Classroom/Virtual Learning in the Time of Technology

By Barbara Lark, Parent Outreach Facilitator, Turner Middle School and Lithia Springs Elementary School

It’s a proven fact that every child has unique learning abilities. These learning abilities may include Visual (spatial), Aural (auditory), Verbal (linguistic) and or Physical (kinesthetic). With a classroom full of students, in person and or online, it can be challenging for educators to adjust learning plans to fit every student. In today’s world, educators can face these challenges with the ease of technology in the classroom virtually as well as face to face. Fortunately, technology in the classroom can help educators modify lesson plans to fit the needs of their students.

Technology is interactive, and students learn by doing, engaging, researching, and with educators providing feedback. When technology is added to lesson plans, students become more interested in the subject matter they are learning. Technology can provide different opportunities to make learning more fun and enjoyable in terms of teaching the same things in new ways (https://www.teachhub.com/teacher-resources/). Furthermore, technology can encourage students to become a more active participant in their learning process.

Educators ensure students are learning the theory of technology. Technology-focused activities mostly require critical-thinking and problem-solving skills. Educators work as facilitators, providing constant feedback, enabling students to achieve deeper levels of understanding (https://www.teachhub.com/teacher-resources/).

Adults as well as students use technology tools and programs as an essential part of their educational, personal and professional lives. However, students need to learn how to properly and responsibly communicate via text, audio and video. Using educational apps and social media platforms provides allowing interaction, motivation and engagement in class for both educators and students. Social networking can be a great way for students to expand their personal learning network and to discover resources when used appropriately (https://www.teachhub.com/teacher-resources/). Here are some helpful websites parents can use to help students navigate through a technology world:

- Visit the ParentTech Web site to learn more about parenting in the digital age.
- The National Parent Teacher Association has initiatives in educational technology signed to help parents be involved in their schools' technology activities.
- How Can I Be Involved in My Child's Education by Lynn Liontos is an article that has many suggestions for parents wishing to become more involved in the education of their children.
- Discovery Channel Online is an added resource to the television programming on the Discovery Channel, The Learning Channel, and Animal Planet. The site also has great science and history resources and games.
Multi-Tiered System of Supports: A Family Guide to Understanding Multi-Tiered System of Supports
By Dr. Kacia Thompson, District MTSS/504 Coordinator, Douglas County School System

Did you know that our school system is addressing all the needs of your child? It is through the Multi-Tiered System of Supports also known as MTSS.

So what exactly is MTSS?
A Multi-tiered System of Supports (MTSS) is a “tiered system of supports that integrates assessment and intervention within a school-wide, multi-level prevention system to maximize student achievement and reduce behavioral problems. MTSS promotes systems alignment to increase efficiency and effectiveness of resources” (Adopted from National Center on Response to Intervention, 2010)

Watch this MTSS Video: How Does it Work?

Family Guide and Resources:
A Family Guide to Understanding MTSS (English)  A Family Guide to Understanding MTSS (Spanish)  Key MTSS Terms

More Questions?
If you have any additional questions, please start with your child’s school. Once you contact the school, be sure to work with the MTSS/504 School Coordinator for further help and support. The school coordinator will guide you through the process that is appropriate for your child.

Please be prepared to share as much information as possible with your child’s school. Here’s a few examples of what to share.

- Medical history
- Past school supports, accommodations, and interventions
- Psychological Report
- Therapist or Counselor Notes

Keep in mind that all information that you share is confidential.

Invitation to a Meeting
The school will invite you to a meeting with a team of knowledgeable people (i.e., psychologist, social worker, counselor, PEC Specialist Educational Evaluator, and teacher). The purpose of this meeting will be to determine how best to support your child. You will have the opportunity to share your concerns, suggestions, ideas, and any other information.

Next Steps:
Whatever decisions are made, you will be given copies of the minutes and information. Any supports, accommodations, or interventions will be based on what your child needs. The school will collect data and monitor his/her progress. Stay in constant communication with the teachers to ensure a successful outcome for your child. Remember, it takes a village to raise a child, and we need you!

However, If you need additional support, then you can call the district office.
I will be happy to assist you and the school. It is my goal to work on whatever concerns or suggestions you may have.

