
BUXTON SCHOOL

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Buxton Distance Learning FAQs:

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Scheduling

- When will Buxton’s Spring classes start?

Most classes will start on April 6th. We are phasing into this process by offering one set of classes for the first few weeks, and adding the rest on April 20th. (We will provide you with a schedule of which classes are starting when.) We will be using a combination of “live” classes—usually via Zoom—and learning opportunities that you can do/use on your own time. Most classes will have one or two live sessions a week, plus work/assignments for you to do whenever it is convenient for you and your family to schedule your work.

- How long will remote classes continue? Is there a chance that we will return to the Buxton campus?

For now, the state of Massachusetts has declared that we must continue distance learning until at least May 4th. At the moment, we are still holding out hope that we can recommence on campus at some point this spring. We will keep you updated as our thinking evolves.

- Will the date for graduation/commencement be changed or remain the same?

We do not know the answer to this yet. If we are able to come back to campus, we might decide to move graduation to June 20th. But that is still very much up in the air.

- Will all classes for the Spring Term still be conducted in this distance format?

Yes! It will not surprise you to hear that every one of your teachers is coming up with inventive and inspiring ways to teach all of your classes. The art faculty have creative plans for teaching art and music from a distance, and your academic teachers are really

embracing this challenge and devising cool ways to make their classes work even though we are scattered.

- How can you conduct hands-on classes in a distance format?

Again, the faculty are working on this. There will be video demos, live sessions, and other ways we are still researching to give you as rich and immediate an experience as possible.

- When will each class meet? What will the schedule of classes be?

We have developed a schedule that starts later in the day to accommodate all time zones. That schedule consists of one or two sessions a week for each class. Individual teachers will determine how each of those blocks is used: sometimes for a live teaching session, sometimes for students to check in on their progress or get help from their teacher, sometimes to work independently and report back. Once we get rolling, it will be important for you to keep track of the published schedule and what each teacher tells you about each block on that schedule.

- When will report conferences happen?

We will start having report conferences either later this week (starting around April 1st or 2nd) or the week of April 6th. If you haven't done so, please finish your self-evaluation and share it with Lindsey (lindsey.wyatt@buxtonschool.org)! The report conferences will be done either by Zoom, FaceTime, Google Hangout, or telephone.

Teaching/Learning

- How will students learn in this distance format?

→ Each teacher will post their assignments and expectations weekly on their Google Classrooms, so that you can plan your time in a way that works with and for your family. In general, assignments will be due weekly as well. Some of your schoolwork will feel very familiar: reading books, discussing them, writing responses, etc. Some of your schoolwork will be new and evolving: using a shared electronic whiteboard, watching video demonstrations, creating electronic content collaboratively, and more.

→ You will have one or two live sessions a week, scheduled to accommodate different time zones. Those live sessions may be used differently by different teachers, so stay tuned for their more detailed instructions.

→ We will be using a combination of Zoom, Google Classroom, email, and some other platforms TBD.

- Where should students look to receive communications from Buxton and their teachers?

Students should monitor their Gmail address closely—the one that they used to enroll in their classes on Google Classroom. Since classwork and assignments will be happening primarily in Google Classroom and Google applications, a student's Gmail will be the main place where most communications come. Students should also monitor their phone to see if their teachers or advisor reach out to them by text or phone as well. Franny will be sending out frequent emails with news and updates.

- What kinds of technology does a student need to participate in the remote classes?

→ Teachers are mindful of the potential constraints families are experiencing right now, so we are trying to provide as many teaching and learning opportunities that don't depend on technology as possible.

→ That said, students will need access to a computer and the internet. We will be using a combination of Zoom, Google Classroom, and, potentially, a few other apps, to conduct our classes. (If you are having trouble accessing the technology, please reach out to your advisor. We will help you get what you need.)

- What about books?

→ If you need a new book for a class (like English, for example), teachers will give you the information you will need to purchase the book directly.

