



ALBERT LEA
SCHOOL DISTRICT 241
ALBERT LEA AREA SCHOOLS
211 WEST RICHWAY DRIVE
ALBERT LEA, MINNESOTA 56007

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Hello Distance Learning Academy Families,

We are excited to have your student(s) enrolled in our Distance Learning Academy and look forward to working with your family to provide the best education we can in this model. The Distance Learning Academy has four focus areas that will guide our educational approach to meeting the district mission:

- **Relationships & Connectedness**
 - Establishing and maintaining relationships with our students, families, and staff members is very important during this historic global event. We will need to work with each other and stay connected to be successful in this new **Distance Learning Academy** educational environment. We also need to stay connected so we can support the social-emotional, academic, and mental health of our students and our staff members.

- **Access & Support for Everyone**
 - Our students, families, and staff members will need to have equitable access to technology and the internet for the **Distance Learning Academy**. Along with access comes the appropriate level of support for all engaged with this model. We will look to provide the learning support necessary to both meet the needs of our students and to provide an educational option where students can all succeed. We will endeavor to create the best supported environment we can for the students and staff members in our **Distance Learning Academy**.

- **Quality & Fidelity**
 - Several members of the high-quality Albert Lea Area Schools instructional staff will be teaching the participants in the **Distance Learning Academy**. They will be using a common set of curriculum guides, partnered with peer discussions across learning models, to provide our district curriculum with fidelity. We are looking to provide the highest quality experience we can in this new educational model.

- **Understanding & Continuous Improvement**
 - The **Distance Learning Academy** is a new model of education both for our teachers and our students. While we were introduced to a variant of distance learning last Spring, this model will be different from what some experienced. This blended model of interactive video classroom lessons and online work completion requires engagement and collaboration to be successful. Knowing that some things will not go as planned, and some unforeseen things will come up, are all part of the



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new learning experience. Know that we will be monitoring the experience with the families at home, our staff at the school, and internally to continuously improve the experience provided in this learning model.

As with all learning settings, classroom engagement is important for significant learning to occur. While the **Distance Learning Academy** is a flexible model of learning, students are expected to attend all scheduled virtual class meetings and to complete all assigned online assignments. If your family has circumstances that warrant additional flexibility, please contact your student's teacher to make arrangements. Attendance will be monitored, and reported, daily. If your family has any barriers preventing your student from engaging in their classes, please reach out to us so we can assist in finding a solution.

The use of technology will be an integral part of our learning environment. Our plan is for students in grades K-2 to be issued a school iPad and students in grades 3-12 to be issued a school Chromebook. Accidental damage insurance for these devices is available for **\$23** for the school year. Families must have their device checked in at our Brookside Technology Help Desk before enrolling in the insurance program. Students/Families who do not have access to the internet may also ask about receiving a district Hot Spot to provide the necessary access for learning.

All students will receive grades similar to their in-school and hybrid model counterparts. Transportation will not be provided as students in the **Distance Learning Academy** as they will be learning at home and not in the school buildings. Students participating in the Albert Lea Area Schools' **Distance Learning Academy** are eligible to participate in after-school activities as desired.

Students utilizing the **Distance Learning Academy** learning model are still eligible for meals through our school lunch program on your normal school lunch account. It is highly encouraged for families to complete the Free-Reduced lunch program application form. Lunches will be available via a curbside pick-up or drive through format at Albert Lea High School and Southwest Middle School if you choose.

The daily schedule for the Distance Learning Academy will streamline closely to the building schedules for students. A more specific class schedule will be communicated by your student's classroom teacher(s). A general schedule for secondary students is available on our website.

On behalf of the Albert Lea Area School District and the Distance Learning Academy staff members, we look forward to working with all of you to create a successful learning experience for your students. Together we will make the Distance Learning Academy a great experience for our students, our families, our district, and our community.

Have a great day and Go Tigers!

Respectfully,

John Double