A Message To Our Families

Dear DSST Families,

I would like to share a personal, transparent view of the upcoming year, as a parent and as the CEO of DSST. Educating your student is a sacred responsibility, even more so in the midst of a pandemic. I am very grateful that you have entrusted us to educate your children this year.

As we launch into the new school year, still filled with uncertainty, I want to come alongside you as a parent and as a leader trying to make good decisions that always put students at the center.

DSST Commitments to Your Family

Our entire team across our 15 schools is committed to providing your child with an outstanding DSST education. It may not happen in the same way it has in the past, but we are determined to deliver on what makes a DSST education great: strong, inclusive learning communities, deep meaningful relationships, a great college preparatory STEM program, and personal connections with our families.

We will virtually foster a sense of community by intentionally building a strong and united school culture. We will ensure students continue along their path to college by doing everything we can to re-create our in-person school day online. You can expect regular communication from advisors and teachers, along with an open ear to your feedback about what is working and what we can improve.

The Plan for the Year

We desire to be in-person as much as possible this year. My true hope is that we will be moving to an “in-person” option post fall break, potentially hybrid or fully in-person depending upon health guidance. We are currently working with metro area leaders to get a clearer set of metrics to best inform our decisions, and will seek input from families, students, and staff as we make our first decision by October 1 about post-fall break plans. In the meantime, we are 100% in on launching DSST E-School.

How Can We Partner Together?

Creating a fantastic school year for your children will require a true team effort of navigating many twists and turns. Great collaboration requires a shared goal, shared understanding of how we achieve it, and consistent communication. We all share the goal of providing your children a great year of learning and personal development in warm, inclusive communities.

In times of difficulty and challenge, great communities rise to become something better than they were and I believe all of us, together, will do that this year.

I deeply want each of your children to have a wonderful year. Let’s go make that happen together.

Bill Kurtz
CEO of DSST Public Schools
The 2020-2021 school year will begin remotely through E-School to ensure the safety of our staff and students based upon health guidance from district partners and our city and state health officials. DSST has already made the call to continue E-School through our Fall Break. This decision was made in early August in order to help you plan accordingly and to ensure we are starting the year safely. By October 1st we will determine how the rest of the calendar year will proceed. If there is a move to a hybrid learning model or a more robust in person structure, you will still have a chance to continue in E-School if you desire.

We have created this guide to help all of our families start E-School successfully. The intention of this guide is to put the most critical E-School information in one convenient place. This document will hopefully answer many of your questions, but it is not intended to be a catch-all for all DSST related information. There are a number of other resources you should turn to with other questions you may have:

**Need specific help?** The last section in this guide lists where to go for help in a number of specific areas.

**For up-to-date and more specific information**, news and guidance related to E-School and the school year please visit our website at: dsstpublicschools.org/20-21-school-year-updates.

**For school-specific questions or for comprehensive school policies** please refer to your school’s family and student handbook which can be found on your school’s website.
DSST’s E-School Vision, Philosophy and Student Norms

In the midst of a global pandemic, we will work to ensure that our students achieve at the same level they would have any other year. DSST’s mission drives at eliminating educational inequity and we know that during crises, inequities are made larger and more profound. DSST will partner with staff, students and families to ensure that we meet our north star achievement measures AND that we think flexibly and strategically about how to get there.

We are committed to building strong, authentic relationships with our students and families. We will deliver high-quality, synchronous programming in all core content areas, with opportunities for co-curricular enrichment and electives. We will do this by:

- **Operating a full “normal” school day online**, roughly 8 AM - 3 PM. Students need this learning time and we will incorporate strategies that aim to reduce screen fatigue.
- **Providing more synchronous learning** along with more typical class sizes (20-35) so that students are learning directly from teachers and each other in smaller settings.
- **Frequent checks on your student’s progress** with thoughtful assessment and regular progress reports.

**ACHIEVEMENT**
Students learn and achieve at the same level as, or higher than, any other school year.

**FAMILY & STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AND ACCESS**
Families and students are engaged and connected with access to everything they need for meaningful learning.

**WELLNESS**
The overall wellness of students and staff is deeply cared for and prioritized.

**COLLEGE SUCCESS**
Students continue on their path towards being fully prepared for college at the same level, or higher than, any other school year.
A Day In The Life of E-School

Students can expect many of the typical hallmarks of a DSST school day throughout E-School.

Predictable Start and End Times

Each student will follow an individual schedule, given to them from their school. E-School will run from 8:15am (MS)/8:30AM (HS) - 3:15pm on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday.

