursday when scheduled and individual weekly meetings on Fridays

We will also be facilitating additional opportunities for children to use Zoom for peer connection and to check in with teachers, but using screens at these times will be **optional**. (Children who choose to work on their own, away from a screen, will still complete a full morning work period and a full afternoon work period.)

- Breakout rooms for working with peers during the morning work period (a teacher will check in occasionally during this time)
- Breakout rooms with peers during afternoon the afternoon work period (a teacher will check in occasionally during this time)
- Teacher office hours during the afternoon work period

Daily Schedule

The daily schedule can be found below. Please note that the Monday-Thursday schedule differs from Friday's schedule.

Monday-Thursday Schedule

- **8:45am: Students log in to Seesaw and check their lessons for the day.**

- **9:00am: Morning All Class Check-In**
 - Review schedule for morning lessons.
 - Provide any general notes or group information.
 - Each child will be dismissed after sharing his/her first work with the teacher.
 - Children will determine if they will be working in a Zoom Room or Zoom Breakout Room.
 - They may choose to have a work period away from the screen and work on their own at home or outdoors and check in with the teacher later in the work period.

- **9:20am-10:00am Morning Work Period and Lessons:**
 - Each child will receive a minimum of three small group lessons per week.
 - Children not in lessons are working at home independently, in Zoom Rooms working in small groups, or have a pre-recorded video on Seesaw to watch (usually a review of a scholastic concept).
 - Students working in Zoom Rooms will be visited by the teacher throughout the morning, just as a teacher would check in on students during their work period at school.

- **10:00am-11:30am Independent Work Period:**
 - At this time, children will be responsible for their independent or small group work with their peers without direct guidance of the teacher.
 - Children needing support at this time may ask their peers or message their teacher via Seesaw to receive guidance later in the day.

- **11:30am-12:00pm Daily Chores**
 - This is a time for children to contribute to the maintenance of the home and complete their daily "home goals." This work will be dependent on the needs of the family and household. It could include cleaning, organizing activities for younger siblings, caring for a pet, or any other household/family related contribution.

- **12:00-1:30pm Lunch and Silent Reading**
 - This will be a full hour and a half away from the screen for students and teachers. Just as when we are in school, students should use this time to prepare their own nutritious lunch, followed by 30-45 minutes of silent reading. Some children may

choose to spend a portion of this time outdoors as well, but it is important to read for at least 30 minutes during this midday break.

- **1:30-2:00pm Independent Work Period:**
 - Students will resume their independent work or meet in small groups to complete group projects. As with the morning independent work period, children will be responsible for their independent or small group work without direct guidance of the teacher.
 - Students should complete a daily workout goal to strengthen their bodies and minds, which they may choose to complete during this time.

- **2:00-2:40pm Afternoon Work Period and Teacher Office Hours:**
 - Students are expected to continue their work into an afternoon work period. They may choose to work on their own off the screen or virtually with classmates.
 - At this time, the teacher will be available in a Zoom Room for this timeframe, to address any questions or needs that may have arisen. Students can pop in and out as needed. This office hour time includes but is not limited to:
 - An editing meeting
 - Checking in about a particular problem
 - Reviewing concepts or offering guidance on follow up work

- **2:40-3:00pm Read Aloud as a class**
 - Just as when we are in school, the teacher will read a book to the children, pausing for discussion as needed. Children can do hand work or sketch during this time, so they do not need to be looking at the screen the whole time.

- **3:00pm Students are dismissed**
 - We will end our day 30 minutes earlier to ensure that children can get outside for exercise.

- **3:00-3:30pm Teachers available for parent correspondence**
 - Because partnering with parents will be so critical, teachers have set aside a half hour Monday-Thursday to converse with parents.

Friday Schedule

- **9:00 am: Morning All Class Check-In**

- **9:20am-10:00am Morning Work Period (as in Mon-Thurs) and Individual Weekly Meetings**
 - Each student will have a regular weekly time for a 1-on-1 meeting with the teacher via Zoom on Friday morning or afternoon. The teacher will meet with students in 15 minute increments to:
 - Ask about current silent reading book
 - Discuss successes and challenges of the previous week
 - Review work completed

- Create an individualized plan for the next week
 - Guide the child to any pre-recorded content and other resources if needed
 - Collect any lesson requests
 - Address any other questions or concerns
- **10:00am-11:30am Independent Work Period**
 - **11:30am-12:00pm Daily Chores**
 - **12:00-1:30pm: Lunch and Silent Reading**
- **1:30-2:00pm Independent Work Period**
 - **1:30-2:30pm 2:00-2:40pm Afternoon Work Period / Teacher Office Hours / Individual Weekly Meetings Continue**
 - **2:40-3:00pm Read Aloud as a class**
 - **3:00pm Students are dismissed**

Accountability

This spring was an unexpected and new experience for students, parents, and teachers. Because there were abundant challenges and differing needs, our offerings were optional. As we settle into our “new normal” this fall, expectations and student requirements will ensure that students are progressing and making their way systematically through the curriculum. Students are expected to participate in the full day’s schedule, with the previously mentioned flexibility built into morning and afternoon work periods. *As is always the case at Forest Bluff School, if any issues arise that limit your child’s participation, please inform us as quickly as possible. We are happy to make alternate arrangements, especially under these unusual circumstances.*

Accountability should be kept between student and teacher as much as possible. In our classrooms, students are only to develop their time management and executive functioning skills when teachers do not constantly hover over them, so we certainly do not expect a high level of parental involvement when working from home. In fact, it is detrimental. A certain level of freedom to experiment, explore, and even to make mistakes is absolutely critical to maintain intrinsic motivation and to develop a strong work ethic.

As is also true in the classroom, our primary tool for accountability is the student’s individual meeting with the teacher. Our daily class check-ins and small group lessons will provide insights to the teacher, along with any observations parents are able to share. Just as is true in our classroom, if additional measures are needed to increase accountability, they will be implemented. We are fortunate to operate within a system that honors individual needs, and allows for as much freedom or as much support as each child needs.

Online Resources

Zoom

Zoom will be used for all video conferencing including:

- all class meetings
- small group virtual lessons
- teacher “office hours”

- individual weekly meetings.

We will utilize the Zoom Room break out rooms to allow for small group learning and discussion. Using this feature, a teacher can pop in and out of the group work, just as she would check in on students in a physical classroom.

Seesaw

Seesaw is a means for students to:

- share their work with the teacher
- share their work with and inspire classmates
- see the work of classmates

It allows the teacher to:

- check problems
- edit written work
- offer general feedback
- post any notes or necessary materials/resources for students to bring to a group lesson
- post any notes or necessary materials/resources for students to aid in the required follow up
- create an online resource library which includes general resources such as
 - word problem pages
 - language work
 - blank maps
 - templates/grids/charts
- create a library of pre-recorded lessons for additional academic content
- post recordings of live lessons to be reviewed if needed

Physical Resources

Student Work Bag

In addition to the online resources provided by the school, we will also be providing each child with a work bag to ease the process of transferring work between home and school as children transition between our building and your individual houses. This will include, but is not limited to:

- a work journal
- folder to hold finished work and work in process
- maps
- graph paper
- lined paper
- handwriting paper

Access to Montessori Materials

We are in the process of formulating a plan that will allow students to work with the physical Montessori materials. There will be opportunities for students to borrow materials from the school occasionally and also to practice daily with homemade materials created by our staff and by the children themselves.