



# STAMFORDAMERICAN International School

## **Continuity of Learning Plan Middle School**

**COGNITA**

An inspiring world of education

Stamford American International School, Singapore  
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# Introduction

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The foundation of every school is the safety and wellbeing of our school community.

When safety considerations necessitate school closure, Stamford will work with students and parents to support Continuity of Learning (COL).

Most scenarios that involve school closure can appropriately be called crises. During a crisis situation, the wellbeing of the community is of primary importance. Well-being begins with physical safety, but also extends to social and emotional dimensions. Our intention is for the COL Plan to restore a level of calm and normalcy to an otherwise difficult situation. In addition, we seek to help students continue their learning throughout the disruption.

We recognize that a wide variety of circumstances could lead to school closure, so this plan is designed to be a flexible framework that could be adapted as necessary. In some cases a sudden event, such as hazardous level air quality, may necessitate closure with little warning. In other cases, such as a viral pandemic, the school may have time to prepare and communicate to students, parents, and teachers. Depending on the stability of the situation, there may be a period of time when the campus is closed but the COL Plan has not yet begun.

In all cases, the Superintendent will communicate with parents and teachers the start time for students to begin COL. Where possible, the staff will be given one or two days to prepare for the beginning of COL. This time is designed to help support teachers during the transition. In any case, students will begin COL on the date determined and communicated by the Superintendent.

The Superintendent will periodically send email updates to parents and staff apprising them of any pertinent information about when SAIS might reopen for regular classes. As with the decision to close campus, the decision to reopen school for regular classes will be made with close consultation with Cognita and Stamford leadership teams.

Stamford hopes that implementation of this Continuity of Learning Plan will never be necessary. However, in the event of a serious crisis or emergency, it is important that this plan describes our approach to COL: the channels we will use for communication; the Learning Management Systems (LMS) we will employ; the roles, responsibilities, and expectations SAIS has for faculty, parents, and students; guidelines for how parents/guardians can support their children's learning; and a host of other priorities and considerations tailored to make the best of challenging circumstances.

This plan is based in part on the work and experience of our colleagues at other Cognita Asia schools, as well as the Global Online Academy, International School of Kuala Lumpur, Hong Kong International School, American School in Japan, Shanghai American School, International School of Beijing, and Western Academy of Beijing. Our thanks goes to all our colleagues around the world for their help and support.

# Stamford Values



We choose the term Continuity of Learning intentionally, rather than online, virtual, or distance learning. We believe that finding a balance between online and offline learning is important in both normal and unusual circumstances. We also acknowledge that Stamford is not designed as a distance learning school, but when necessary we will use distance learning to provide continuity for our students.

During difficult circumstances, we turn to our core values for guidance.

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <p><b>Compassion</b></p> <p>We seek to empathize with and care for one another, especially in difficult circumstances. We know that the biggest challenges may be emotional rather than logistical, and we support each other as a community.</p> | <p><b>Integrity</b></p> <p>We believe it is important to communicate with students, parents and staff honestly and with transparency. At times when life is disrupted and people may be fearful, trust is essential.</p>                      |
| <p><b>Courage</b></p> <p>We recognize that difficult times require us all to be courageous through actions both big and small. This may simply be the act of restoring a sense of calm and normalcy throughout the community.</p>                 | <p><b>Ingenuity</b></p> <p>When faced with new challenges, we rely on our resilience, resourcefulness, and ingenuity to solve challenges. During crises we do not seek to try out the latest innovation, but we find ways to be adaptive.</p> |

# Stamford Learning

At Stamford we believe that every day brings valuable opportunities for learning. This is reflected in our principles and practices document for high quality learning which states:

## **Learning: Everyone, everyday, everywhere**

We recognize that Continuity of Learning is different from the normal classroom routine. In particular, teachers, students and parents will need to consider how to support quality learning environments and purposeful communication & collaboration - two of our principles of high quality learning.

We are also confident that Continuity of Learning can bring new opportunities for enriched and engaged learning through increasing empowerment of students - one pillar of our Stamford mission. As such, we will approach Continuity of Learning with optimism and will work together to design high quality learning and assessment opportunities.

