

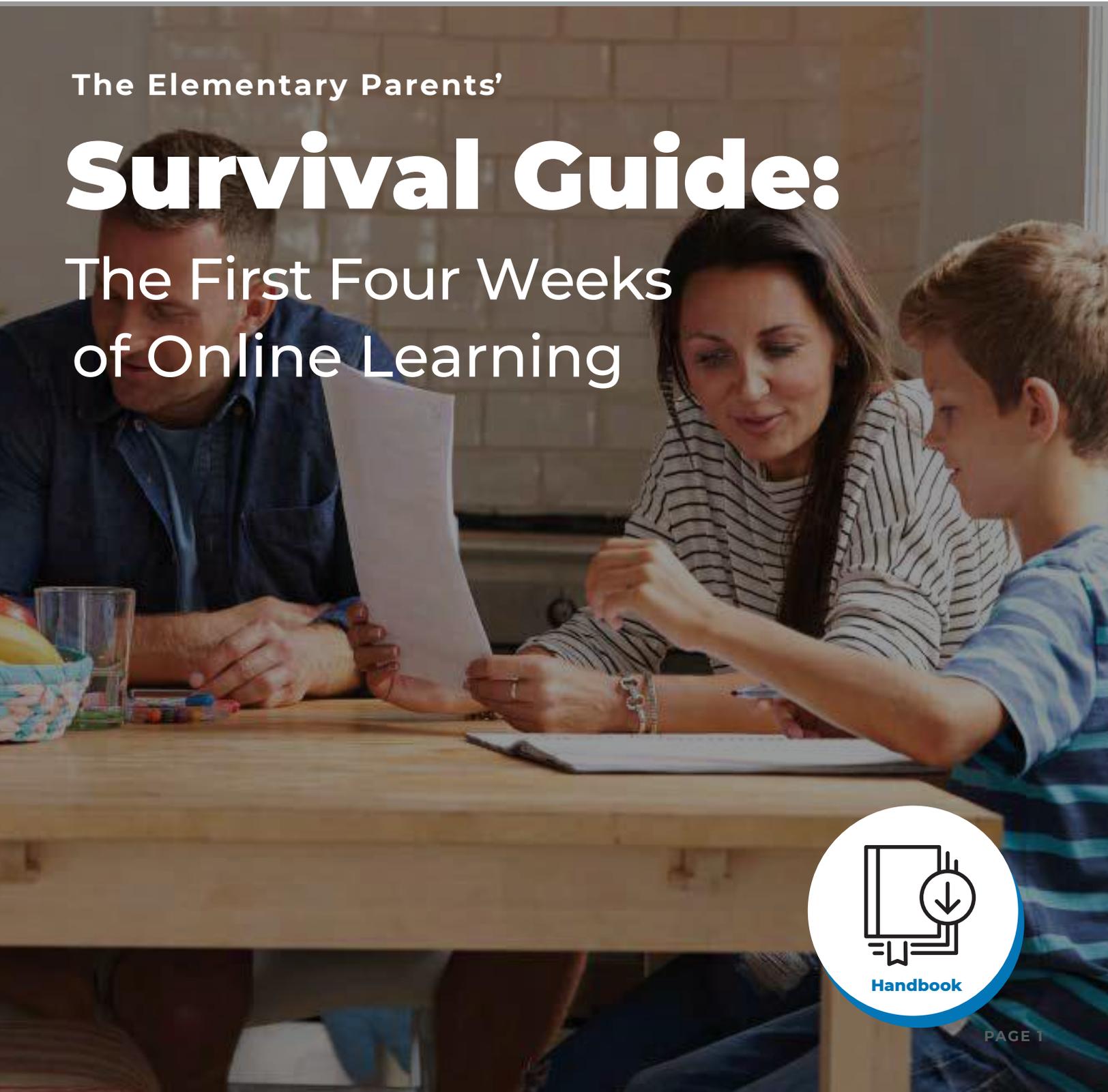


# VLACS

The Elementary Parents'

# Survival Guide:

The First Four Weeks  
of Online Learning



## Elementary Parents' Survival Guide

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## Introduction

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Welcome to VLACS Elementary! Thanks for joining us! We're excited you're here and want you to enjoy not only a successful start, but a successful VLACS experience.

This FAQ will get you up and running and hopefully address many of your questions. It offers general information that applies to all of our Elementary courses.

If you have specific questions about your courses or need a more in-depth explanation of how things work, please check with your instructor. The following is a list of questions addressed in this document.



## FAQ

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### **Help! What Do I Do? Where Do I Start?**

Read and explore the Welcome and Getting Started sections BEFORE you begin working with your child. The more you familiarize yourself with how things work, the easier it will be for you to help your child navigate their courses.

The Getting Started module lives on the main lesson page and will help you learn lesson navigation, lesson icons, types of assessments, uploading work, and pace.

