



Distance Learning Plan

Revised July 2020

Introduction

Headlands Prep is dedicated to individualized learning, academic mastery, personal growth, and civic engagement. These four pillars influence academics and community development in all locations and on all platforms. As such, we have developed a Distance Learning Plan designed to harness individualized learning and academic mastery to ensure personal growth and guide our academic program in the event of an unplanned school closure. Events that may close the school include wildfire, earthquake, flooding, an extended power outage, and threats to the health and safety of the school community. It is not possible to plan for all possible scenarios, nor is it always possible to know in advance that school will need to close. Such decisions will be made carefully by the Head of School in consultation with the Director and administrative team.

Given the 1:1 model, Headlands Prep is uniquely prepared for distance learning. We seek to maintain high academic standards and a supportive learning environment, and provide community members with continuity of learning. Always, Headlands Prep will keep the well-being of all members of the community – students, teachers, staff, and parents – at the forefront of its decision-making.

Plan Highlights

- Headlands Prep will maintain its normal schedule of class sessions.
- Teachers will use the Google Drive platform to hold class meetings (Hangouts or Google Meet).
- Teachers will continue to use Google Drive to share course materials and Headlands email or Google Hangouts to communicate directly with students.
- Teachers, students, parents, and staff will continue to use the Headlands portal for attendance, daily progress notes, and other school administration business.
- All classes will begin with the teacher and student connecting via a Hangouts meeting. During the scheduled class time teachers will conduct the lesson for the day, following Headlands Prep guidelines and expectations.
- All assessments will be transitioned to Distance Learning Assignments. No traditional testing will be conducted for the duration of the Distance Learning period.
- Clubs may meet at the discretion of the faculty advisor via Hangouts or Google Meet.
- Assemblies and Community Celebrations will be held at the discretion of the Head of School.
- Administration will be available via email from 8:00 am - 6:00 pm each day and will endeavor to return messages as promptly as possible.

Though the Headlands Prep campus is closed, school is still in session during the activation of the Distance Learning Plan. All applicable school rules as outlined in the 2020-2021 Parent/Student Handbook continue to apply and each day should be treated as an official school day.

Courses

Class Schedule & Attendance

The 1:1 model is uniquely supportive of distance learning. Teachers are able to maintain the feeling of a face-to-face environment and keep students engaged in material. Headlands Prep has not modified the schedule, instead providing continuity of scheduling. We recommend students use the 10-minute breaks between classes, as well as the lunch period, to walk around and take a break from their screens. All usual Headlands Prep cancellation policies and fees still apply, though they will be billed at the lower rate.

Homework

Meaningful practice is key to building a strong foundation and understanding of course material. Students will continue to be assigned nightly homework, though in reduced amounts. Our Distance Learning plan integrates guided practice in class with meaningful practice at home that contributes to the Distance Learning unit assignments. Through this method students are acquiring knowledge, practicing it with their teachers in class, and applying it to their assignments for homework. If a student does not complete their homework outside of class, they will work to complete it in the next class with their teacher.

Class Format

Students and teachers will continue to meet for 50-minute sessions, with the last 5 minutes reserved for writing the daily progress report. Teachers are expected to spend roughly 25-30 minutes of total active teaching time and 15-20 minutes total of guided practice during the duration of the session to support students in solidifying their learning.

Testing

No testing will be conducted for the duration of the Distance Learning period. Instead, all assessments will be transitioned to Distance Learning Assignments. For more information on Distance Learning Assignments (DLAs), see below.

Grading & Mastery Learning

Teachers will continue to grade student work during class time to facilitate feedback and student mastery of material. All grades will continue to be posted on the Headlands Portal upon completion of an objective. Expectations regarding achieving mastery levels of 80% or above still apply for a student to move on in course material. Given that Headlands Prep has suspended all testing during the Distance Learning Period, students who have not achieved 80% mastery on a Distance Learning Assignment will be given the opportunity to edit their work until they achieve the mastery threshold.

Accommodations

All previously approved accommodations still apply for the duration of the Distance Learning Period. Additional accommodations may be considered at the discretion of the Associate Head and Head of School in order to best support student learning during this time.

