



CIC Distance Learning 2021

Welcome to Online Learning at Colegio Internacional de Caracas

CIC maintains an active learning environment even when the school is forced to close. If the school campus is closed during the academic year, CIC will engage the CIC Distance Learning 2021 system that assures each student receives high-quality learning experiences through a digital learning environment. Here, teachers are expected to provide authentic learning experiences that are aligned with the CIC curriculum, CIC Mission, CIC Vision, and the IB Learner Profile.

During times of virtual learning, CIC will use several methods to communicate with students and families. Important school-wide messages and updates will be delivered regularly through text messages, specific online programs, email, or direct mobile phone contact.

CIC Distance Learning is an important virtual component to assure quality learning during unforeseen circumstances in Caracas from pandemics to political unrest. This document provides guidelines that can help students, parents, and teachers maximize learning while the physical campus is closed for an extended period of time.

Parents Assure a Successful Learning Atmosphere at Home:

- Create a learning space away from distractions but can be overseen by the parent. CIC teachers recommend using the Dining Room table or bedroom desk (with the bedroom door open) – not in a busy area.
- Determine a firm routine to follow on a daily basis. Get kids up ON-TIME, eat breakfast, and follow your schedule from beginning-to-end daily.
- Keep a balance between your child being in front of a computer, and maintaining an active healthy lifestyle (take regular breaks, move around, and take moments outside).
- Stay in control and check in with your child throughout the day, and with his or her teachers regularly. Make sure you can see your child's computer screen to help keep your child on task.
- Manage your child's screen time and offset with time in the sun, cooking, or non-tech activities.
- Check in on your child's emotions daily with regular moments of care and laughter.
- Provide a healthy breakfast (and water bottle) as fuel for the day.
- Parents: keep yourself healthy too! Take care of yourself so you can help others.



It is important to remember that the learning objectives for online-based learning are the same as the regular school day on campus. No matter what the platform or time, students are expected to engage actively with their teachers and complete all work – every class. It is the teacher's responsibility to connect with students daily and communicate each child's effort and achievement to parents – just like on campus. Individualized learning is the standard at CIC – whether in class or online – and teacher feedback is always appreciated.

CIC teachers are now receiving ongoing professional development to fully utilize their online delivery on such platforms as Google Classroom, Meet, and Hangouts, Zoom, Skype, and many others. With home support from parents, all CIC students will successfully continue their learning while away from the classroom!

CIC Teachers Assure Proper Engagement for Virtual Learning:

- **Teachers follow a structured schedule.** For each grade level, teachers share a specific weekly schedule that dictates the general participation of both students and teachers. Parents should print this out when received and refer to it daily. Teachers will be prompt – especially for the start of the day.
- **Teachers are prepared daily.** CIC Teachers will have the same personal commitment to academic excellence online that they have while on campus. The CIC standard is daily face-to-face instruction from all teachers that engages students and meets the needs of the individual.
- **Teachers understand home and learning realities.** CIC teachers understand too much independent screen-based learning time is counter-productive. Therefore, teachers seek to balance traditional tech-based learning with diverse, project-based, non-screen activities.
- **Teachers personalize and individualize.** As a small school, CIC teachers communicate with each student regularly to assure each is getting the support he or she needs – we are pro-active. With CIC distance learning, students receive different types of experiences for a feeling of achievement, accomplishment, fun, and higher-level thinking.
- **Teachers meet the school mission and curriculum.** Even though students are working online, CIC teachers provide instruction that meets the expected school wide learning results, and CIC’s mission and vision (which can be found on the cic website, cic-caracas.org)
- **Teachers set a high standard for learning.**

Quality Assurance/Scheduling During Distance Learning:

- While distance learning, all CIC teachers check into the CIC system by 7:30AM daily.
- All students and teachers begin live communication at 8AM *sharp*.
 - ES has a homeroom period at 8AM before direct instruction.
 - SS has an 8AM homeroom embedded in the first learning block of the day.
- Classes continue from 8AM and conclude at 1PM during distance learning.
- Following, students and parents have access to teachers independently from 1PM-3PM for conferences, help, and private communication. During this time teachers are developing tutorials, lessons, videos, and learning resources – so prior arrangements are suggested. Teachers should also use this time to pro-actively meet with parents and students.
- The distance learning school day includes time for interacting with students, facilitating learning activities, planning time, team meetings, professional learning, breaks, and email communications.
- CIC Specials teachers participate actively in the virtual learning experience daily.
- Teachers will set deadlines for the submission of homework, and work that is submitted after 3PM may not always be addressed by teachers the same day.

