

A Message from Kingsley's Chief Academic Officer: Introducing Kingsley Home Learning

Dear Kingsley Families,

Warm greetings from Kingsley.

This message provides an overview of Kingsley's Home Learning program, including our goals and objectives and an overview of what you can expect in the weeks ahead.

Division Directors will send detailed academic work plans along with links to the appropriate online resources and specific information about the technology needed for this program.

Kingsley's Home Learning web page offers additional tools and resources, including the Auxiliary and Special Programs blog and extra materials to support students' educational journey in an engaging, low-stress way.

Kingsley Home Learning Goals

Whether on campus, online, or hands-on at home, the goal of our program is to engage students in ways that promote academic, social, and emotional growth. Our curriculum will continue to develop understanding in math, reading, and writing and offer opportunities for skill development in areas that include hand and eye coordination, small and gross motor skills development, memorization, organization, and making inferences while reading. Kingsley Home Learning, we want to ensure that students are challenged meaningfully and joyfully, without adding more stress to their lives (or yours).

We also want to provide our community with opportunities for continued interaction. This means ensuring time for students to connect regularly with their friends and their teachers in classroom contexts. For our parents, this means having regular communication with our teachers, Education Directors, and other staff who can be of assistance.

Academic Experience

Kingsley Home Learning will consist of online, in-print, hands-on, and experiential work components. The online portion will include both "real time" and recorded elements—on-demand videos recorded by teachers that are always accessible and pre-scheduled Zoom sessions that will allow your child/ren to engage with classmates and teachers in real-time (for Early Childhood and Lower Elementary students, these will also be recorded for ongoing reference).

Students will be asked to complete their work both synchronously and asynchronously. Synchronous work will occur online and will be scheduled to occur several times a week. Topics, themes, and activities will vary by classroom and by division (details coming soon from Education Directors).

Please note: we realize that household schedules and access to equipment may occasionally prevent a child from attending a live session. Lower Elementary and Early Childhood teachers will record each lesson and post the video to that classroom's "Home Learning" page. On Wednesday, March 25, Tara Hofherr will send a detailed account of the Upper Elementary program, which will be more synchronous in practice.

Asynchronous projects and lessons will focus mostly on language arts and math work, and will be posted online so that students can access them at a time that suits each family's schedule. These lessons will have clear instructions and due dates.

Learning Tools and Parent–Teacher Communication

In developing Kingsley Home Learning, we have thoughtfully balanced hands-on and print materials with online videos and interactions. Access to computers will be necessary to access the online and video conferencing work. We realize that some families will have two or more children working at the same time. Upper Elementary Students have their Chromebooks for online work. Other children will need access to either desktop or laptop computers periodically throughout each week. We recommend, if possible, that students have earphones or headphones if working in a shared space.

For simplicity and clarity, Kingsley teachers will use a select few robust platforms. Some, like the Zoom video conferencing app, will be utilized schoolwide in age-appropriate ways, while others will only be used in a single division (i.e. Google Classroom for Upper Elementary). Teachers will check in one-to-one with students and/or in small groups throughout the week.

Early Childhood and Lower Elementary Students will use the materials sent home before March Break, as well as lessons and projects that will be posted to their classroom’s Home Learning Page on the Kingsley Website. Upper Elementary students will be using Zoom and Google Classroom on their Chromebooks, as well as the materials sent home with them. These students will mainly use their Google Suite accounts for their work.

For all Divisions, invitations to Zoom sessions with teachers will be emailed in advance. Completed, hard copy assignments can be scanned or photographed and attached to emails so that teachers can assess and share feedback on student work.

Fortuitously, the Montessori method has equipped our students to be self-directed learners, but we understand that there is a big difference between practicing those skills in a classroom versus at home, in the company of siblings, caregivers, and parents. Kingsley teachers and Education Directors will provide ongoing learning support for parents regarding establishing and maintaining at-home routines, schedules, and physical learning spaces, as well as modeling how to use a “planner” with your child/ren to organize a day’s and a week’s worth of work. We encourage you to work with your child(ren) to arrange a dedicated, well-organized space on which they can repeatedly rely. Education Directors will give details on how best to arrange a learning space in your home.

Co-Curriculars

Kingsley’s Co-Curricular teachers have been diligently developing lessons and videos that you can use with your children as you build your child’s schedule. Each teacher will post these each week to the Co-Curricular section on their My Kingsley classroom page . Options will include sing-alongs with Mr. Brian and Ms. Gamet; work-along art project videos from Ms. Valenza and Ms. Ana; Science experiments designed by Mr. Kuh; and structured play and exercise activities from our Physical Education teachers.

Enrichment Opportunities

Kingsley’s Auxiliary and Special Programs team has compiled resources for [After School Club At Home](#) and [Friendship Club At Home](#). These are available to the entire Kingsley community and will be accessible on the Kingsley Home Learning page. These offerings will engage your child/ren in a wide variety of enjoyable enrichment activities, develop new skills and to cultivate a range of interests.

Social and Emotional Support

Kingsley's Social Emotional Student Support Coordinator, Madelin Cerullo, is coordinating online references for parents and students. She will maintain a blog and a list of parent resources and age-appropriate offerings, and will host regularly scheduled Zoom meetings.

Tech Support for Families

Since we are entering relatively uncharted waters by offering parts of our program online, we anticipate there may be snags here and there. If you encounter any difficulties, please use kmssupport@kingsley.org to contact our tech-support team.

Standardized Testing

Upper Elementary and Next School Counseling Director Tara Hofherr has been in touch with the Education Resource Bureau (ERB) to learn about its plans for permitting Third through Sixth Grade students to take this year's tests at home. She and Lower Elementary Education Director Pete Zetlan will be in touch about preparation and administration for the ERB exams as soon as that information becomes available.

Tara will contact the Fifth Grade parents of Kingsley's to discuss online delivery of the ISEE Prep class by Sharon Church, who has taught the class at Kingsley for the last three years.

Closing Thoughts

In crafting Kingsley Home Learning, we acknowledged the need for flexibility and the likelihood that we will make adjustments as we move forward. Our dedicated and experienced faculty are approaching this period with creativity, resilience, and a "maker mindset," and they remain ever-ready to pivot to maximize the benefits of this unique educational moment. We are confident that our students' experience in a Montessori-rooted environment like Kingsley's, which has empowered them to pursue their curiosity, to persist in their search for understanding and mastery, and to practice empathy, has put them in a strong position to adapt to learning from home.

Please remind your children that their work is important, that they have choice in their work, and that they should take pride in their work. And, please remember as parents to appreciate their resiliency and to watch them apply themselves with joy and satisfaction.

Thank you for your continued trust in Kingsley and please let me or the appropriate Ed Director know how home learning is going for you and your child. Your feedback will be invaluable as we monitor and tweak our plans.

Sincerely,

Jorge Valcarcel