

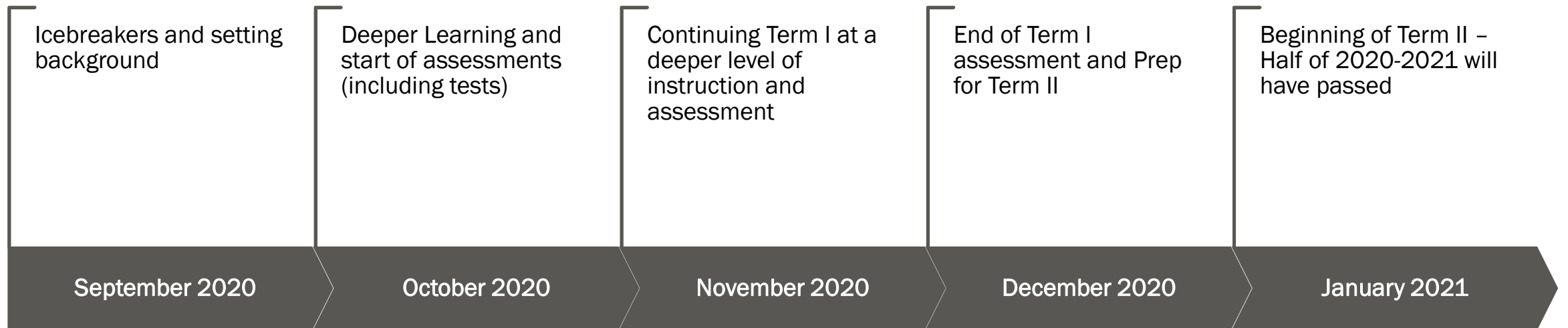
POST COVID SCHOOLS

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OCTOBER EDITION – POST SCHOOL OPENING

EDU-COVID SERIES

OVERVIEW OF ACADEMIC YEAR 2020-2021



The first three issues in this series – EduCOVID, have presented systematic ways to handle the crisis of schools closed, communities locked down, and academic plans disrupted.

This document, as the fourth in this series, digs deeper into strategies that educators can utilize for optimum benefit and as per need and global observation.

After few months of online learning exploration, the options are multiple. It is important to study these options and decide which to use according to the institutions' needs, and not necessarily, what other institutions are doing. Personalizing tools is so important.

To select tools and strategies that fit a certain school community, a careful look at pros or cons, latitudes and constraints, is very helpful. Just like every domain in an institution, quality should exceed quantity.

What matters is the effective implementation that fosters learning and teaching, rather than having a display of tools that do not serve that purpose.



REMINDER 2: FOCUS SYNERGY



SMART UNDERSTANDING
OF SITUATION
(COUNTRY/REGION LEVEL)