Wednesday schedules will vary by school site, please see your campus-bases leadership team with questions.

Small-Group Advisory

Each student belongs to a group of roughly 15 students who check in daily with a dedicated teacher, or advisor. These advisories provide them with opportunities to check in and connect to classmates and a trusted adult.

Live and Synchronous Instruction

Students will spend much of their time in live, synchronous classes. You’ll find a sample middle school schedule on page 5, and high school on page 6.

Attendance

Students will be expected to attend all of their classes and attendance will be taken daily.

Parents should use their school’s attendance line or attendance email to communicate about student absences.

Students should also communicate with their advisor if they’re unable to make class for any reason.

Assignments and Assessments

All assignments will be done through Google Classroom, with specific due dates, and assessments will be performed through Edulastic in order to understand where students are growing and where they might need more practice.

Core Values

Our 6 Core Values (Respect, Responsibility, Courage, Curiosity, Doing Your Best and Integrity) will continue to guide how staff and students discuss their interactions and efforts.
A Sample Schedule for a Middle School Student

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Subject/Activity</th>
<th>Break</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8:15 - 8:40am</td>
<td>Advisory</td>
<td>25 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:45 - 9:35am</td>
<td>Social Studies/ELD</td>
<td>50 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:40 - 10:30am</td>
<td>Science</td>
<td>50 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:35 - 11:25am</td>
<td>Electives</td>
<td>50 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:25am - 12:05pm</td>
<td>Lunch/Clubs/Community Time (School autonomy)</td>
<td>40 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:05 - 1:20pm</td>
<td>Math</td>
<td>75 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:30 - 2:45pm</td>
<td>English Language Arts</td>
<td>75 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:45 - 3:15pm</td>
<td>After School Programming (School autonomy)</td>
<td>College Prep, Mandatory Tutoring, Refocus, Other</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Day ends between 12:00 and 1:00, no later than 1 pm (all electives/interventions also end by then)
## A Sample Schedule for a High School Student

### Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Period/Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8:30 - 8:45am</td>
<td>MM/Advisory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:45 - 9:35am</td>
<td>Period 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:40 - 10:30am</td>
<td>Period 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:35 - 11:25am</td>
<td>Period 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:30am - 12:15pm</td>
<td>Lunch, Advisory 1:1s, Clubs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:20 - 1:10pm</td>
<td>Period 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:15 - 2:05pm</td>
<td>Period 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:10 - 3:00pm</td>
<td>Period 6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Wednesday

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8:30 - 8:45am</td>
<td>Advisory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:45 - 9:45am</td>
<td>A Week = Period 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:50 - 10:50am</td>
<td>B Week = Period 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:50 - 10:50am</td>
<td>A Week = Period 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:55 - 11:55am</td>
<td>B Week = Period 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:55am - 12:25pm</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:30 - 1:00pm</td>
<td>Extended Advisory/College Seminar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:00 - 3:15pm</td>
<td>Staff Structured Time</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# The Tools of E-School

## Microsoft Teams
**Collaborative space for teaching and learning**
Microsoft Teams is the most important “lifeline” for your student in terms of technology and it is where they will spend a good part of their day. This is where your student can participate in audio calls, video calls, and can chat with DSST staff members, including teachers and technical help agents. This is also where your student will start their day with an Advisory meeting.

## Microsoft Outlook
**Email teachers for help**
Microsoft Outlook is where your student can check and send email from their DSST account. Outlook also has some less used features such as calendaring, etc., but is primarily used for email.

## Edulastic
**Assessments**
Edulastic is the assessment platform that DSST teachers and students use most frequently to take assessments such as quizzes, formative assessments, etc. Your student may use other assessment platforms such as Illuminate, CMAS, MAP, etc. throughout the year, but they will be more infrequent than Edulastic.

## Google Classroom
**All Assignments**
Google Classroom is where students see the work assigned to them and when it is due, all in one place. Google Classroom may link out to other platforms, but is always the best place to find the most current assignments. Parents/guardians can view these assignments through Flyer calendars and by asking students to view their Google Classroom dashboard.

## Flyer
**Family Communication**
Flyer is a smartphone app for family communication that is compatible with iPhones, Androids, and iPads. Flyer is the one stop shop for communication and other important information for families from our schools including progress reports, announcements, assignment calendars, and two-way chat.

