Recommendations for Virtual Implementation of Neuhaus Education Center Curriculum

Neuhaus Education Center understands that this school year brings forth a new set of challenges and feelings of apprehension. We continue to be awed by your dedication to provide your students with the tools and support they need and appreciate the efforts you have made to bring a comprehensive approach of literacy into your classrooms.

Neuhaus always recommends interactve lessons with students either face-to-face or using a virtual learning platform where students can engage with their teacher. Interaction is necessary to guide instruction and determine student success. Please note, that new learning through the curriculum is only possible with explicit, systematic instruction from an appropriately trained instructor.

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Below, we have provided recommendations for teaching in a virtual environment for consideration in conjunction with district/campus expectations and student needs. If you have questions or concerns, please send an email to info@neuhaus.org.

General Considerations for Remote Teaching

- Ensure explicit explanation of procedures and routines - children thrive on structure and predictability.
- Prepare teacher materials before instruction (lesson plans, manipulatives, decks, manuals, PowerPoint slides, visual aids, etc.).
- Consider what student materials need to be provided by the school and what can be used from home (for example, a student could use coins or small Legos as counters during phonological awareness activities). Consider the method of delivery of materials (email for students to download and print, families pick up packets at the school, teacher shares computer screen, etc.).
- Use gestures and visual aids to reinforce procedures and concepts.
- Continue to build personal relationships with students just as you would in face-to-face instruction- using their names, smiling and waving, making eye contact (look at the camera and not at their picture), and telling students about yourself are ways to bridge the virtual divide.
- Keep a quick pace during the instructional routine and avoid down time.
- Show compassion and patience with your colleagues, students, and families. Monitor students for personality changes and disengagement.
- Practice self-care and build a support network- this is new to everyone!

Virtual Teaching Using Interactive Platforms

Many virtual teaching platforms (such as Zoom, Teams, Canvas, Schoology, etc.) have capabilities and functions to increase student engagement. Plan for multiple opportunities for engagement and interaction during each lesson (teacher to student, student to teacher, and student to student), as it will not come as naturally in a virtual setting as it does in face-to-face instruction.

- Use polling features to increase engagement and check student understanding. In most platforms, these can be created before or during a session.
- Allow students to use participant response features such as "thumbs up" and "virtual clap."
- Enable breakout rooms for students to interact with their peers, practice reading fluently, or discuss text. The teacher has the capability of entering those breakout rooms.
- Use the whiteboard and annotation features to type and guide students though activities such as writing, coding words, and spelling. Students can annotate as well, which gives a quick check for understanding.
- Share the teacher screen to project materials (i.e. reading practices, one-page readers, or student spelling pages).
- Encourage students to use the chat box to ask or answer questions, or share "aha" moments during instruction. Teachers can designate a student to notify if there is a new comment.
- Call on certain groups of students to unmute and respond aloud at various points in the lesson. Vary the ways you group students (birth month, color of shirt, favorite type of ice cream... the possibilities are endless!)
- Track student participation daily with a student roster to ensure all students are included and interacting with the lessons.
- Remind students that it is okay to stand up when needed, but to situate their device so the teacher can continue to see their face. Encourage students to stretch and move!
- Encourage guardians to support students during instructional time.
- Consider limitations on instructional time.
- Break learning into smaller chunks and gradually lengthen instructional time to increase stamina, as children need regular breaks to process new information. For example, instead of a continuous 45-minute Language Enrichment lesson, you might do three 15-minute sessions with breaks in between.
- If your instructional schedule only allows a limited amount of time for structured literacy instruction, prioritize the heart of the lesson: review with decks, new learning, and reading practice.
- Utilize a virtual timer to share with students.
- Encourage students to send audio recordings of themselves reading (words, sentences, one-page readers, or passages) and provide specific feedback.
- Encourage parents to send screen shots or pictures of written student work, such as spelling words or written assignments.

Consider these possibilities for adapting each component of Neuhaus curriculum for virtual instruction.