STAKEHOLDERS'
COLLABORATION



FEEDBACK LOOPS



HIGHLY-EFFECTIVE
TEACHERS

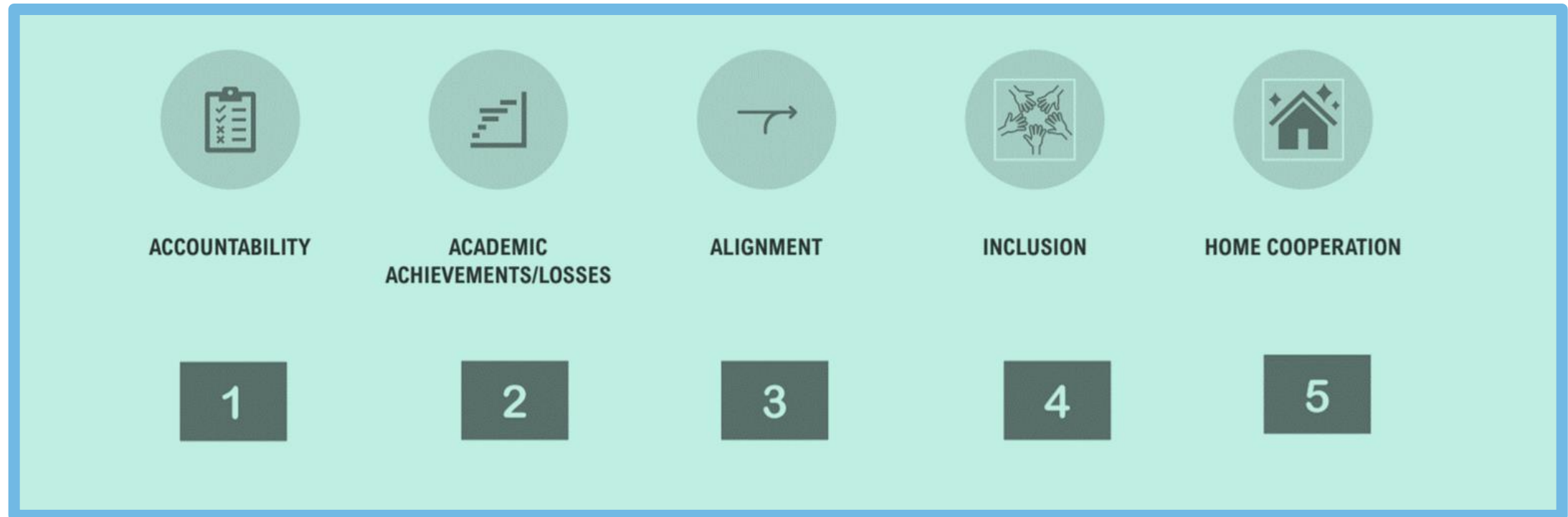


FLEXIBILITY

These were fully explained in Post COVID School (Version 1) from the Edu-COVID Series, published in July 2020.

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REMINDER 3: FOCUS URGENCY

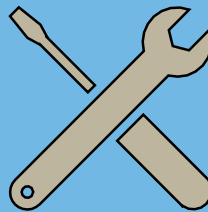


These were fully explained in Post COVID School (Version 2) from the Edu-COVID Series, published in August 2020.

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MORE ON THE FIVE FOCUS URGENCY AREAS


- TIPS AND STRATEGIES -



ACCOUNTABILITY

FOCUS URGENCY

I



Integrating efforts to monitor daily work is accountability from all sides and of all types. Parents are now part of the learning more than ever. Every detail of teaching is being exposed inside homes, making schools unable to defend themselves in case of problems arising. Parents can now hear their children's teachers right in the living room or in the kitchen area. Quality is truly exposed now. With COVID extending through this academic year, the challenges of having learners, who are less-equipped with high-order thinking skills, are considerably high.


Below are certain questions that educational bodies can ask collectively :

- Are we meeting at a regular basis and in departmental forms to discuss details of the learning and well-being process within our communities ?
- Are we recording and studying all the variables so that we can assess our practices ?
- Are we setting immediate plans to tackle issues and concerns ?
- Are we providing the right tools suitable for every discipline ?
- Are we certain of what every teacher assigns learners as classwork and homework and their relevance to the learning and well-being process ?
- Are we analyzing the level of thinking skills embedded in every task, assignment, or activity ?
- Are we ensuring that teachers are correcting and/or allowing learners to correct their errors ?
- Are we updating our software according to the latest releases ?

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENTS / LOSSES

FOCUS URGENCY

II



According to NWEA latest report, only 70% of gains in reading has been attained and less than 50 % in mathematics. This leaves school leaders and teachers with a huge responsibility to detect the losses and set plans to fill the gaps.

While managing classes, it is important to stick to the usual strategies and techniques that children are familiar with. It is wiser to ensure the success of the process then add new strategies to enrich it.

The call now is to work through deep understanding of foundational concepts and applying higher and higher thinking skills. The need to remain within grade-level framework is crucial. Reinforcing last year's concepts should not replace this year's.

