REMOTE LEARNING PROTOCOLS

1. Be on time.
Punctuality is especially important for online meetings, because we are working in the absence of normal checks to ensure that everyone can be gathered to start classes on time.

2. Wear proper attire.
Learning from the comfort of your home can make it feel desirable to dress down, but we want to make sure we are looking presentable and professional for each other, just like we do at school.

Unless you are ill, you will be expected to share your screen through video in order to engage in discussion, so please dress well. Sleepwear and anything that could be perceived as immodest should be avoided. If you have any questions about proper clothing, have a conversation with your parents/guardians. It's always better to be overdressed.

3. Choose a good location.
Video must be on for all classes. The most important thing is to have a clean and non-distracting background. If you must work in your bedroom, make sure your bed or decorations are not prominent in the background. If possible, set up your desk with materials ready and a neutral background.

Another factor is the possibility of background noise. If it is at all likely to be loud in your room, try to isolate yourself. If you have a headset it will make your situation much more flexible. As much as possible try to make sure nothing from your location becomes a distraction to others in the class.

4. No Snacking
Resist the urge to snack. Try to eat a snack in the time between your virtual classes. No one wants to see you eating while participating in a class discussion. Not only is it distracting to others, but can divert your attention as well. It is acceptable, however, to drink water throughout the class.

5. Mute yourself if you experience unavoidable background noise.
If for reasons beyond your control noise becomes a problem in what you thought was a quiet space, please click the icon that will mute your audio. Try to do this sooner rather than later, and either ask family members to move or else move yourself. Please remember if muted to unmute yourself when called on.

6. Be ready to take notes.
While teachers may have different instructions in different subjects and scenarios, online meetings aim to condense the time that everyone is present together. In many cases, it will be beneficial for you to be able to jot down a note on the instructions the teacher is giving or important information he or she is sharing with you. While you can always questions during the class, you can also ask later by email or another means of communication, or check the recording of the video, for clarification.

7. Give your full, focused attention.
It goes without saying that giving your focused attention is one of the best things you can do to learn efficiently. However, when on an online meeting it may be tempting to use another device or engage with someone or something else in your surroundings rather than the meeting that you are a participant in. Giving eye contact to the screen is a good way to show your instructor that you are attending, unless of course you are taking notes. Side conversations with other students via another means of communication are definitely off limits.

8. Participate fully.
Participating fully may look different depending on what your teacher is expecting of you at any particular moment. At times, your teacher will be leading the class in a discussion and this is when it is most important to speak up and share your thoughts. Of course, if your teacher is simply sharing instructions with you, then participating fully means paying close attention to be sure you understand, writing anything down you don't want to forget, and being ready to ask any questions you have about confusing parts when the teacher is done.

9. Pay Attention.
In this new environment, it might not be immediately apparent when your attention unintentionally slips away for a minute. Unless you are using your phone to take actual notes, set it aside and check it when the class has concluded. Mute your phone and disable notifications either way. Likewise, if you are using a laptop or desktop, mute or turn off notifications there, as well.

It may also be tempting to check your inbox or carry on a side conversation during class, but please do not do it. You might miss out on key information or an opportunity to give input. If you are using your webcam, use attentive body language: sit up straight, do not make big extraneous movements, and do not let your eyes wander too much.

10. Don't dominate the discussion.
A strategy that may be helpful is counting how many people have spoken since the last comment you shared. If that number seems to average in the 4-5 range or higher, you're probably doing fine, even if you're still sharing more than others. However, if your number is averaging in the 2-3 range, or even as low as 1, you should definitely hold your thought more and let others share before contributing again. Obviously, if the teacher or another student asks you a follow-up question right after your comment, that doesn't need to count, but the point still stands.

11. Do ask questions.
Connected to these thoughts on participation is the importance of asking questions during an online meeting. Your teachers are there to support and help you, and it makes it easier on everyone if you can ask a question while together in an online meeting. If you are experiencing some confusion or have a question about something, it's likely that someone else has that same question. Speak up!

12. Be more careful with your words.
So much of our communication is built on presence with a person, including our truly incredible ability to read facial expressions and other nonverbals. We can't always articulate what we are reading in another person's countenance, but it informs the tone and temperature of our interactions with others in ways we don't even realize. Start into online meetings with a mindset

of cautious learning. We're going to have to relearn some of our social interactions to avoid any misunderstandings and hurt feelings.

13. Review your notes and the recording later.
When possible, the teacher will share a recording of the lesson or notes with you and any student who missed the live meeting because of sickness or other circumstances. Keep that in mind as you interact during the meeting! But it's also always possible that the recording will fail or there will be a glitch in the technology.

14. Keep up with all assignments.
One of the challenges posed by online learning is the increased level of responsibility that students will have for their own learning. It can be tempting to put off assignments with multiple days before their due date. However, doing this once can have a spiral effect, where, because you are rushing to make up yesterday's assignments, you now have less time to work on today's assignments, meaning you are likely to get behind on what's due tomorrow as well. Online learning provides you with more flexibility in the structure of your school day, but you and your parent should actively design a school day for yourself. If you constantly have the temptation of video games or Netflix calling you away from your schoolwork and the burden of decision to stay the course, you will find it much harder to be productive. On the other hand, if you set up bright lines and rules for yourself to get work done before play time, you will likely find online learning an enjoyable experience.

15. Check your email (ItsLearning) regularly.
There are a few reasons that checking your email regularly will be important. First, your teachers will be emailing you assignments, instructions, and links to online meetings. While they will try to keep the schedule they have announced, it is always possible that a teacher could experience a disruption of some kind that requires them to reschedule. Checking your email ensures that you will receive these notices in a timely manner and be able to adjust your schedule for the day. It is also possible that a teacher will have to clarify something that was misunderstood or said incorrectly in an online meeting by email afterward. If you go merrily on your way with the assignment, without checking your email, you may encounter difficulties that could have been avoided.

16. Apologize for any accidental breech of etiquette.
As human beings we all make mistakes, and mistakes are even more likely when a new set of experiences and challenges interrupt our normal routine. Online learning is going to involve that sort of interruption, and no one is expected to be perfect. However, if you do break one of these etiquette guidelines—whether it's not being on time, loud background noise, dominating the discussion, or not being prepared—come right out and apologize sooner rather than later.