District Contact:  Dr. Kacia F. Thompson
District MTSS/504 Coordinator
kacia.thompson@dcssga.org
(770) 651-2329

JOB OPPORTUNITIES
IN DOUGLAS COUNTY
Are you looking for work in Douglas County? Click here to go to DouglasJobs.com for local companies who are now hiring!
Resources for Parents of English Learners!

The Douglas County School System has posted new resources for parents of English Learners on our website. Our goal is to provide effective outreach to parents of our English Learners and to assist them in being involved in their child’s education. Please visit our website here or scan this QR code to access the website with the resources listed.

Currently, all ESOL students kindergarten through 12th grade are taking their English language proficiency test known as the ACCESS for ELLs test. This test is given yearly to measure the progress of each English Language Learner’s ability to understand and use English in the school setting. Test results will be returned to your child’s school in late spring. Those results will be shared with parents, teachers, and other school district personnel to determine the best plan for instruction and support for your child. If you have questions about testing, please contact your child’s ESOL teacher.

Would you like to receive messages from the Douglas County School System in another language?

Please follow the easy steps below to change your language preference:

1. Log into Parent Portal: https://campus.douglas.k12.ga.us/campus/portal/parents/douglas.jsp
2. Click on Person Icon in the right hand corner of the screen
3. Click on Settings
4. Click on Contact Preferences
5. Choose your Preferred Language from the options.
6. Save
7. If your Preferred Language is not one of the options, please email parent@dcssga.org.
8. If no language is chosen, the default language is English.
9. If you need assistance, please contact someone in the office at your school.

ESOL students in Douglas County have access to some very helpful computer programs. Lexia Core5 for Kindergarten-Fifth Grade students and Lexia PowerUp for middle school and high school students is a great resource to help your child build reading, listening, and comprehension skills. Your child can use Lexia at home. There is a link on the DCSS portal, and your child should already know the correct username and password. (If not, contact your child’s ESOL teacher.) When students log into the program, they see their goal for the week and how many minutes they have spent working on Lexia so far. Please encourage your child to meet the goal for the week! Students can also use Flocabulary.com to build vocabulary! Your child’s ESOL teacher may have assigned each student a username and password for Flocabulary. Your child can watch Flocabulary videos without a username and password. Just go to Flocabulary.com and click lessons at the top of the screen. Your child can choose a vocabulary video about math, language arts, science, or social studies! Both Lexia and Flocabulary help students improve their English skills.
Classroom/Virtual Learning in the Time of Technology - continued from page 1

◊ The Public Broadcasting Service Web site includes information on their programing as well as sources for teachers and links to information on the arts, technology, history, and science.
◊ Ask Dr. Math is a Math Forum Project that provides homework help. It is maintained by Swarthmore College.
◊ Bilingual Books for Kids is a commercial site that distributes materials written with Spanish and English appearing side by side.
◊ Think College Early is a Web site sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education that provides young adolescents with online resources for examining their choices in preparing for an occupation.
◊ TedEd offers a variation of TED Talks with shorter, often-animated clips of subjects such as science, technology, social studies, literature, language, art, health, psychology, and business and economics. With communities and clubs, the site also makes it effortless for collaboration.
◊ Academia For academics whose main goal is to share research papers, Academia.edu draws a crowd of over five million visitors. Academics can monitor the effect of their research and keep tabs on the research of the other academics that they follow. It’s a great tool for anyone needing data and information on various subjects and interests.

Studies has shown the impact of technology. The term "technology integration" covers so many varied tools and practices; there are many ways technology can become an integral part of the learning process. The willingness to embrace "technology integration" is instrumental in the successful process of learning through the means of technology via in person and or virtually. Technology is continuously, and swiftly, evolving. It is an ongoing process and demands continual learning.

“Technology is just a tool. In terms of getting the kids working together and motivating them, the teacher is most important.” - Bill Gates

References:
How to use Tablets, Educational Apps and Social Media in your Classroom https://www.teacheracademy.eu/course/how-to-use-tablets-apps-social-media-classroom/
K-12 Resources By Teachers, For Teachers Provided by the K-12 Teachers Alliance https://www.teachhub.com/teacher-resources/

ATTENTION ALL STUDENTS:
Spring 2021 Georgia Milestones Testing Calendars

For more information on the upcoming Georgia Milestones testing, scan here to visit the Douglas County School System Testing Calendars.