### **What's Your Biggest Piece of Advice to New Families?**

Be flexible and patient with yourself and your child. It takes at least 1-2 weeks to adjust to the program, how the curriculum works, and pacing. Some days you may zip through work. Other days you may not, and that's okay! Have fun learning. Ask lots of questions!



## What's My Role?

We work with parents and caregivers as partners, not teachers. For children to have a successful online learning experience, they need to have help and support with course navigation, reading, submitting assignments, and establishing positive working routines.

In addition to helping your child have the best learning experience possible, we ask parents and caregivers to maintain contact with teachers and school support staff, attend weekly meetings, and keep all contact information, including phone numbers, mailing addresses, and email addresses accurate and current.

## What's the VLACS Instructor's Role?

At VLACS, we recognize that positive learning experiences don't happen without establishing excellent relationships with students and their families. Your VLACS instructor will facilitate your child's learning experience, will work with your child to develop strong work habits, and will meet regularly with you and your child.

Courses are asynchronous, so there is no live instruction or tutoring but courses are interactive, offer computer-based readers, and your student will have plenty of one-on-one time with their instructor. Students will also have opportunities to interact with their classmates during weekly group activities.

Students will have one teacher for their core subject areas: ELA, math, science, and social studies. Teachers meet at least weekly with their students one-on-one.

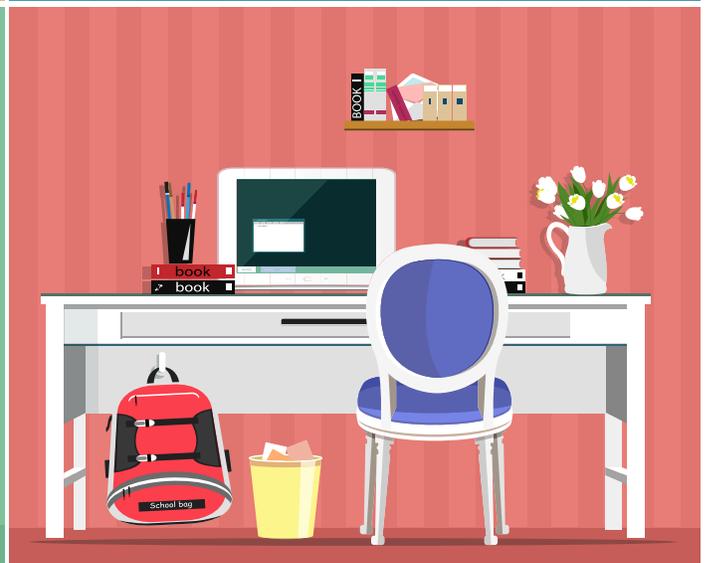
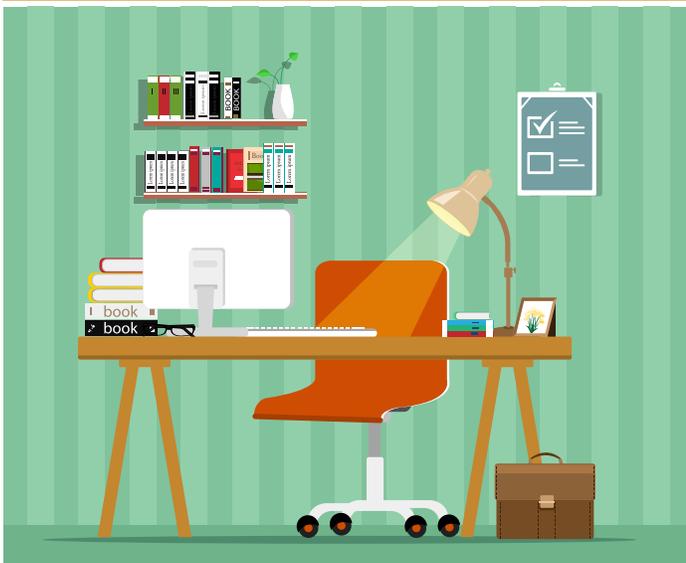
Teachers are available during their posted office and appointment times. If you need a teacher outside of those times please contact them directly.

## What Are Some Ideas for Creating a Workspace?

Set up a comfy space for your child to sit and be able to work, write, and draw. Kitchen tables with booster seats, kid-size furniture if you have it, or the coffee table -- any place your child can sit comfortably and work is good.

We also recommend setting up another area -- couch, beanbag, or other comfy corner -- for reading and sitting with a parent or caregiver to review or discuss lessons.

The area should be distraction-free -- ideally with no television, and few other people like siblings running around!



## What Materials Does My Child Need Every Day?

When you begin work for the day, make sure your child has access to all the materials and supplies in whatever format you choose. We recommend you set up a student workspace with all of the required materials within easy reach either by using desk drawers, shelves or a box, or even a small backpack with supplies.

All of our elementary courses require these materials. We recommend that you have all of these within reaching distance for the duration of your scheduled school time.