Assessing tools will support in successful teaching and learning. Every discipline has its own needs- languages, mathematics, sciences, PE, etc. Measuring student progress regularly will help in assessing performance – gaining or losing, achievements and losses.

Balancing online and offline tasks is crucial to getting most of the interaction between the learners and their teachers. With less time this year, managing tasks will either lead to achievement or loss – nowhere in between.

Tailoring lessons to match learners and subjects simultaneously will ensure engagement. A teacher can reflect upon that by asking oneself questions, such as “Would I find this boring? Would I like to raise my hand or answer if I were the learner in this virtual space?” “Am I immediately intervening so that my learners can bridge the gaps linking them to attainment of standards ?”

LANGUAGES

PAGE 1

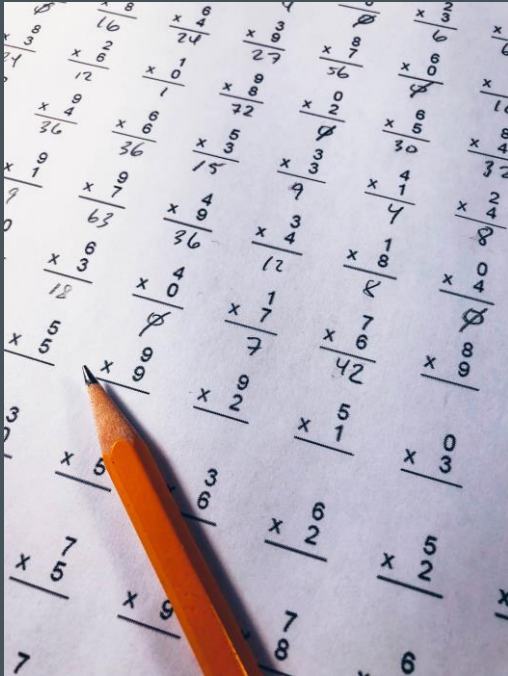


- Language, no matter which one, is critical since it is the basis for all other subjects. English is the most common. Other subjects are communicated through languages. It is easier to teach languages in classes since Language Learners, such as ELLs, rely more on their body language for expression and teachers rely on that too. Whether on-site or online, ensure that you allow expression through body language.
- Four domains need to be focused upon the most since these constitute the whole language framework:
 1. Fluent Reading
 2. Comprehension
 3. Vocabulary
 4. Writing

It is important to see these as four separate wholes to ensure deep coverage of each and connect them simultaneously through the right, relevant tasks.



MATHEMATICS



- Integrate as much real-world mathematics as possible. Relate to the outside world and to what learners can see in their homes. According to the most education departments, doing problem-solving involves modeling – the structure of the model and the parameters in that model. Knowing the assigned values in that model comes from the understanding of the math “situation” or also known as data. That’s how learners start to relate to the real-world problem-solving.
- The data or description mentioned above is essential in being relevant. This is one of the main challenges in teaching mathematics. Adhering to this concept assists in formulating one of the basic skills that a learner needs-how these functions start and develop to best relate to real-world. This is a core concept that teachers can direct their learning to attain as much as possible in this limited class time.
- Involve as many visual patterns as possible, especially with kindergartners and elementary learners.
- Using different types of representations for all mathematical concepts. This is essential in mathematics, mainly because representations display concepts in concrete terms so that learners can easily see patterns and consequently,

PHYSICAL EDUCATION



- Physical Education may be the hardest subject online because it requires physical interaction of children. However, it can be done online due to the current situations of school shutdowns (online learning mode) and social distancing (on-site learning mode).
- PE learning involves both understanding of the concept of movement and doing the movement itself. Allocating time for both is important.
- PE, movement-based practicum, can be done through regular body stretching, jumping, walking around the house (might not be done by all learners/teacher can only guarantee that if child is holding his device while walking or running), getting something, such as socks, shirt, spoon, etc, towel workouts,
- Most important is focusing on the objectives of the PE class, which is not only to move and kill time. Flexibility and strength of muscles,