| High Quality Learning                              | Continuity of Learning Consideration   |
|--|--|
| Learner-centered                                   | <i>How might I continue to use my knowledge and understanding of my students to plan for learning?<br/>How will I continue to connect with my students one-on-one to support their wellbeing and learning?<br/>How will I work with parents to support student wellbeing and learning?</i> |
| Purposeful communication & collaboration           | <i>How will I plan for learning that contains numerous opportunities to connect and communicate in partners, small groups and as a whole learning community (class)?</i>   |
| Quality learning environment                       | <i>How might I support parents &amp; students to design quality home-learning environments?<br/>Giving safety considerations, how will I encourage students to use a variety of learning environments to enrich their learning (outdoors, etc.)?</i>                                       |
| Personalizing learning                             | <i>How might I empower learners to develop agency and use their own interests and strengths to drive their learning?</i>   |
| Clear & modeled expectations                       | <i>How might I ensure that I clearly model the learning outcomes and quality expectations on tasks to support student excellence and success?</i>  |
| Culturally and linguistically responsive practice  | <i>How might I engage students in using their cultural and linguistic attributes to enrich their learning at this time? How will I scaffold language to support student success?</i>   |
| Teaching for understanding, application & transfer | <i>What are the most important understandings and skills for application and transfer at this time?</i>  |
| Metacognition                                      | <i>How might I encourage students to reflect on their learning and agency as a learner?</i>  |
| Feedback   | <i>How will I empower further learning through frequent, actionable feedback?<br/>How will I provide avenues for students/parents to feed back about their experience?</i>   |

# Guidelines for Parents

## Compassion

- **Check in regularly on your child's well-being and learning** - At the beginning and end of each day, check in with your child on how he or she is doing. This will likely be a stressful time for everyone, so it is important for kids to know that we care and that we notice. Also help your child prepare for the classes or activities for the day by asking them about their learning targets, activities for the day, schedule, and what sorts of resources and support they might need. Consider using a daily planner, like [this one developed](#) by educators at ISB Beijing.
- **Allow your child to have free time as well as school time** - Those who have gone through a COL experience say that oftentimes kids end up being overscheduled. There is a temptation to try to create a sense of order by planning out every minute of the day. Allowing kids time to play and to do things they simply enjoy is an important part of maintaining continuity.
- **Be kind to yourself as well as your kids** - Most parents are not trained educators, and are simply doing the best they can in a difficult situation. Do your best to take care of yourself as well as your children, keep a positive outlook, and recognize that the situation is temporary.

## Integrity

- **Establish a clear schedule and routine** - At school, teachers work with students in the beginning of the year to establish clear expectations, schedules, and routines. During Continuity of Learning, students should continue to wake up early enough to begin their learning at the normal school start time. They should be sure to change out of pajamas and into school appropriate clothing. It is important for parents to ensure every child has a typed or handwritten schedule clearly on display on the wall of the space the child does their daily school work.
- **Designate a quiet, calm learning space** - Depending on the situation this can be difficult, especially if there are adults working from home or multiple kids in the house. Consider having your kids use noise canceling headphones if the space becomes too noisy. Children should work in a public space like a living room, where adults can keep an eye on them, rather than by themselves in their bedrooms.
- **Watch for teacher communications** - Without teachers being physically present, it is critical that parents and older children pay active attention to teacher communications. Be aware of the LMS system (Seesaw, Unified Classroom) that teachers are using. Check your email for individual communications. If you need to message a teacher, you are encouraged to do so but be sure that your communication is succinct and self-aware. Teachers may be receiving messages from dozens, if not hundreds, of other parents as well.

## Courage

- **Help your child balance time online** - Part of the reason that Stamford has chosen the term Continuity of Learning rather than eLearning or Online Learning is because we want kids to have a balance of online and offline activities. This is particularly important to support student well-being. [Take a look at these guidelines](#) developed by the Western Academy of Beijing.
- **Encourage your child to use social media wisely** - Social media and virtual play dates can help kids continue to stay connected with their friends, but they can also create challenges and distractions. Consider tools like [Cold Turkey](#) to help limit distracting sites. Review the [Common Sense Media Family Contracts](#) with your children to help create agreements on digital usage.
- **Model and support exercise and physical activity** - Finding creative ways to keep physically active is particularly important in situations where students are not able to leave their homes. Use body break tools like [GoNoodle](#), [Seven Minute Workout](#), or [MindYeti](#) to break up the day and have a fun exercise or mindfulness break with your kids.

## Ingenuity

- **Set up your home environment to support creative play** - If kids are forced to stay home all day, you can help them stay mentally active by setting up creative materials and [supporting creative play](#). At school students have access to innovative spaces like our J3 Makerspace, but at home there are still lots of activities you can do with kids in the [Early Years](#), [Lower ES](#), or [Upper ES](#).
- **Seek feedback on what's working and what isn't** - Ask your children what they need in order to be successful throughout Continuity of Learning. By making success a group effort you help support your children's ability to reflect on their own learning, a key skill.
- **Reach out to other parents to find creative solutions to challenges** - You are not in this alone. Draw on the support of the community and look for what works for you and your kids, which may or may not be the same as what works for others. We want our kids to ask for help when they need it, so it is important for us to do so as well.