Teaching & Learning Remotely

Distance Learning Assignments (DLAs)

For the duration of the Distance Learning Period, Headlands Prep will transition all assessments to Distance Learning Assignments, or DLAs. DLAs are designed to enable students to apply their learning, keeping them engaged in material by harnessing their interests and academic curiosity. This project-based learning approach checks for understanding of course content through inquiry, personal expression, critical thinking, and problem solving. DLAs remove the need for traditional testing, which is not compatible with Headlands Prep's distance learning format.

DLAs are meant to be integrated into coursework, both in-class and for homework. Students will be able to present learning through multiple modalities, and teachers individualize meaningful assignments based on student interests and strengths. By applying their learning and showing their understanding of key course concepts, students will gain valuable skills and be able to apply them in other contexts. The goal of the DLAs is to have students not only demonstrate what they know, but why they know it, and then apply this knowledge to the broader context.

Guidelines for Faculty & Staff

Teachers and administrators will continue to provide a supportive, engaging learning environment for all students that empowers learning, academic mastery, and personal growth. The Headlands Prep community remains committed to building student success and confidence through individualized learning.

Teachers will:

- Continue to post daily progress reports of class sessions, student work, DLA grades, and important notes in the last five minutes of each session.
- Connect with students via Hangouts, and reach out to administration and parents via email if a student is tardy or absent.
- Begin each class via Hangouts or Google Meet, and conduct a 55-minute session that blends active teaching with meaningful guided practice.
- Make sure the student understands how the guidelines for distance learning will apply to their class.
- Honor all accommodations and learning needs, and check in with parents and administration if/when additional needs arise.
- Regularly check in with students to monitor their challenges, get their feedback and input, and support their students in being resilient critical thinkers and problem solvers.
- Be present for the duration of each class session, both while actively teaching and monitoring their guided practice throughout the class period.
- Share all necessary documents and resources with students via Google Drive and/or Google Hangouts.

- Coordinate with Alexandra Norman (A.Norman@HeadlandsPrep.com) regarding any accommodations, DLA needs, or academic support.
- Coordinate with the admin team (Admin@HeadlandsPrep.com) regarding any technological issues and ensure that all classes run smoothly.
- Follow all normal guidelines for communicating with students, parents, and colleagues.

Teachers who are unable to hold classes remotely due to illness will contact the administration and a substitute will be assigned if possible.

Members of the Administration Team will:

- Be available from 7:30 am - 6:00 pm (individual availability may vary)
 - “Available” generally means reachable by email within 60 minutes unless in a meeting or engaged in some other work-related activity that prevents checking emails.
- Respond to voicemails as promptly as possible.
- Be available for scheduled phone or video meetings on an as-needed basis.
- Continue to send updates regarding school closures or extension of the Distance Learning Period.

Guidelines for Students

Students should establish daily routines that will help them fully engage in their online learning experience, and they should reach out immediately to their teachers, parents and/or admin if they are finding it difficult to do this.

Although classes are being conducted online, please be mindful that all policies in Headlands Prep’s Parent/Student Handbook still apply.

- Take time to assess your surroundings and identify a neutral space that is conducive for online learning (i.e. not on your bed or in a bathroom). This space should be comfortable, quiet, and suitable for attending class and completing homework.
- Be attentive to your attire. Students are expected to dress in normal school attire and should not attend class in pajamas or clothes that they would not otherwise wear in public.
- Refrain from distracting behaviors (i.e. eating, conversing with others in your home during a class, and any behaviors that will divert attention from class).
- Be punctual. If you have not arrived 10 minutes into the class session, your teacher will send an email to your parents and notify school administration. An admin member will call home if necessary.
- Mute your microphone when you are not speaking or actively participating in the class discussion.
- Position yourself towards a lightsource that illuminates your face.
- Complete assignments with integrity and academic honesty; Do your best work.

Guidelines for Parents

Below are a set of guidelines designed to help parents think about what they can do to help their children find success in a distance learning environment.