ART



- Many schools chose not to teach Art Studies or diminished number of periods per school, giving more time to core subjects. However, this is not recommended, especially in these tough circumstances, when social physical presence and support are not always accessible (online learning/social distancing in schools).
- Selecting topics and themes is so critical because they need to be redirected to meet the needs of this era. Children need to communicate and feel self-confident. Teachers can use these themes to promote that and relate to what children are interested in.
- A very effective way to teach arts online is through videos, that the teacher can record of himself or herself. Then give learners time to watch it : result if piece of work was not shown before, pausing, and sometimes speeding the video if needed.
- Displaying artwork on social media of the institution in various modes encourages learners to do their best.

ALIGNMENT

FOCUS URGENCY

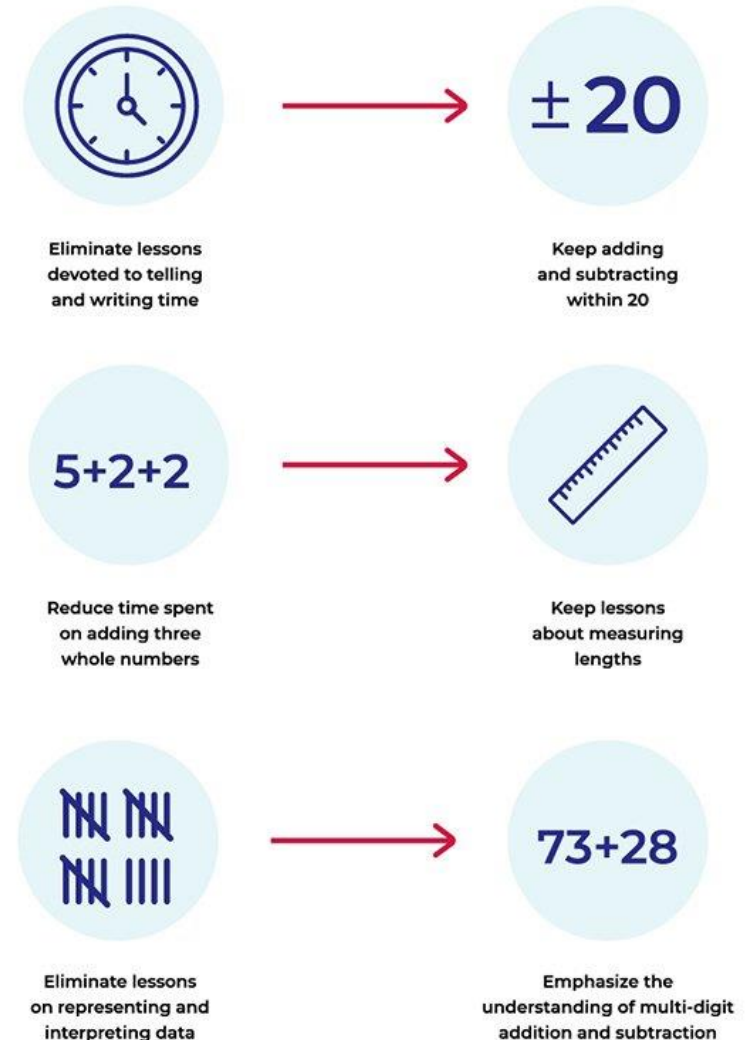
III

ALIGNMENT TO CURRICULUM

- The aim is deep learning – in other words, giving learners the long-life mastery of objectives and skills.
- It is crucial not to just cover titles. Main skills, such as problem-solving and critical thinking, should not be skipped under any circumstance because these are what the learners need to do to acquire the necessary skills.
- Adjusting to time constraints is necessary to ensure that all main standards are covered. To make the process easier and more guaranteed to achieve the target, three categories can be classified: Core – Additional – Extra. Application can be upgraded as per progress, but this leaves the opportunity for more learning to happen.
- Intervention packages can be provided for students who are struggling with learning loss, learning difficulties and special needs.