For more information about the Georgia Milestones Assessment System on Georgia Department of Education website, please visit the following link: https://goo.gl/QwmTHB
UPCOMING WORKSHOPS
Parents of children being served with Title I funds may attend any workshop, regardless of location. Please note: As of the publishing date of this newsletter, all parent meetings and workshops will be virtual. For additional meeting information, please contact your child’s school at the listed phone numbers below.

Annette Winn Elementary School Parent Resource Center
3536 Bankhead Highway, Lithia Springs, GA 30122
(770) 651-3100 awes.dcssga.org

Academic Parent Teacher Teams Meeting 3 (VIRTUAL)
Monday, March 29 and Tuesday, March 30, 2021 at 6:00 PM
Grades K through 5 will meet with the parents of their child’s homeroom to discuss data based on foundational skills they have chosen. They will then create and practice activities to work with their children at home and discuss goals for APTT meeting #3.

Beulah Elementary School Parent Resource Center
1150 Burnt Hickory Road, Douglasville, GA 30134
(770) 651-3300 bees.dcssga.org

Next parent workshop coming soon!
Visit the Parent Resource Center or see the next newsletter for more information.

Burnett Elementary School Parent Resource Center
8277 Connally Drive, Douglasville, GA 30134
(770) 651-3500 bues.dcssga.org

Next parent workshop coming soon!
Visit the Parent Resource Center or see the next newsletter for more information.

Chestnut Log Middle School Parent Resource Center
2544 Pope Road, Douglasville, GA 30135
(770) 651-5100 clms.dcssga.org

International Night (VIRTUAL)
Tuesday, March 16, 2021 at 6:00 PM
International night will embody the diverse cultures that make up our school community. We will host break out sessions: Country traditional dress, artifacts, sports and games, history, statistics and trivia, famous citizens, and food and drink. We will also have families prepare food samples that represent their cultural heritage and our community is invited to view all the amazing cuisine virtually.

Eastside Elementary School Parent Resource Center
8266 Connally Drive, Douglasville, GA 30134
(770) 651-3800 eses.dcssga.org

Next parent workshop coming soon!
Visit the Parent Resource Center or see the next newsletter for more information.

Factory Shoals Elementary School Parent Resource Center
2375 Mount Vernon Road, Lithia Springs, GA 30122
(770) 651-3900 fses.dcssga.org

Family Science (VIRTUAL)
Thursday, March 18, 2021 at 6:00 PM
Teachers will stimulate the imagination and interest in Science through activities that use resources that are inexpensive and readily available.

Lithia Springs Elementary School Parent Resource Center
6946 Florence Drive, Lithia Springs, GA 30122
(770) 651-4100 lses.dcssga.org

Next parent workshop coming soon!
Visit the Parent Resource Center or see the next newsletter for more information.

North Douglas Elementary School Parent Resource Center
1630 Dorris Road, Douglasville, GA 30134
(770) 651-4800 ndes.dcssga.org

Data Talk (VIRTUAL)
Thursday, March 4, 2021 at 6:00 PM
Families will come to an informational session on how to move the school forward with active community and parent involvement. We will discuss Assessment Data and how it will be used to move our school forward in the most positive way for our scholars.

Stewart Middle School Parent Resource Center
8138 Malone Street, Douglasville, GA 30134
(770) 651-5400 sms.dcssga.org

Next parent workshop coming soon!
Visit the Parent Resource Center or see the next newsletter for more information.

Sweetwater Elementary School Parent Resource Center
2505 East County Line Road, Lithia Springs, GA 30122
(770) 651-4600 swes.dcssga.org

Testing Tips (VIRTUAL)
Tuesday, March 13, 2021 at 9:00 AM and 6:00 PM
Hear from school staff about how to support and prepare your child for the upcoming Georgia Milestones assessment. Learn the importance of these scores. We will also cover testing for GKIDS and CDAs.

Turner Middle School Parent Resource Center
7101 Turner Drive, Lithia Springs, GA 30122
(770) 651-5500 tms.dcssga.org

Next parent workshop coming soon!
Visit the Parent Resource Center or see the next newsletter for more information.

COVID-19 Parental Resources Kit
Click here for new COVID-19 resources to ensure your child’s social, emotional and mental wellbeing. Provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Douglas County School System - Parent Post