Review: To be successful, CIC students should possess:

- A strong desire to learn and a commitment to communication with teachers (we know virtual school is not easy),
- Reliable internet and the appropriate technologies,
- A workspace away from distractions and appropriate resources (downloads, books, paper, etc.),
- Active parental support,
- **A strong commitment to submitting all completed work on time (and understand the consequences of missing daily deadlines, and**
- A commitment to emotional and physical self-health



CIC Distance Learning Delivery of Instruction (2020-2021):

CIC will provide a quality – and consistent – online learning experience for all students. As such, CIC generally follows this particular blend of instructional support:

- *Whatsapp, Google Suite* (for Elementary) and *ALMA* (for Secondary) are CIC's primary platforms for posting assignments with other tools added by individual teachers to enhance and/or extend learning.
- There is a combination of real-time and independent learning activities daily for classes most days.
- Video engagement should occur daily. This may include live communication and/or pre-recorded lessons.
- Opportunities will be offered for students to connect with their teacher and each other daily. This includes Homeroom, Morning Meetings, Q & A sessions, and small group/whole class instruction.
- Teachers provide feedback to students on their learning in authentic and time-sensitive ways.
- CIC teachers work collaboratively to implement learning activities.
- Counselors are available to support students as needed and are available each school day.
- Specialists (i.e. Art, Music, PE, Collaboratory, ESOL, and others) are active members of the teaching community and participate as such.

Digital Platforms & Tools:

CIC teachers are expected to be proficient and use Google (Classroom, Hangouts, Meet, etc.) and ALMA as primary instructional platforms, and video engagement usually happens daily through YouTube or elsewhere. It is likely that teachers may use *additional* applications to assist the learning within each individual classroom. Here are some of the current learning tools that support virtual learning at CIC:



- **Whatsapp Groups:** The CIC teacher manages group(s) as the administrator and may establish multiple groups for different objectives that include basic information, feedback, assessment or data-sharing.
- **Google Classroom:** [This is the primary location for ES academic participation.](#) Assignments, links, and resources are available here for students and parents.
- **ALMA:** [This is the primary location for SS academic participation.](#) This is the CIC database that stores and shares attendance, grades, lesson plans, and other information that is used by the CIC administration for reporting. Parents and students have access to this data.
- **Google Hangouts, Meet, Etc.:** CIC teachers use these applications for conferencing and communicating directly with students in real-time.
- **ZOOM:** This is a secondary – but important - conference technology teachers commonly used to meet with groups of students for instruction.
- **YouTube:** This is the location where most teachers link and have collections of videos that are used by students during the school day.
- **Mobile Phone:** This is an important daily communication tool for all.

Putting it All Together – in Caracas:

We understand the difficulties in Venezuela and with working from home. We accept that at times teachers and students may be incapable of direct live communication. We are committed, however, to doing everything within our power to assure the student receives appropriate learning so that from 8AM – 3PM each day online is equivalent to a day on campus. With a commitment to “excellence in education”, CIC will make every effort to meet the school mission, and the school will work with families and other teachers as partners to provide the best possible education online.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the framework for the basic school day online?

Below is the general structure for families during CIC Distance Learning 2020. There are different expectations for each grade level though the student day starts at 8AM for all and direct instruction usually concludes at 1PM, with private support from 1PM-3PM available daily.