Identifying Priority Standards

To make the best use of limited time, experts suggest streamlining the curriculum to cover only the essential standards. Here's what that might look like in a 1st grade math class:



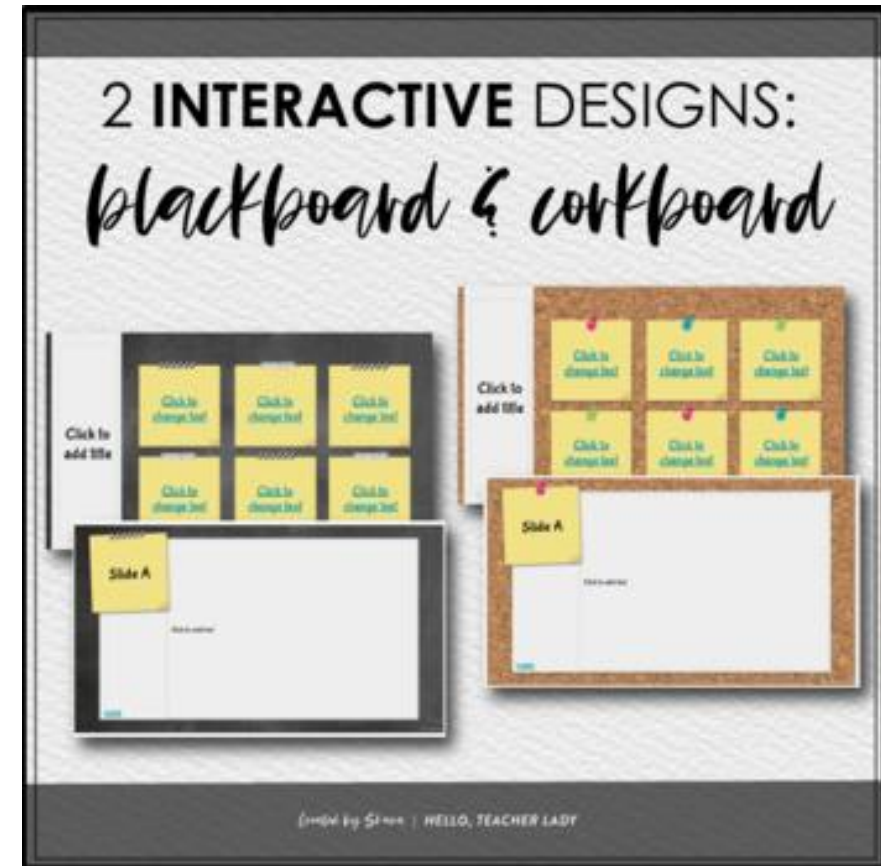
INCLUSION

FOCUS URGENCY

IV

ATTENTION GRABBERS


- Before classes, always use calendars and reminders available on digital platforms. Always expect that a learner might forget schedules or assignments.
- Using timers at the beginning and middle will ensure engagement since it urges action.
- Using movement during online learning is necessary, especially with children. Asking children to stand up, dance, juggle, bring things to show through the screen, play certain movement games, and anything that can be considered a “brain break”.
- Positive Narration Strategy: attracts the attention of the one who is not yet doing the task. By addressing two who are already doing the task, and addressing the one who is not, (.... is still getting his notebook), a teacher can draw the attention in an indirect way.
- Interactive google slides induce using choice boards, that keep learners engaged.
<https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/Interactive-Google-Slides-Digital-Choice-Board-Template-5558366>
- Grabbing attention does not always have to be through videos. Sometimes audio helps as much. For example, Screencastify has an option to use “Audio only”.
<https://www.screencastify.com/>
- Groupings: “Group interview switch” is a very helpful strategy, in which learners are divided into groups, such as Group A, B, C, etc. Then they are given a task that is based on questioning. Then they switch. This is an excellent strategy for “Building Prior Knowledge” section of the lesson, and this way all learners will have the opportunity to take part in the activity.