# Middle School

## Priorities and Considerations

- After receiving initial notice from the Superintendent about school closure, families will receive an email from the Middle School Principal with division-specific information.
- The primary tools for asynchronous communication between teachers and families will be Unified Classroom, email and Google Hangouts. Google Meets will be used for synchronous video chat.
- Students will be notified of their classwork and the link for the Google Meet through Unified Classroom Assignments.
- Student schedules should roughly reflect their normal school schedule for the day: learning from 8:30 until 3:30 with roughly one hour per class.
- At the start of Advisory, students will enter a Google Hangout chat set up by their teacher. This chat will allow the teacher to take attendance for the day.
- For each lesson, students are expected to complete a task as outlined in the lesson assignment and submit their task as directed by 4pm on day A2 and B2. If they have questions or need help they should ask the teacher.
- Teachers will reply promptly to emails and messages sent within normal school hours.

## Approximate Time Frames for Learning

| All MS Students (Grades 6-8)                                    |   |
|---|---|
| Days A1 and B1<br>45 - 60 minutes per class (4 classes per day) | Each class starts with a live check in via Google Meets that may vary in length depending on the lesson.  |
| Days A2 and B2<br>45 - 60 minutes per class (4 classes per day) | After brief check in sessions for each class, students engage in independent, asynchronous learning activities based on instructions from the previous day. They can consult with their teachers as needed during office hours. |
| Self-Directed learning  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reading for pleasure</li><li>• Being physically active</li><li>• Exploring personal interests</li></ul>   |
| Links and Resources   | <a href="#">MS Student Tech Toolkit</a>   |

## Daily Schedule

| Time           | Day A-1   | Day A-2   | Day B-1                                      | Day B-2   |
|----------------|---|---|--|---|
|                | Synchronous:<br>Start with On-screen classes  | Mostly Asynchronous:<br>Brief synchronous class meetings,<br>Mostly teacher office hours        | Synchronous:<br>Start with On-screen classes | Mostly Asynchronous:<br>Brief synchronous class meetings,<br>Mostly teacher office hours        |
| 8:30-9:00 am   | Advisory  | Advisory - synchronous  | Advisory                                     | Advisory - synchronous  |
| 9:00-9:15 am   | Break   | Break   | Break  | Break   |
| 9:15-10:15 am  | Block A1  | Check in Time A Day<br>Brief Synchronous Sessions<br>A1 9:15<br>A2 9:45<br>A3 10:15<br>A4 10:45 | Block B1                                     | Check in Time B Day<br>Brief Synchronous Sessions<br>B1 9:15<br>B2 9:45<br>B3 10:15<br>B4 10:45 |
| 10:15-10:30 am | Break   |   | Break  |   |
| 10:30-11:30 am | Block A2  |   | Block B2                                     |   |
| 11:30-1:00 pm  | Lunch   | Lunch   | Lunch  | Lunch   |
| 1:00-2:00 pm   | Block A3  | Office Hours for A Day<br><br>Lang Acquisition/<br>English+SSD/<br>Arts/I&S+EALs                | Block B3                                     | Office Hours for B Day<br><br>PHE/Math+SSD<br>Science/Design                                    |
| 2:00-2:15 pm   | Break   |   | Break  |   |
| 2:15-3:15 pm   | Block A4  | Office Hours for A Day<br><br>PHE/Math+SSD<br>Science/Design                                    | Block B4                                     | Office Hours for B Day<br><br>Lang Acquisition<br>/English+SSD/<br>Arts/I&S+EALs                |
| 4:00pm         |   | Evidence of learning for periods A1-A4 due  |  | Evidence of learning for periods B1-B4 due  |
| 3:30-4:00      | Faculty Meeting time:<br>Monday - Faculty Check Ins<br>Tuesday - Grade Level C Team check ins |   |  |   |

### Explanation of terms used in the Daily Schedule:

- **Synchronous:** Teachers and students use this time for face-to-face using Google Meets (GM).
- **Asynchronous:** Students use time to work individually on tasks. Teachers are available on GM to help students during the indicated times.
- **Advisory:** Advisors meet synchronously every day via GM with students to take attendance (in Unified Classroom) and check in with students emotionally, help to structure their day, facilitate time management, and provide support to students at this time.
- **Office Hours:** Teachers will be available to interact with students, answer emails, and set GM meetings. In other words teachers will be readily available online.
- **Breaks and Lunch:** These are both teacher and student breaks and lunch time

### Day A/B Calendar

Middle School [A/B DAY SCHEDULE FOR CONTINUITY OF LEARNING PLAN](#)