



**BROOKLYN  
FRIENDS  
SCHOOL**

March 31, 2020

Dear Preschool Families and Grownup Loved Ones,

Today marks the second day of virtual school and our emerging home/school partnership.

I have heard from many of you that it has been very helpful for you to have the activities and the videos as your children's at-home learning days take shape.

As I listen and learn what is needed from you and from teachers, our plan continues to grow and evolve. I will be going over the survey with care and will be able to respond further. My purpose and that of the teachers is to be responsive to you and our children's needs. Please be aware that the needs in each family are different.

Some families want no schedule at all, some an explicit schedule. Some are fine with a lot of screen time, some want little or none at all. As always, you can count on me and our team to base our decisions on good judgement and early childhood expertise. What we are doing is evolving a BFS response that is customized. It is not a one size fits all. Our teachers are working purposefully and are very eager to connect in person for those who would like to.

“Why are we phasing in the Zooms on April 1st and 2nd”?

I will be introducing our ed-tech consultant who is working hand in hand with me (virtually), this week. In our video and letter you will learn more about our ongoing preparation.

One of the things we decided to do was begin with half group Zooms. Doing smaller groups of Zooms at the start allows us to give each child more response time and attention at first. This is a similar rationale to our phase in at the start of the school year. We start slowly so that we can provide more attention.

The duration of the Zooms is set for a half-hour. However, the session will not take up a full half-hour. 15-20 minutes is a more realistic expectation, but the half-hour provides time to troubleshoot tech issues, etc. if they arise during a call. The Zoom gatherings will be approximately 15-20 minutes long.

On Wednesday (4/01) and Thursday (4/02) classes will meet in 2 separate half groups. You will receive your half group assignment from your child's classroom teachers.

From Friday on, the morning Zoom times will remain consistent each day. After this week, if there is a change to the Zoom time and/or we add additional times, we will make sure to give you plenty of advance notice.

These Zoom gatherings provide an opportunity for children to connect with their classmates and teachers. If your child cannot make it one day for any reason, it is completely fine. These Zoom invites are an Invitation Only and not a requirement. Your family may not feel that it is appropriate for your child to be online at all. This is a family choice and an Invitation Only.

The Preschool Home Information Survey has been very helpful in identifying your needs. If we add a closing session we will do our best to take the times you have let us know about into consideration. Thank you in advance for understanding that we may not be able to get it timed to fit perfectly for all families. We will do our best!

In addition to the class Zoom gatherings, teachers will conduct one-on-one 5-10 minute Zoom check-ins with each child in the class this week. This will allow children who may not be able to attend the larger group synchronous time to have an opportunity to connect with their classroom teachers. We also understand that some students prefer the calmer atmosphere of a Zoom call with just one other person.

Your classroom teachers will be sending out a sign-up for one-on-one Zoom check-ins on Wednesday (4/01). This week, the one-on-one check-ins will occur on Thursday (4/02) and Friday (4/03).

So that you are prepared for the Zoom gatherings at the end of the week, make sure you review the [Zoom Technical Guide for Families](#). Additionally, Tracy Chow, the LS Technology Integrator, has put together a list of helpful reminders for successful Zoom times at home: [Video Conferencing Etiquette for Lower School](#).

Though it was created for the Lower School, it should also be helpful for Preschool families!

Virtual Learning Plan Logistics and Protocols

The weekly classroom emails are sent out by 9:00am. Teachers are still working into the night to get the tech together, and we thank you for understanding when we have glitches, corrections and troubleshooting along the way.

While we are not yet ready to send the emails the night before, if advance prep is needed for a recipe or an activity, and you want to be able to prepare and plan, teachers will send a brief “prep” list the night before.

As we gain proficiency we will be adjusting, adding, developing and building on what we have been doing (both content and protocols). We will keep you posted well in advance about any changes, additions, etc.

Specialist teachers are doing amazing work and there will be a Preschool-wide set Specialist Schedule.

I will be sharing the Specialists' Bios this week.

Our Fours have Soccer with Edson, but now all of you will be able to preview and get to know Edson virtually!

Monday - Library with Gili and Maggie

Tuesday - Dance with Jules

Wednesday - Music with Nancy

Thursday - Soccer with Edson

Friday - Sing with Tony

These Specials will come with the classroom email on the designated day.

Preschool teachers and I are all committed to providing you with learning suggestions and activities that can be inserted into your day in a way that flows best for you. If you would like support figuring out a schedule, either based on our Sample Schedule or not, please let your teachers or me or Jane know how we might help you. I am happy to ideastorm with you.

Our intention as a Preschool community is to provide you with activities that can be done at various points throughout the day, depending on your needs. If screen time feels stressful and your child needs to read or draw quietly (or bake, or do a puzzle, or cuddle), that is absolutely understandable. If your neighborhood is quiet in the morning and that's the best time to go for a walk while remaining socially distant, start the day that way. The activities are there for you and your child, ready to be used as and when needed. Please do what is best for your family and loved ones.

Lastly, as you have heard from Jane, we are here to support you as well as the children. I hope to connect with you in our Coffee Hour on Monday, April 6, and in the upcoming Office Hours I will be holding next week.

In friendship and connection,

Maura