→ If you will be continuing to use a textbook from earlier in the year, if you have that textbook at home, you are all set! Wherever possible, teachers will also include images of required textbook pages or problem sets along with their assignments in Google Classroom.

→ *If you left a textbook at school, and find that you need it, be in touch with us. It may be difficult for faculty to enter students' rooms and be able to sort out which books belong to whom. As much as possible, teachers will be looking for online resources for their classes so you can access what you need from home.*

- What if we are in a different time zone than Buxton?

We have designed a schedule that will start later in the morning, allowing us to accommodate students in both East Coast and West Coast time zones. For those in other time zones, or those who have specific time conflicts with any live class sessions, those sessions will be recorded and made available for students.

- Are there any additional materials (art supplies, books, software, etc.) that we will need to purchase?

If there are additional materials required for specific classes, your teachers will let you know that and help you get them.

- How will students receive feedback from their teachers? How will students be evaluated in this Spring Term?

Just like when we are all together on campus, you can reach out to a teacher at any time and find out how you are doing. You will also be receiving regular feedback on your work.

Because this is an extraordinary time and an unprecedented way to learn, we are especially grateful to be a mostly ungraded school. We are not interested in making this into a high-stakes moment for students or families. Our approach to this term is that we will consider these classes as "credit/no credit" courses. As long as you try as hard as you are able to make this work — we'll be doing that too! — your "grades" for the year will be fine!

- Are the juniors still required to complete a junior thesis project?

Faculty are in the process of examining how to best adjust to our new circumstances, and this includes the junior thesis paper/projects. For some of you, your thesis project may still be possible to carry out along largely the same lines you had planned, and you may suddenly find yourself with even more time to dedicate to it. For others, continuing your

junior thesis in the way you had planned may be more difficult. For that reason, we are going to make the junior thesis optional. Please be in touch with your junior thesis advisor soon to talk over how you would like to proceed.

Families

- How can I best support my child in distance learning?

The first and most important thing to know is that WE know that this is an unprecedented and extraordinary time, one that will stretch and challenge all of us. The more flexible and forgiving we can be with each other—parents with their kids, kids with their parents, families with Buxton, Buxton with families—the better and happier we will be. We are here for you, doing the best we can. We have every faith that the same is true for you!

Given that most families are all at home during this time, we know that it is a special challenge to give everyone space to do their work. That said, if you can provide a private, quiet space for your child to have their “live” classes and to do their assignments, that would be ideal.

In addition:

→ Franny will be available on a regular basis via open Zoom meetings. Invitation and details to come.

→ Your child’s advisor will be in touch once a week to see how things are going and help troubleshoot any problems.

- What if our family is facing extraordinary circumstances during this time?

Get in touch with us! Call, email, or text your child’s advisor, any teacher, Peter, Franny, anybody! Let us know what’s going on and we will try to help. If you need assistance with technical issues or internet connectivity, please reach out to Matt Martin at matthew.martin@buxtonschool.org, or John Kalapos at john.kalapos@buxtonschool.org.

Community Connection

- How will I stay connected to my class?

Once we all get used to conducting our academic lives remotely, we will start exploring ways to conduct our community lives that way as well. Classes can arrange group Zoom get-togethers (the seniors already have!), faculty will be hosting “virtual Billiard Room” hang-outs, teachers are organizing various activities. More on this to come!

- How will I get updates from Buxton?

Lindsey will be mailing out daily “announcements” to keep you up-to-date on open study sessions, teachers’ “office hours,” open Zoom meetings for students and/or parents, and other developments.

- Will I still have meetings with my advisor at Buxton?

Yes! You and your advisor will still “meet” weekly, albeit through text, email, FaceTime, or Zoom.

- Will there still be Senior Services?

Yes! We will be in touch with the seniors very soon to find accessible and inclusive ways to conduct services while we are apart.

- Will there still be a yearbook?

Again: Yes! We are working with Suzy and others to develop a remote way to create the yearbook if need be.