## Infinite Campus Parent Portal
**Attendance, Schedules and Grade Books**
The Parent Portal (powered by Infinite Campus) contains Attendance, grades and other important official information. Your students’ scores and official grades for assignments can be found in the Parent Portal. Parents will also see these grades on regular progress reports sent home by advisors, but can always check them in real time in the Parent Portal.
Student Norms and Expectations

ACCESS ALL CLASSES through Microsoft Teams

ACTIVE PARTICIPATION: we encourage students to continually build their voice and ensure their questions are answered

LOG INTO ADVISORY by 8:15am (Middle school) and 8:30am (High School)

COMMUNICATE RESPECTFULLY and kindly with peers, teachers, and staff

COMMUNICATE WITH YOUR ADVISOR if you are sick or unable to attend

WATCH AND PARTICIPATE daily in morning meeting

POST/ASK ONLY about the topic at hand

USE ONLY SCHOOL-APPROPRIATE LANGUAGE, pictures, GIFs, etc.

MUTE YOUR MICROPHONE when not talking

COMPLETE ALL ASSIGNMENTS by their due dates

E-SCHOOL DRESS CODE may be required- check with your school for specifics.
Grades, Assessments and Progress Reports

Grading

Grading in E-School will be similar to a typical DSST school year - please refer to your school’s student/family handbook found on your school’s website.

Progress Reports

In an effort to ensure continued communication around grades and participation during E-School, you will receive a Student Progress Report from your Advisor at least every other week.

Assessments

Measuring student progress is more important than ever as we strive to ensure that all students are learning and growing throughout E-School. Students will engage in a variety of assessments this year, some of which are described below:

**Daily Mastery Checks and Exit Tickets:** used to help students and teachers identify progress towards the daily objective

**Formatives and Summatives:** used to measure progress towards key learning outcomes

**Interim Assessments (IA)s and Finals:** often administered at the end of each Trimester for longer scale evaluation towards learning outcomes

**Diagnostic Assessments (e.g. iReady, MAP):** these periodic assessments help determine the strengths and gaps in student learning to provide more tailored instruction to student needs

**State and National Assessments:** While CMAS and the SAT were canceled this Spring, it is our expectation that these assessments will occur this year. As we gain more guidance regarding these assessments, your school will share more specific information to support students and families in achieving success on these assessments.
Exceptional Learners

DSST is committed to ensuring all students receive instruction and support that is accessible and meets their unique learning needs during E-School.

Students with Disabilities
(including students with IEPs and/or 504 plans):

Planning for Individualization: For each student with an Individual Education Plan (IEP) or 504, we will be creating an individualized plan for how the IEP/504 will be implemented during E-School. These plans will be created under guidance from our district partners (APS and DPS) to ensure special education and 504 requirements are upheld. Special Education Teachers and/or 504 Coordinators will be reaching out to families shortly to explain the process and seek input for these plans.

Accommodations, Modifications & Specialized Instruction: While delivery of supports may look different in a remote or virtual environment, IEP and 504 accommodations, modifications and services will be provided following guidance from our Local Education Agencies and under accordance with Special Education and 504 law.

Who to Contact: For more information, please reach out to your child’s Special Education Case Manager/Teacher, your school’s 504 Coordinator, and/or your school’s Special Education Administrator.

English Language Learners

English Language Development (ELD): Regular ELD instruction will continue for every English Language Learner throughout the course of E-School 2.0. ELD Teachers will serve English Language Learners through one of two instructional models: (1) Students will receive English Language instruction in a small group setting, or (2) Students will receive English Language instruction in a designated content course; the ELD teacher will co-plan and co-teach with one content area teacher at each grade level in order to provide explicit English language instruction, pull small groups, and provide tailored support for students.

Who to Contact: If you have questions about how we’ll be supporting your student, please reach out to your school’s English Language Acquisition Administrator or your child’s ELD Teacher.

Gifted and Talented Students

Advanced Learning Plans (ALPs): ALP goals will continue to be created in partnership with students, teachers and families. Gifted and Talented (GT) programming is owned by individual campuses, but all programs will work to support GT students in achieving the goals agreed upon in the ALP. GT students will have access to appropriate enrichments and extensions that are part of E-School programming. GT administrators and leads will work with district partners to continue identifying students who qualify for the GT programing.

Who to Contact: If you have questions about how your student will be supported with their academic and social/emotional growth goals in the ALP or questions about GT identification, please reach out to your school’s GT Admin or GT Lead.
College Success In E-School and Beyond

DSST is committed to ensuring all students have the opportunity to choose their best fit post-secondary program. The College Success Team is committed to working with seniors and their families to:

Ensure they are set up to navigate the college and post-secondary processes.

- Apply to a diverse set of colleges and post-secondary programs.
- Maximize financial aid opportunities.
- Ensure seniors have a strong post-secondary plan.
- Ensure post-secondary information is both accessible and accurate.

