



Davis Head Start Virtual Learning Program Individualized Instruction Components

In order to meet the early childhood needs of families in our community during this time of Covid-19, the Davis Head Start Program is providing two virtual classroom options. These virtual classrooms allow our program to provide an engaging and high-quality learning environment for participating families with limited in-person participation in compliance with local Covid-19 regulations.

To create an engaging and high-quality virtual learning program, the Davis Head Start Virtual Team has recognized the need to support both children and their families in their own unique learning environments. This has led to the intentional development of processes that allow our teaching teams to individualize instruction for children and the families supporting them.

Our individualized instructional model consists of several components including daily virtual circle times, daily small group instructional videos, weekly take-home packets, and weekly face-to-face socialization opportunities. A more detailed description of each program component follows.

Establish a Virtual Learning Team

- When considering establishing a virtual learning environment, it has been helpful to establish a team who will create, implement, and monitor the effectiveness of virtual learning. This team should consist of members who fulfill the following roles: a specific teaching team assigned to the virtual classroom; an education specialist who supports the teachers as they create lesson plans and online learning opportunities; a team member who is in contact with families and children to ensure the virtual program is working for the family; a technology specialist who ensures the families in the virtual program and the teachers have access to technology for virtual classroom interactions.
- Our team also developed a mission statement supported by goals to establish a clear focus and standard to hold ourselves to.

Daily Virtual Circle Time (Synchronous Learning)

- Teaching teams divide assigned children into mixed ability groups. This provides opportunities for children to provide peer support and modeling for one another, along with their teachers, as they work together to create a sense of community and introduce learning goals at the beginning of each day.
- The teaching teams designate specific times for each circle time ie 9:00 a.m., 9:45 a.m., and 10:30 a.m., and work with the families to select the best time for them to participate. This is also how attendance is taken each day.
- If a family cannot attend virtually during one of those times, the teachers record the circle time and email it to families along with a specific and simple question about what was taught. The family and child can view the video at their convenience and respond to the question for attendance to be counted.

Daily Small Group Instructional Videos (Asynchronous Learning)

- Small group videos hone in on specific concepts being taught such as math, science, literacy, etc.
- These videos are recorded twice to provide a leveled activity for specific groups and is sent home to families along with hands-on materials in take-home packets. Packets are explained in the next section. These packets support the individualized video instruction and are also individualized for the ability level of the child.
- Families video and/or take pictures of their child completing activities and return them to their teachers via predetermined methods including the Teaching Strategies Gold Family App, email, the Loom App, and other options as they work best for families. Families also submit selected work samples completed by their child when they pick up their new at-home work packets. This allows the teachers to have a large amount of evidence as they monitor the progress, development, and future needs of each child.
- Feedback and parent/teacher communication is a vital part of our video instruction. The Loom App provides a video platform that has the option for parent/teacher comments directly below the video. This allows for immediate feedback for teachers and open communication between teaching teams and families. Feedback and parent/teacher communications for our videos shared via the Zoom App are communicated using email.

Weekly Take-home Packets

- Individualized take-home packets have a simplified lesson plan outline and hands-on materials that support the small group instruction videos. Packet materials are individualized according to each child's developmental level.
- Another area of individualization we have recognized a need for is family individualization. What are family members able to support and sustain in terms of working with their own children? Packets are filled with materials that support not only the child's abilities, but the families' requests for amount of work sent home, thus extending support to families.
- Families have two options for getting their individualized packets. They may pick the packet up from the school every other Friday (packets are prepared two weeks at a time) or the teaching team makes arrangements to deliver the packet to the family.
- As stated in the previous section, families also submit selected work samples completed by their child when they pick up their new at-home work packets. This allows the teachers to have a large amount of evidence as they monitor the progress, development, and future needs of each child.

Weekly Socialization Opportunities

- Small groups of children are invited into the classroom each Friday to participate in activities that promote social interactions and to provide opportunities for individualized and leveled instruction.
- These opportunities come both at the request of the teacher and/or at the request of the family. The teaching teams strive to meet the individual needs of the families and their children in these face-to-face settings.
- Please note socializations are held in compliance with current local Covid-19 regulations.

Surveys

- As a final measure of meeting the individual needs of our children and families, an anonymous survey is sent via email each month for the purpose of collecting information that supports our two main virtual program goals—family engagement and high-quality instruction. This creates a platform to consistently check in with families that aids the virtual team in making informed decisions about the future direction of our program.