HOME COOPERATION

FOCUS URGENCY

V

- 
- Advise parents to provide gaming that supports learning, mainly board games, construction toys, card games, chutes and ladders, etc.. Parents can then observe children's cognitive abilities and demands as well as their behavior in the different contexts. They can also show their children their own behavior during problem-solving, giving their children more self-confidence and motivation.
 - Parents' cooperation in ensuring that their children do not turn their camera off or find ways to sneak out of the virtual classes, is urgently needed. Keeping an eye, rather than relying on the old child self-control is needed from time to time. Working parents can arrange a way to do that as well.
 - Parents need to be advised to stay positive and encouraging despite all challenges. Keeping in mind that children are already facing the COVID-Era challenges in one of the main domains in their lives, which is learning, already confuses their children.
 - Giving children opportunities to try to do things in different ways to meet targets may be needed from time to time. Parents are not educators and they were not trained to be so but asking for advice and/or institution providing awareness sessions can facilitate that.
 - PE and art are the subjects that parents can help with if schools are not offering them. PE is easy to perform and it can be done as a family bonding activity. Arts can be done with direct (parent/guardian showing ways) or indirect support and supervision (through videos).
 - From a technical level, parents can explore new options. For example, Chrome Books, that has Family Link, is an option for parents to get approval or denial apps and themes in the Chrome webstore and can monitor children screen time.



SOCIAL EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

LEARNER AND TEACHER

Social Emotional well-being, just like academic well-being, cannot be fully achieved during these hard times.

However, every small step can count for better experiences.

LEARNER

- The modes of learning are the opposite to what a learner K-12 has ever witnessed, whether online or social distancing on campus. The need to progress academically, amid parents', teachers', and learner's high expectations, in an environment that includes no proximity, neither in classrooms nor during recess and PE classes, as well as home restrictions, brings forth anxiety, confusion, and to some depression. Many children rely on their friends in school for emotional support. With this missing due to COVID regulations, those children will be accumulating stress by not disclosing their feelings. Digital communication with friends cannot replace physical interactions, just like teaching online cannot replace class teaching.
- Initiating a program for SE support, that includes activities like open talks, card writing, journals, appreciation bubbles, or any type of activity that includes speaking out anxiety and confusion in a friendly, confiding way, is not only helpful for SE well-being, but also reinforcing cognitive abilities. When a child feels less stressed out, he /she engages better in learning.





TEACHER

- Ensuring that all learners have signed contracts for commitment and independently written assessments at home is essential to maintain parent assistance and learner commitment, within frames of integrity and dedication. This lessens conflicts and stress, especially that teachers now struggle with learners handing assignments.
- Online learning connects schoolwork to homes 24/7 due to the nature of the internet. However, teachers do not have to be accessible 24/7. Setting schedules for questions, inquiries, and assignment feedback organizes the flow of work. However, it would be mutually beneficial to set time – Response Time - for answering your learners or sending them assignment evaluations and feedback. This way no tasks are left pending or learners confused, speculating their teachers' responses.
- Implementing a clear weekly plans with goals, tasks, meetings, etc.. keeps things organized, minimizing chances for stress and last-minute tasks.
- Keeping a personal journal and writing down or even drawing whatever makes a teacher happy and proud at achievements and the way the teacher is handling online work. (“My Achievement Board”, “My Happy Moments”, etc..

Manal Zeineddine

GLOBAL EDUCATION INFLUENCE
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
QUALITY CONSULTING

www.orbitsdevelopment.com

info@orbitsdevelopment.com

manal.zd@gmail.com



Like this well-structured, symmetrical tree, stay strong, even when your leaves are turning yellow.

Crisis, like the one we are now in, will surely make us stronger !