- **Letter Recognition**: teacher manipulates large letters in a slide presentation; students have individual sets of plastic letters or letter cards; students hold up letters to the camera to demonstrate understanding; students submit a picture of completed activity.
- **Phonological Awareness**: teacher manipulate shapes in a slide presentation as counters; students hold up green/ red cards or show thumbs up/ thumbs down; students hold up fingers to the camera to demonstrate the number of words/ syllables/ phonemes; students submit pictures of completed sound boards, or hold the sound boards up to the camera.
- **Oral Language**: create slide shows of visuals to guide oral language discussions; teacher shares their screen of a Pinterest board with visuals for the unit; students upload videos of recorded oral responses (naming, describing, retelling, summarizing); teacher takes students on "virtual field trips" relating to the oral language unit (a virtual trip to the zoo during the animal unit, a virtual nature walk to search for colors and shapes, or a virtual peek into the teacher's kitchen when discussing healthy food).
- **Handwriting**: teacher presents a large letter for students to use as a model for skywriting or trace and copy; students trace the letter formation on their screen with their finger; students can practice stroke descriptions aloud; students submit pictures of trace and copy pages.
- **Decks**: teacher creates slide presentations of word decks (shuffle the slides as you would a deck); students can create their own sets of word cards to practice independently.
- **Multisensory Letter Introduction/ New Concept Introduction:** teacher uses a handheld whiteboard or a blank screen with annotation. Please note: introduction of new content through multisensory letter introduction or new concept introduction is ideally done in real time with student responses and teacher feedback.
- **Reading Practice**: teacher shares screen of reading practice page and students use the annotation tool to code or select words; teacher uses nonverbal gestures to cue students to prepare and read text; students submit recordings of the reading practice page for feedback from teacher; teachers provide written questions for the three reads of the reading practice for students to complete at home (circle the word with the most phonemes in row 1, underline all derivatives on the page, etc.); students submit picture of completed reading practice page; guardians initial or sign a reading practice page to indicate successful reading.
- **Spelling**: students write responses on blank paper or a whiteboard and hold up to the screen; students spell online using the annotation feature or the chat box.
- **Read Aloud**: utilize websites that have recordings of read alouds and play the video for students (websites including Epic and Learning Ally will allow your students to choose books on their reading level or use speech to text features); teacher enables breakout rooms for student discussions.
- **Comprehension**: students create 5W cards and card pyramids at home with index cards, blank paper or sticky notes and submit picture of completed assignment; student discussions with guiding questions in breakout groups; students can type answers into the chat box or use the annotation feature; use of polling feature to ask questions about the text with teacher feedback. Please note, introduction of new comprehension strategies is ideally done in real time with student responses and teacher feedback.
- **Mastery Checks**: Please note, Mastery Checks are ideally completed one-on-one in real time with students.

Recording Neuhaus Lessons

When recording Neuhaus lessons, only post to platforms with specific student access and not to public sites. Follow all state, district, and campus guidelines regarding privacy of students.

- When recording lessons with student participation, create opportunities for students to demonstrate understanding of their reading practice, new concept, spelling pattern, oral language, reading deck(s), etc. by allowing students to respond and hear the responses of other students.
- Record lessons with students so those who are viewing can hear student responses and teacher feedback. This alleviates the need for double planning and execution of Neuhaus lessons.
- If you are not allowed to have students appear in recordings, set up the camera so the teacher is the only one appearing in the video. Establish procedures for students to stay out of the field of filming when recording is in session.

Optimizing Technology

Visit with your technology team to ensure that your device's audio and video allow for optimum engagement of students.

- Use headphones with a microphone or a separate microphone to eliminate background noise when teaching or recording.
- Minimize distractions when recording. Shuffling papers, barking dogs, and static can be very distracting to students.
- Adjust the lighting in your room so students can clearly see the material and your face. If the camera is farther away, make sure anything you write on the board is large enough for students to see without getting frustrated.
- Stay within view of the camera when recording. Pacing back and forth can be distracting and cause students to lose view of you.
- Be aware of your voice level. Speak loud enough so students can hear you stress important information.
- Move students with louder voices away from the microphone so they do not interfere with remote learners.

Administrative Considerations

- Assign one teacher in the grade level to teach all virtual students so that planning and instruction is more individualized.
- Neuhaus lessons can be recorded live during classroom instruction and then sent to students virtually providing all privacy guidelines are followed.
- Aim for equitable access to technology for all students in the district.
- Provide opportunities for professional development for remote teaching as new ideas and strategies are being developed.
- Encourage your school community to share challenges and successes. Relationship building will help get each of you through difficult times.
- If your district has a system in place that is working well for all stakeholders, please share with Neuhaus so we can continue to support other educators.

Online Resources

Visit our website at (www.neuhaus.org)

- Stay at Home Learning Page (https://www.neuhaus.org/StayAtHomeLearning)
- Link to Quick Tips from Neuhaus YouTube videos (short videos from our instructional team aimed to help parents and educators; topics include letter recognition, oral language, phonological awareness, vocabulary, syllable types, comprehension of narrative and informational text, spelling, writing, Reading Readiness Deck, and Language Enrichment Initial Reading Deck).
- Mastery Checks
- Link to the Neuhaus Online Store (instructional materials and digital reading practices are available for purchase).
- Reading Teachers Network (https://www.neuhaus.org/educators/reading-teachers-network)
- Decks
- Consumables and Tools (numerous free resources including Handwriting materials, Hints from Hailey curriculum videos, Instructional Charts, Mastery Checks, Rapid Recognition Chart Generators, Scaffold Cards for Independent Reading, Stories for Inferencing, Story Map, Story Retelling Pictures, and Word Bingo Generator).
- Mastery Checks
- Neuhaus on Pinterest (@neuhausedctr) Boards with visual aids and links to online resources including Quick Tips from Neuhaus, Colors and Shapes of Language Units, Reading Readiness Oral Language Units, Digital Learning Resources, and Picture Writing Prompts (start at the bottom of the board and scroll up).
- Follow us on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter for class offerings and additional resources.
- AIM Institute: Teach Reading Virtually (https://sites.google.com/view/teach-reading-virtually/home)
- Florida Center for Reading Research (www.fcrr.org)
- University of Florida Learning Institute: Teaching Reading Online (https://education.ufl.edu/ufli/virtual-teaching/main/)
- Region 4 Education Service Center: Interactive Alphabet Arc (https://www.esc4.net/rla/interactives)

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