

St. Mary School—Mount Vernon, IL

Distance Learning Policy

2019-2020

St. Mary School Staff have developed a plan for a distance learning day in the event that school would need to be cancelled. The following guidelines have been discussed and edited through various stakeholder meetings. Please address questions or concerns regarding the following guidelines to Mr. Brett Heinzman at bheinzman@stmarymtvernon.org. These guidelines will be reviewed and posted each fall.

Distance Learning Guidelines:

1. In the event of an emergency, distance learning will be announced through the Option C Emergency Alert System as soon as the decision is made.
2. The State of Illinois allows for a **maximum of 4 distance learning days** each school year, which count as a school day meaning the day wouldn't be added to the end of the school calendar.
3. After the distance learning day is announced, **teachers will notify parents/guardians by 8 a.m. of all assignments to be completed for that day.** Teachers will communicate with parents using their preferred method of communication that they use on a weekly basis. (If you are unsure, please check with your homeroom teacher ahead of time.)
4. Attendance must still be taken in order for the distance learning day to count as a school day. **Parents must respond to the teacher's message listing the assignments by 12:00pm on the distance learning day for their child to be counted "present" at school that day.** Teachers will submit attendance electronically by 12:00 pm on the distance learning day using the Option C Student Information System (SIS).
5. **Teachers will be available to answer questions between 8:00am-12:00pm on the distance learning day.** They will be checking their communication tool at least once an hour during that period.
6. **Students will have the distance learning day/s plus one extra consecutive school day to complete the distance learning work and turn it in to their teacher to be graded.**
7. On a Distance Learning day students will have assignments for Religion, PE, Math, Reading, Writing, and a Service Activity.
8. Teachers are aware that each family may have special circumstances and that unexpected events may occur. If your family has a unique circumstance, please communicate with your homeroom teacher so we can work with you to solve the problem.
9. Teachers will create a Distance Learning Day packet for each of the four potential Distance Learning Days. The first Distance Learning Day packet will be sent home to parents by the end of August. Parents are asked to put this packet in a safe location so that it may be accessed in the event a Distance Learning Day is announced. Each teacher's Distance Learning Day packet will also be accessible on the Option C SIS system. Teachers will inform their parents how to access the Distance Learning Day curriculum on Option C.
10. Students with disabilities will have assignments in accordance with their individualized plans.
 1. Early in the academic year, the key stakeholders will collaborate to create the plan.

2. When a distance learning day assignment plan cannot completely replicate an in-session school day, efforts will be made to provide the support needed for particular students. For instance, if reading is a challenge for a student and the student has online access, the teacher may assign tasks on sites that will read text aloud.

For Parents/Guardians

- Parents/Guardians will be informed of the distance learning policy each school year by the end of August.
- Parents are encouraged to set up their individual Option C account. Parents are welcome to contact the school for help in setting up their parent account.
- Parents/Guardians, along with teachers and students, are asked to remember that distance learning days are designed to be flexible: if a child struggles with a concept or assignment and is unable to complete the work that day, parents should remind their son or daughter to communicate with the teacher the next day about how to meet requirements.
- Parents/Guardians should contact teachers directly between 8 a.m. and Noon on a distance learning day with any questions or concerns that may have regarding distance learning day assignments.

For Teachers

In preparation for distance learning days, teachers in Grades K-8 have been asked to:

- Familiarize students with desired procedures explaining the procedures to complete assignments.
- Review with students how to access the distance learning packet of information on the Option C SIS in the event they lose their hard copy packet.
- Provide a timely plan, posting work for the school day by 8:00 a.m.
- Plan for self-directed, independent learning with specific consideration for range and individual learning needs.
- Anticipate time requirements recognizing students learn at different paces, especially in an independent setting.
- Communicate with colleagues to ensure common expectations, communications, and protocols.
- Collaborate with service providers of diverse learners to differentiate assignments and/or expectations as needed.

During Distance Learning Days, all teachers are asked to:

- Check individual parent communication tool throughout the distance learning day from 8 a.m. to Noon.
- Continue your work as a team or individual on professional development topics.