The College Success Team will leverage both individual and group connection and support opportunities. Seniors can expect to hear from their college counselor at least weekly.

College Success Teams, Advisors, and Seniors will use Overgrad as the primary tool to explore and create post-secondary plans. Seniors will also use Overgrad to finalize their college lists, track applications, and share information about admissions decisions and financial aid. Seniors can share their accounts with families and work together to explore and finalize post-secondary planning and goals.
Athletics and Other Options

Athletics

**Middle School:** DSST Public Schools has made the difficult decision to suspend all middle school sports until further notice. Schools are currently looking at creative ways to bring them back in a safe way if possible later this school-year after January 2021. Please connect with your school’s Athletic Director for more information.

**High School:** For the time being, we will be following CHSAA guidance, following a modified sport schedule for the 20-21 school year, creating four separate sport seasons. All contact sports and volleyball have been moved to a later season in the calendar. Please reach out directly to your school with additional questions.

Additional High School Options: Opt-Ins

We are thrilled to offer additional completion optional and extra STEM and Humanities courses as “Opt-Ins” that are open to all High School students across the network. These courses will be taught by some of DSST’s experts in those content areas, offered during and after school as schedules permit. Visit dsstpublicschools.org/opt-ins for more information and to apply, and email opt.ins@scienceandtech.org if you have any questions.
SOME DSST TEACHERS MAY INVITE STUDENTS to participate in small, voluntary, in-person activities during the fall. Like some high school sports, these are permitted with certain protocols. These protocols may change over time with state and local health guidelines so please check with your school if you are unsure. Your student does not need to participate in any of these activities. If you choose to participate, no additional waiver is required but there will be a health screening.

In-Person Interactions

Interactions/meetings can be held outdoors, and the following guidance will be followed:

- **Group size** must be kept small (10-15 participants).
- **6ft distance** must be maintained between participants.
- **Masks/face coverings** must be worn by all participants.
- **Materials** cannot be shared.
- **All participants**— staff, students, families — must complete the health screening process prior to participating in the in-person activity. If they don’t, hosts must take temperatures and fill out the form on arrival for participants.
- **Schools/teams** must track the activity, including documenting who participated in the activity.
- **Participants should use hand sanitizer** whenever possible for hand hygiene.

How to Stay Connected

FAMILIES

Flyer - Families can stay connected with their student’s advisor (their main contact), their school, and the DSST network on the Flyer app. All communications are translated into a family’s preferred language on Flyer and we recommend enabling push notifications so you never miss a message.

Website/Email - DSST’s 20-21 School Year network website (dsst.info/20-21Updates) is the go-to place for the latest information regarding returning to school and network-level decisions. This site will reflect all information included in our family communications from the network.

Social Media - Follow us on Facebook (@DSSTPublicSchools), Instagram (@DSSTPublicSchools), and Twitter (@DSSTPubSchools) for our latest updates.

STUDENTS

Email - Students are expected to check their email daily to receive important updates from their advisor and teachers.

Teams - All classes and additional office hours will be held on Teams, where students will regularly receive assignments and updates.

How to Contact Us!

Find your school contact information at dsstpublicschools.org/schools

Call the DSST network at 303-524-6324
## Where Can I Go For Help?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Support Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I do not have internet access at home.</td>
<td>Email <a href="mailto:internetaccess@scienceandtech.org">internetaccess@scienceandtech.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I need help troubleshooting my internet access.</td>
<td>Reach out to your student’s advisor for assistance, then use this reference guide: dsst.info/Eschool_internet_help</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am having trouble with my DSST computer.</td>
<td>Email <a href="mailto:student.helpdesk@scienceandtech.org">student.helpdesk@scienceandtech.org</a> or call (303) 802-4188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am having trouble logging into a software platform (Teams, Google, etc.)</td>
<td>Email <a href="mailto:student.helpdesk@scienceandtech.org">student.helpdesk@scienceandtech.org</a> or call (303) 802-4188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am having trouble on an assignment.</td>
<td>Send your teacher an email or a Teams message</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am having trouble with the Flyer app.</td>
<td>Visit dsstpublicschools.org/connect-flyer or email <a href="mailto:flyer@scienceandtech.org">flyer@scienceandtech.org</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| I need information about food distribution.                          | DPS students visit dsst.info/DPSfood
APS students visit dsst.info/APSfood                                        |
| I have a need that isn’t listed.                                     | Call your school (phone #s are listed at dsstpublicschools.org/schools) or call our network at 303-524-6324 |