As the HWCDSB continues to support faith formation and learning from home, we wish to hear your thoughts about your distance learning experiences. What has worked well, what have been the challenges, and what suggestions do you have for improvement?

June 2020

About This Exchange
We launched an exchange with the following question to discover different perspectives regarding distance education. The results will be used as we plan for the 2020-2021 school year and the return to school of students.

Exchange details

Q1  As the HWCDSB continues to support faith formation and learning from home, we wish to hear your thoughts about your distance learning experiences. What has worked well, what have been the challenges, and what suggestions do you have for improvement?

Does your (or your child’s) distance learning experience continue to support faith development through religion focused learning tasks and/or opportunities for prayer and reflection?

- Yes: 73% (1392)
- No: 12% (239)
- Unsure: 13% (242)
- I am not involved with distance learning: 2% (37)

Students and parents, please choose the statement that best describes your distance learning experience so far:

- I am/My child is not receiving enough work: 13% (251)
- I am/My child is receiving the right amount of work: 47% (877)
- I am/My child is receiving too much work: 16% (308)
- I do not know how much work my child is receiving: 2% (40)
- This question does not apply to me: 22% (403)

How would you describe your feelings towards distance learning thus far?

- Enjoyable: 8% (148)
- Stressful: 30% (560)
- Confusing: 5% (92)
- Challenging: 36% (671)
- Engaging: 5% (100)
- Boring: 6% (120)
- I am unsure: 3% (49)
- Other: 4% (78)
- This question does not apply to me: 3% (46)
Voices from Parents/Guardians

More continuity, more online platforms where the teachers actually come on screen and present a lesson.
To ensure all students are understanding the curriculum and receiving the supports they may need if having difficulties.

4.0 ★★★★★ (20.0)

I really do appreciate the way teachers have had to pivot and be flexible in their delivery of lessons. I’m sure it has been just as hard on them Thank you, educators, for all you do.

3.8 ★★★★★ (23.0)

Keeping a routine has been helpful. The challenge is keeping them motivated - so they are allowed to take a break and play outside whenever they want
This is important to manage stress for the children and for the parent. They learn how to manage their time too.

3.8 ★★★★★ (18.0)

I appreciate the efforts.
The longer there is no communication between student and teacher, the harder it gets.

4.1 ★★★★★ (10.0)

I am finding that a m-f schedule for the whole week that’s put out in advance works best. Rather then each day. We are able to plan and look ahead.
Its flexible. One day if I have alot of work to do I can have the possibility to skip a day and spend more time the next day.

3.7 ★★★★★ (22.0)

I like that teachers have provided the work and instruction at the beginning of the week and we are able to structure learning for what works for us.
I find it challenging to both meet expectations and limit screen time for our kids - which is something that is important to us.

3.7 ★★★★★ (16.0)

Lexia being extended is great!
The online program is designed for e-learning and engages children. Excellent program and whoever extended thank you

3.6 ★★★★★ (12.0)

So happy that our parish priest is prerecord school masses and uploading to you tube for the school to watch on the day the mass was to occur.
It is important because our faith is what makes us different from the public schools.

3.6 ★★★★★ (18.0)

My Gr.11 child is doing well, but she is also familiar with online learning having taken a course last summer. Her math teacher videos her lesson
and sends it out. This is something that is very helpful. Some resemblance to school.

3.5 ★★★★★ (13.0)

My student’s teachers have been very supportive. Without their help I would never have been able to have figured things out. They are being diligent.
I wish that the whole week’s work was laid out at once so we knew what we were up against - total - rather than day by day. It seems to fluctuate.

3.5 ★★★★★ (15.0)

A weekly schedule is helpful
It helps the parents split up the work and create a plan for the week

3.5 ★★★★★ (6.0)

video lessons have been helpful but are inconsistent between classes
video lessons provide direction and engagement with the students

3.5 ★★★★★ (15.0)
Voices from Students

Not every student is an auditory learner. There are visual and hands-on learners as well. It’s important to recognize this because we all learn differently. When teachers just post videos of them just speaking, it’s harder to learn that way.

4.0 ★★★★★ (23%)

I like doing it at our own pace. I enjoy not having to log in at a set time when it could be hard for our schedule. Videos would be helpful. It gives us flexibility around our routines. Not missing them because it is a bad time of day for us.

4.1 ★★★★★ (20%)

Most of the content is straightforward, but some information in the course should be explained better. A thorough explanation will help the student understand the content better.

3.6 ★★★★☆ (48%)

Difficult to communicate and have a thorough breakdown of the content. It’s important to understand what you are being taught.

3.8 ★★★★☆ (21%)

I feel I am not struggling to actually learn the content through distance learning as it is a lesson a day then quiz then move on the next day. There isn’t enough time to absorb the information. Next year students won’t even remember the lessons that they spent so much of their time doing.

4.0 ★★★★★ (15%)

I think that distance learning has been good so far. But there’s still challenges. For example starting new lessons can be challenging if you don’t understand or just learning new things in general not in real life but at home.

3.2 ★★★★☆ (14%)

Feedback & appealing to different levels of abilities. Providing more than “Nice” or “well done” as feedback would encourage student growth and appeal to different abilities.

4.3 ★★★★★ (27%)

Personally, I am working 50 hours a week, at a place where I interact with the public and am on my feet for 10 hours a day. I am trying my best to keep up with school work, but it’s just not realistic. I hand in all assignments but deadlines are impossible for me.

3.6 ★★★☆☆ (58%)

I don’t think we should have online school in the fall, this will effect my future and social life. Considering school is a big social circle for many you should enforce masks to wear everyday and have testing often. We cannot avoid the virus, but rather learn to live with it and try to be safe.

3.4 ★★★☆☆ (33%)

What’s challenging is that I’m struggling to do 3 hrs/day of work. I’m slowly losing myself. I’m willing to go into Insanity if more work is given. This is important because sometimes I want to take a break from all the work I’m doing and maybe a walk can calm me down but I will be dying inside.

3.0 ★★★☆☆ (18%)

Being almost completely out of routine, as well as missing the social aspect of learning, has been the most difficult for me as a student. My teachers teach differently now that we transitioned online. I personally enjoyed the classroom environment more than learning via Youtube videos.

3.8 ★★★★☆ (24%)

Handing in assessments has been very hard. Why don’t we just have one space that we had all the assessments in my class. I have like 10 it gets so confusing. Anyone else agree?

3.0 ★★★☆☆ (17%)

Besides it’s cons, distance learning has some pros. I’ve received higher marks so far than actual school.

3.6 ★★★☆☆ (30%)

Teachers should also try to post back marks as quick as they get them for students to see how they did so they know where they need to improve. This gives students a rough estimate of where they are if they should be asking for help if they are doing well where they might need to improve.

3.6 ★★★☆☆ (34%)