PN - Kindergarten		Grades 1-5		Grades 6-12 (A & B Days)		
8AM	Live daily 8AM Homeroom meeting. Live discussion of day's objectives and start class engagement.	8AM	Live 8AM Homeroom meeting. Discussion of day's objectives.	800AM – 900AM	Live homeroom & Block 1	
		830AM	Direct Instructional Blocks A (live, recorded video, etc. linked to Google Classroom)			
		9AM				
		930AM			905AM – 1000AM	Block 2 Instruction
		10AM	Break & Teacher Communication window	1005AM – 1100AM	Break & Teacher Support Window	
		1030AM				
		11AM	Direct Instructional Blocks B (live, recorded video, etc. linked to Google Classroom)	1105AM – 1200PM	Block 3 Instruction	
		1130PM				
		12PM			1205PM – 100PM	Block 4 Instruction
		1230PM				
8AM-1PM	Structured teacher communication all morning. Teachers will contact parents daily with live updates. <i>CIC also seeks a periodic personal visit when possible for some classes for these grades.</i>	1PM	Final live contact time.	1PM	Final live contact time (from Block 4)	

What does the Distance Learning day look like for **Elementary Students**?

Elementary students are online and active at 8AM when homeroom begins and the grade-level schedule is shared in advance. There are scheduled learning blocks (with plenty of breaks) throughout the day, and learning is age-appropriate, with a focus on individual growth. Specials classes (Art, Music, ESOL, etc.), play time, independent reading, and other learning skills are embedded in the schedule. Classes end at 1PM and student may then have homework aligned to the CIC Homework Policy. There is enrichment and skill-based work for students after 1PM some days in the lower grades, and usually in the upper grades.

What does the Distance Learning day look like for **Secondary Students**?

Secondary students start live instruction at 8AM and follow a 2-day block schedule cycle (like on campus) and the grade-level schedule is shared in advance. Homeroom is embedded in the first block of the day, with appropriate breaks each day. In the Secondary School, there is a stronger focus on academic instruction, so students are expected to remain academically active daily until 3PM – with increasing independent work in the higher grades.

How do I start the virtual learning day? All students are expected to be prepared by having all work submitted by the expected deadlines. Students should be online before 8AM to receive credit for morning attendance – and turn off their camera and microphone to reduce distractions at the start of classes. Then, after Homeroom ends, regular instruction begins.

How do I get technical help?

For technical assistance, emails can be sent to tech@cicaracas.com.ve. For help with class work, students/parents should contact their teachers directly. Parents are encouraged to discuss tech issues with their child's teachers so they are aware of the ongoing situation.

How do we communicate with teachers, counselors and administrators? All CIC faculty and staff are available through email, Whatsapp, our CIC web page, or by phone each school day between the hours of 7:30AM and 3:00PM – with special considerations after 1PM. A team of administrators is available on campus each school day. Teachers who receive a communication after 3PM usually respond the next morning.



How do parents get the work teachers are posting for students?

All primary work will be posted in Google Classroom(ES) or ALMA (SS). Communication information is shared by each teacher at the beginning of term. Students submit work directly to teachers using the class systems.

What if my child cannot participate (due to illness, for example)?

As soon a parent knows the child will not be in class for that day, he or she should email or text the homeroom teacher with any and all pertinent information (by 8AM). The homeroom teacher will share all information with the CIC administrative assistant.

Can work be handed in late? CIC has clear policies for late work published in the Elementary and Secondary School Handbooks. These policies apply to online learning in addition to on-campus classes. Due to the nature of online learning, teachers expect student work by all established deadlines.

Is virtual school optional? Because CIC is a school with United States (Cognia) and International Baccalaureate (IBO) accreditations, online instructional days are considered the same as regular school days for students and must be attended for grade-level credit. *CIC must offer online learning when the campus is closed to maintain its international accreditations.*

Does CIC provide academic awards during distance learning? Yes, CIC provides Honor Roll, High Honor Roll and other awards, but the criteria are adapted to the realities of working online. Usually, the minimum standards are adjusted to the actual content that is covered as well as student rigor/expectations.

