



RVBS Online Curriculum Engagement

Spring 2020

Framework & Guiding Principles

Developmental Approach: Montessori education embodies a developmental approach to learning. Children are whole at every stage of their development and their needs differ at each stage. This idea carries through our implementation of online and virtual learning across the divisions of the School. Attention is also focused on optimizing tools with which students are already familiar, lessening the learning curve whenever possible to leave room for learning where it is needed. The needs of families during this time are also vastly different across the ages. A common thread in the Riverbend community, because of the preponderance of dual-working (outside of the home) families, is the need to find balance in fulfilling both professional and familial responsibilities.

Asynchronous versus Synchronous Learning: *Asynchronous learning is learning that is recorded or posted on a learning platform. Students and their families can access this work when it is most convenient. Synchronous learning refers to live classes, hosted as a meeting by the classroom teacher. Achieving balance in both realms is important in order to respect the time and obligations of both faculty and students/families. Now that the closure will continue through the month of April and beyond, our planning will evolve. Currently, there is a plethora of asynchronous learning opportunities that Riverbend has made available in the form of independent projects across the curriculum and digital learning platforms. Synchronous whole class/small group and individual meetings are happening at every level on a schedule that matches the developmental needs of the students at that level. The School began with a focus on core academic classes and is in the process of introducing synchronous and asynchronous online classes in the Specialist areas across the Upper School.*

Diversity of Opportunity: There is a wealth of resources available to Riverbend students and families. Just as when school is in session on campus, the School strives to follow the child and offer activities that engage the heart and mind across the curriculum. Diversity is key in this work and teachers are working diligently to prepare lessons, engaging their expertise and creativity on behalf of the students.

Parent Support & Communication: Communication regarding online learning has been regular with parents. Parents are encouraged to share feedback with teachers on their experience learning with their children at home. The School realizes that this is a challenging time for families and that the experience is different for each family. Teachers are available to families for individual support. Virtual Parent Coffees will be hosted by school administration at each level in the coming weeks. The School's goal is to maintain and nurture the strong relationships we have with families while we are all learning and living in this different way.

Strategic Continuation of Online Resources: The prospect of continued phasing in and out of online teaching and learning in the future encourages the continuation and integration of online tools in the Riverbend curriculum while upholding the School's commitment to Montessori education.

Finding Opportunity within a Challenging Context: There is always opportunity to be found in times of challenge. The Riverbend faculty have embraced this approach and are working hard to support

students. It is an impressive effort that feeds an optimistic and hopeful approach to learning and an unwavering focus on all that is possible.

Sustainability: So much is uncertain now in terms of length of campus closure. The message that the School is conveying to families is one of balance and sustainability. Faculty have both professional and personal obligations to fulfill in the same way as families. The situation we are facing can change drastically at any moment. An excellent educational infrastructure supported by consistent communication will sustain our community and allow the School to continue fulfilling its mission.

Online/Virtual Learning Tools

Platform/Resource	Toddler	Primary	LE	UE	MS	Faculty/ Admin PLC *
Seesaw	3/16	3/16	3/16			
Google Docs/ Drive				ongoing	ongoing	ongoing
Google Hangouts				3/16	3/16	3/16
Google Classroom				Specials 3/23	Specials 3/23	Riverbend Faculty Room
Zoom	3/18	3/18	3/18			3/16
IXL Learning		Language Math	Spanish Math Language Culture Science	Spanish Math Language	Spanish	
Learning Ally			Fall 2019	Fall 2019	Fall 2019	
ALEKS Mathematics				3/23	3/18	
Newsela			In process	In process	In process	
Go Noodle	3/26	3/26	3/26	3/26	3/26	

Seesaw: This is a digital learning platform that allows the sharing of activities by teachers and the posting of completed work by students into a student portfolio. <https://web.seesaw.me/>. The School has a paid subscription for Children’s House and Lower Elementary.

Google Suite: Riverbend uses the Google Suite as the foundation of our work with students in UE and MS, and also as a professional learning community. This is a free resource for the School as an educational nonprofit organization.

Zoom: Zoom is an online meeting platform that facilitates virtual meetings. The School has a combination of paid and free subscriptions. Families are also supporting the School by offering to set-up virtual class meetings using their own accounts.

IXL Learning: IXL is a widely used learning platform for K–12. Used by over 8,000,000 students, IXL provides personalized learning in more than 8,000 topics, covering math, language arts, science, social studies, and Spanish. Interactive questions, awards, and certificates keep kids motivated as they master skills. Riverbend subscribed to IXL in Math and Spanish originally as a paid subscription. Other areas of the curriculum were added to the School's subscription at no additional cost. www.ixl.com

Learning Ally: Learning Ally is an audiobook solution for schools that provides students all the books they need to and want to read, including curriculum-aligned text books and literature, and popular fiction. This is an excellent tool for students who benefit from a multi-modal approach to reading. Students can listen to a text and read along. Each student has an individual bookshelf to maintain a collection and receive assignments from their teachers. This is a paid subscription that has been used for individual students based on their learning needs thus far. In the current context, the School is in the process of creating accounts for all LE-MS students. www.learningally.org

ALEKS Math: Assessment and LEarning in Knowledge Spaces is a web-based, artificially intelligent assessment and learning system. ALEKS uses adaptive questioning to quickly and accurately determine exactly what a student knows and doesn't know in a course. The platform then instructs students on the topics they are most ready to learn. As a student works through a course, ALEKS periodically reassesses the student to ensure that topics learned are also retained. ALEKS courses are very complete in their topic coverage and ALEKS avoids multiple-choice questions. This is a paid subscription that Riverbend will maintain for UE and MS. Teachers can use the data provided by student work in ALEKS to plan lessons during the school day. www.aleks.com

Newsela: Newsela is a nonprofit organization that compiles and curates articles across the curriculum. Content is based on the reading level of the student, from Grade 2-adult. The News feature of Newsela is always offered without cost. With school closures, Newsela is offering its entire album across the curriculum for schools at no cost. This represents a fantastic opportunity for Riverbend to demo this resource. www.newsela.com

GoNoodle: GoNoodle® engages 14 million kids every month with movement and mindfulness videos created by child development experts. This is a free resource for Riverbend and it is SO MUCH FUN! www.gonoodle.com