



Hughes Springs
INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Questions for Parents/Guardians to Consider Regarding Virtual Instruction

Please read the FAQ document regarding 2020-2021 HSISD Instructional Options first. After you have read that document, please consider these questions.

1. **Is my child going to be able to meet the attendance requirements?** Virtual instruction will require students to be present and actively engaged on the exact same school calendar as students who are on campus. This means your child will have to meet the definition of “actively engaged” every day that school is in session; if they don’t, they are considered “absent.” Work done on weekends and holidays will not count for attendance purposes.

Virtual students are subject to the same attendance and truancy laws as students who attend school on campus. Virtual students are also subject to the same 90/10 rule, which means they must be actively engaged in each subject/course 90% of the days school is in session to receive credit and be promoted.

2. **Where is my child academically?** If your child was struggling or behind before the spring COVID-19 closure, chances are their learning gap has increased dramatically. If you are not able to provide the necessary instructional supports and time needed to complete virtual learning successfully, your child will only fall further behind.
3. **Am I prepared for direct involvement in my child’s education?** Give serious thought to how willing you are to be your child’s “learning coach” and invest time each day in their education.

4. **How much time can I spend each day helping my child with school?** Choosing virtual instruction for your child will require you to spend time helping and monitoring your child. While a learning management system will provide the content and a liaison teacher, parents still bear a great responsibility in monitoring their child. The younger the student, the greater the time commitment needed from parents.
5. **Can I provide structure and motivation to help my child spend several hours each day on schoolwork?** Virtual Instruction for the 2020-2021 school year is very different than the Remote Learning you experienced in the spring. Students will be required to be actively engaged for a set amount of time each day. Students will also be required to be actively engaged in each subject/course each day. See the “actively engaged” definition and attendance requirements in the FAQ document.
6. **Does my home have consistent, high speed internet?** High speed internet will be necessary for students to interact in the learning management system and watch the instructional videos.
7. **Do I have a device that I can dedicate to my child’s virtual instruction?** A cell phone is not going to be sufficient for your child to successfully complete virtual instruction. Ideally, you will need a laptop or desktop computer. It would also be helpful to have the ability to print documents, as there may be supplemental materials/notes that can be downloaded to help your child. If you have multiple children in your home, you may need multiple devices in order for each child to meet the daily attendance requirements.

HSISD only plans to provide laptops to students in grades 9th – 12th who choose to participate in virtual instruction, as this is consistent with our practice/policy for on-campus students.
8. **Does our home have a quiet space that is available for my child to use so they can focus on daily schoolwork?** Students will need a quiet, comfortable space they can use each day to complete their virtual instruction.
9. **Can I provide socialization opportunities for my child?** Socialization is an extremely important part of a child’s development. Are you involved in a church, club or other organization that can provide socialization opportunities for your child?
10. **Is virtual instruction as easy and convenient as it seems?** No. While you may have a little flexibility about when and where to study, this flexibility should not be confused with being easy or fast. Learning is a process and takes time.
11. **Will my child do well in a virtual environment?** Students who already had good study habits, time management skills and self-discipline perform better in a virtual environment than other students. If your child is hard to motivate, does not manage their time well, and procrastinates odds are they will not perform well in a virtual learning environment.

12. **Is this the best option for my child?** Questions to consider - Does my child have the focus & discipline to learn virtually? Is my child ready for this much independence? Is my child able to map out a plan for completing assignments in a timely manner? Am I able to help them do this? Can my child stick with a study schedule at home? Can my child spend several hours a day doing schoolwork without getting to distracted by games, TV, etc.?
13. **Can my child and I get used to this new style of teacher?** Most of the instruction your child receives will be from a learning management systems and recorded videos of a “teacher” providing instruction. While they will have a teacher, who touches base with them, provides feedback and tutoring, this teacher is not as readily available as a classroom teacher. Are you prepared to have to email the teachers questions and then wait for a response? Are you prepared to have to schedule an appointment for online help or virtual tutoring? Teacher interactions are limited to mostly email, video chats and phone calls.
14. **Is my child going to be able to meet the attendance requirements?** Virtual instruction will require students to be present and actively engaged on the exact same school calendar as students on campus. This means your child will have to meet the definition of “actively engaged” every day that school is in session; if they don’t, they are considered “absent.” Virtual students are subject to the same attendance and truancy laws as students who attend school on campus. Virtual students are also subject to the same 90/10 rule, which means they must be actively engaged in each subject/course 90% of the days school is in session to receive credit and be promoted.
15. **Please reflect on your own technology skills.** If you are not comfortable operating a computer and navigating a software program, are you going to be able to help your child?