Virtual Learning environments with daily instructional lessons are designed to be robust and intense so that appropriate learning targets are achieved. We offer this option in response to the issues that surround our communities today for families to make decisions that are best for their situation.

- Virtual learning is a learning experience that is enhanced through utilizing computers and/or the internet both outside and inside the facilities of the educational organization. The instruction takes place in an online environment. The teaching activities are carried out online whereby the teacher and learners are physically separated. Each student will be assigned a Student Support Specialist who is a certified, employee of Hardeman County Schools. This teacher will support students with the program and answer questions about instruction when needed.

- The student must be a resident of Hardeman County and be enrolled in their zoned school in order to participate in HCS Virtual Learning.

- It will be the responsibility of the family to provide internet connectivity or access. Students who participate in Virtual Learning have the option of using their own laptop or desktop or receive a Chromebook from the district for a fee of $30.

- Parents and students must attend training on the usage of the virtual learning platform. A signed Acceptable Use Policy and a device agreement must be submitted before any school devices will be issued. General handbook information is available on school websites including federal compliance notices.

- Virtual learning students are considered the same as those who attend traditional, brick and mortar classrooms. The school calendar will be the same for all students.

- Student Support Specialists are available 8:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. to assist students throughout the school day or within the standard 24 hour turn around. Homework Hotline support will be available from 4 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

- Daily attendance is required on-line and students must be logged into the platform by 9:00 a.m. Virtual learning students are required to work each day and attendance will be counted. These students are considered part of the school like those in the buildings. There is flexibility in the course work you choose to complete that day, but daily participation is required. Parent/guardian is expected to provide a note of absence to the assigned Student Support Specialist when students do not sign in. The rules that apply to their assigned school will apply to virtual as well.

- Time management and organization is critical for successful virtual learning. Students must be able to know how to access information and ask for assistance when needed.
• Students in grades K-1 will most likely need a parent available at all times to effectively complete virtual learning. Foundational learning in these grades is often hands-on. Parents of Kindergarten and First Graders will need to supplement many activities and teach skills that a computer just cannot do. In addition, parents of these students will be required to communicate with the Student Support Specialist weekly regarding progress.

• Communication and support will be an important part of the virtual learning experience. Students will be required to connect with their Student Support Specialists regularly via e-mail, phone calls, Google Meet, etc.

• Participation in virtual learning is for a minimum of one semester. Students must be at an acceptable point (at least half course completion) in their virtual learning before returning to the traditional school building. Families should connect with the Student Support Specialist prior to December 1 if they plan on returning to school so that a transition plan can be developed.

• Grading will be similar to the traditional classroom. Grades will be taken weekly by a certified teacher and a report card will be issued each nine weeks. Students are expected to stay on pace with assignments and courses as determined by a plan. There will be checkpoints where students need to be in the progression of the program. Accountability meetings on campus with the parent/guardian and student will be required if the student is not completing the coursework at an acceptable pace. The learning platforms are grade level based. Students who struggle with grade level work or reading will need extra support at home. Digital learning cannot replace the individualized differentiation that a teacher can provide on-site.

• Academic requirements:
  o K – 1: Reading (plus foundational skills) and math + physical education
  o 2 – 3: Reading, math, science, and social studies + physical education and one auxiliary
  o 4 – 5: Reading, math, science, and social studies + physical education and auxiliary and one class of choice
  o 6 – 8: Reading, math, science, and social studies + physical education and a related arts
  o 9 – 12: Based on the needs of individual schedule for graduation track (Honors and Dual Credit available). Credit recovery is available but will be in addition to the required virtual curriculum.
  o ** All students in grades 1-12 will be required to complete a keyboarding course the first semester they are enrolled.

• Students will exit the virtual learning program with a regular high school diploma at the end of their high school career. Credits will be aligned with the state requirements. High school guidance counselors will work with these students to create plans and schedules to stay on track. Students in grades 9-12 must complete four of the last seven semesters preceding the final semester of their senior year in traditional classrooms to qualify for valedictorian or salutatorian at the end of their senior year.

• Students who participate in virtual learning may participate in sports and extracurricular activities at their assigned school, if, they meet academic and other
eligibility qualifications. Parents will need to contact their assigned school for extracurricular information.

- District and state level testing will be required. Virtual students will be required to complete checkpoint assessments, diagnostics, benchmarks, and state tests on campus at a designated time and location. There are approximately 3-4 per semester. Parents are responsible for transportation to the campus.
- There may be activities/lessons that require something to be printed, completed, and uploaded. File uploads via a scanner or a picture from a phone that can be uploaded to the platform should be sufficient. When possible, the School Support Specialist can assist with this, however, it will be the responsibility of the family to obtain access.
- Special circumstances will be evaluated on an individual basis.
- This requires a strong commitment, time management, and a strong academic base. Students who need additional support in the classroom will likely need support from both a Student Support Specialist and from someone at home that can help hands-on.
- These points serve as guidelines. As COVOD-19 continues to alter our world quickly, we reserve the right to change or alter the virtual learning program as needed.