- **Establish routines.** Support a regular daily schedule that includes a meaningful morning routine, regular breaks, homework, check-ins, normal sleep routine, and guidelines about how to use time when students are not in class. Consistency to the day is important as not all students thrive in a distance learning environment, and some struggle with too much independence or lack of structure.
- **Identify an appropriate work space.** Help your child create and/or identify a regular place for them to attend class and complete homework.
- **Do a daily check-in.** Parents are encouraged to start and finish each day with a simple check-in. In the morning, ask what is your child learning today? In the evening, how did it go today? Did you have everything you needed? What homework do you have? Brief, grounding conversation matters. It allows children to process the instructions they've received from their teachers. It helps them organize themselves and set priorities. Older students may not want to have these check-ins with parents (that's normal), but they should nevertheless.
- **Process learning with your child.** Human beings learn best when they have opportunities to process their learning with others. In the course of a regular school day, your student engages with others frequently. Beyond the check-ins recommended at the start and end of each day, it's helpful if parents regularly circle back and engage with their children about what they're learning.
- **Establish time for quiet and reflection.** Everyone does better when giving time and space to rest, relax, and prepare. Create space for you and your children. Know that there may be times when siblings need to work in different rooms to avoid distraction.
- **Encourage physical activity.** Make sure your children remember to move and exercise. This is vitally important to their health, well-being, and learning.
- **Monitor stress levels.** Normalize that some anxiety right now is understandable by saying something like "feeling some anxiety makes sense right now." Be mindful of anxiety levels that seem grossly out of proportion to the situation or begin to interfere with daily life activities.
- **Manage your own anxiety.** Teenagers will look to adults for clues about how nervous or relaxed they should feel about something. Take measures to soothe your own worries so that you do not unintentionally transfer that stress to your children. They will be out of sorts, whether they admit it or not, and the more we can model a level headed approach, the better.

- **Monitor social media interactions.** Older students will rely more on social media to communicate with friends. Social media apps such as SnapChat, Instagram, WhatsApp, or Facebook are not official, school-sanctioned channels of communication. Remind your children to be polite, respectful, and appropriate in their communications and to represent your family’s values in their interactions with others. A student’s written words and tone can sometimes offend or cause harm to others. Note that all policies in the handbook apply.
- **Encourage connection.** Help your children maintain contact with friends and see them in person when circumstances permit.
- **Be understanding and patient.** We are all finding our way through this uncertain time. Remember that it will require some trial-and-error before we find the right balance between online and offline learning experiences. We thank you in advance for your patience and partnership!

Support

Technology

Headlands Prep Main Phone Line: (415) 944-2254

Admin Email: Admin@HeadlandsPrep.com

Additional Resources

Crisis Text Line: Text 741741 (24 hour support line)

Marin County Mobile Crisis Response Team: (415) 473-6392

Marin Crisis Stabilization Unit: (415) 473-6666

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: (800) 273-8255

Grief Support Line: 415-499-1195

[Marin Health & Human Resources:](http://www.marinhealth.org/humanresources) 415-473-7191

[Renter & Landlord Resources](#)

[Child Mind Institute](#)

College Counseling

Headlands Prep has partnered with [The College Planning Center](#) in Corte Madera to assist families throughout the college planning process. Their team works with 8th-12th graders. The College Planning Center Team is available to meet with their students and families virtually through Zoom. Feel free to contact The College Planning Center at 415-891-3293 or email Info@thecollegeplanningcenter.com to set up an appointment or explore options for your family.

Parent Information Sessions

We will do our best to continue parent information sessions (such as Coffee & Conversations and Parent Ed nights) during the Distance Learning Period. All parent information sessions will be held via Zoom. Please reach out to AdminMarin@Headlandsprep.com for more information.

Plan Notes & Acknowledgements

Provision for Revision

This Distance Learning Plan has been created thoughtfully, and with regard for student, teacher, administration, and parent needs. It has been informed by guidance from professional counselors, peer schools, and cognitive science research. Headlands Prep is committed to continuing with this plan as written for the first two weeks of its implementation, but reserves the right to make changes if it becomes clear that improvements can be made that will better support the school community.

Acknowledgements

Headlands Prep extends its thanks to Branson High School, the Menlo School, and Sonoma Academy for sharing their distance learning plans with us. If you are a school facing a similar shift, please feel free to use any or all of this document as a reference for developing your own plan.