### Technology List

- Printer
- Disk space on your computer as well as external device to back up your files (flash drive, external hard drive, CD-Rom, etc.)
- Cell phone to take photos of student work or a scanner to scan student work

### School Supply List

- Pencils and erasers
- Scissors
- Crayons
- Colored pencils
- Glue
- Tape
- Ruler
- Printer paper
- Multi-colored paper
- 3-inch binder with dividers (or one notebook per subject)
- Three-hole punch

In addition, each elementary subject area also has printables and workbooks divided by grade level. Students and parents will be able to access these workbooks from each course.





## Do I Need to Print Everything?

Not necessarily, but you'll likely need to print some.

There is a printable workbook for each elementary subject. Each workbook has handouts and worksheets. Workbooks are important for students at the elementary level because they provide an opportunity for them to practice their writing skills and develop fine motor skills using pencils, crayons, scissors, etc.

You have two options:

1. If you don't have access to a printer, you can ask your VLACS instructor to send you a copy.
2. Use your printer to print pages as needed.

## How Do I Access Elementary Workbooks?

We currently offer workbooks for each elementary course.

Please contact your instructor to provide you with directions on how to access your elementary workbooks.

# What Should Our Schedule Look Like? How Much Time Should We Spend Per Subject?

That depends. Ideally, you should spend 1-2 hours for each core subject daily and 1-2 hours on electives every other day or once or twice per week.

Many families opt for a block schedule, which allows students to spend more time in one sitting on one subject. For block scheduling, students should still experience 4-8 hours per week of each core subject and 2-4 hours per week of each elective.

Some students prefer more of a brick and mortar model that mimics the schedules they're used to.

Use the blank weekly schedule template from the course page and figure out what works best for you! Here is a sample of a blank elementary weekly pace template.

Elementary Weekly Pace Template

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Language Arts							
Science							
Math							
Social Studies							

## How Is My Child Graded?

### There are three types of assessments:

1. Teacher-graded (like worksheets), writing assignments, projects et al, that students can submit through a text box or attachment.
2. Tests and quizzes, which are multiple choice, true/false, matching, fill-in-the blank, or essay. Some or all parts of exams are auto-graded and others require the teacher to grade.
3. Competency-based assessments are those that measure mastery of a specific competency in a specific area and require a certain level of proficiency. While there are not many of these, please note that there are a few in each course.

VLACS instructors aim to give student feedback typically within 48 hours of receipt of student work.

# Any Tips for Pacing and Keeping Track of Completed Assignments?

Use the **Checklist** icon within the lesson to see a list of lessons and assignments. If printed, you can checkmark when a lesson is complete and keep track of the points earned on assignments.

Use the **Pace Charts** provided in each course. They detail the lessons and assignments students should complete weekly. These can be printed. We recommend putting them in each subject's binder. We also recommend that you use these charts to help you with your daily schedule. Here is a sample pace chart:

	LANGUAGE ARTS	MATH	SCIENCE	SOCIAL STUDIES
WEEK 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ 1.01 Asking Questions: How can Anna have the best day ever?</li> <li>▶ 1.02 Answering Questions: Chris And The Crosswalk—Household Hunt</li> <li>▶ 1.02 Answering Questions: Chris And The Crosswalk—Graphic Organizer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ 1.01 Let's Take A Trip</li> <li>▶ 1.02 Unknown And Alone</li> <li>▶ 1.03 Missing Number</li> <li>▶ 1.04 Snack Attack</li> </ul>		
WEEK 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ 1.03 Retelling Stories With Details: We Go To An Online School</li> <li>▶ 1.04 Retelling Stories With Details: I need help!—Word Detection Printable</li> <li>▶ 1.04 Retelling Stories With Details: I need help!—Graphic Organizer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ 1.05 More or less?</li> <li>▶ 1.06 Evolve And Solve</li> <li>▶ 1.07 A Mode To Decode</li> <li>▶ 1.08 Figure Out What It Is About</li> </ul>		
WEEK 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ 1.05 Describing Characters: Toby The Turtle Lost His Toy</li> <li>▶ 1.06 Describing The Setting: Toby The Turtle Lost His Toy—Printed Forest Activity</li> <li>▶ 1.06 Describing The Setting: Toby The Turtle Lost His Toy—Graphic Organizer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ 1.09 Module One Review And Reflection</li> <li>▶ 1.10 Module One Assessment               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ 02.01 On Your Mark</li> <li>▶ 2.02 Double Trouble</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ 1.01 Fast Or Slow</li> <li>▶ 1.02 Moving With Toys</li> <li>▶ 1.03 Move it your way!</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ 1.01 Keep Your Cool, Follow The Rules</li> <li>▶ 1.02 Being A Responsible Student</li> </ul>



## How Do I Check My Student's Progress & Grades?

You should access your **Gradebook**, found on your course page to check grades daily. Here is a sample gradebook:

My Gradebook:

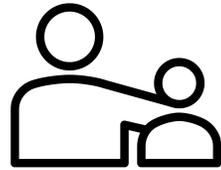
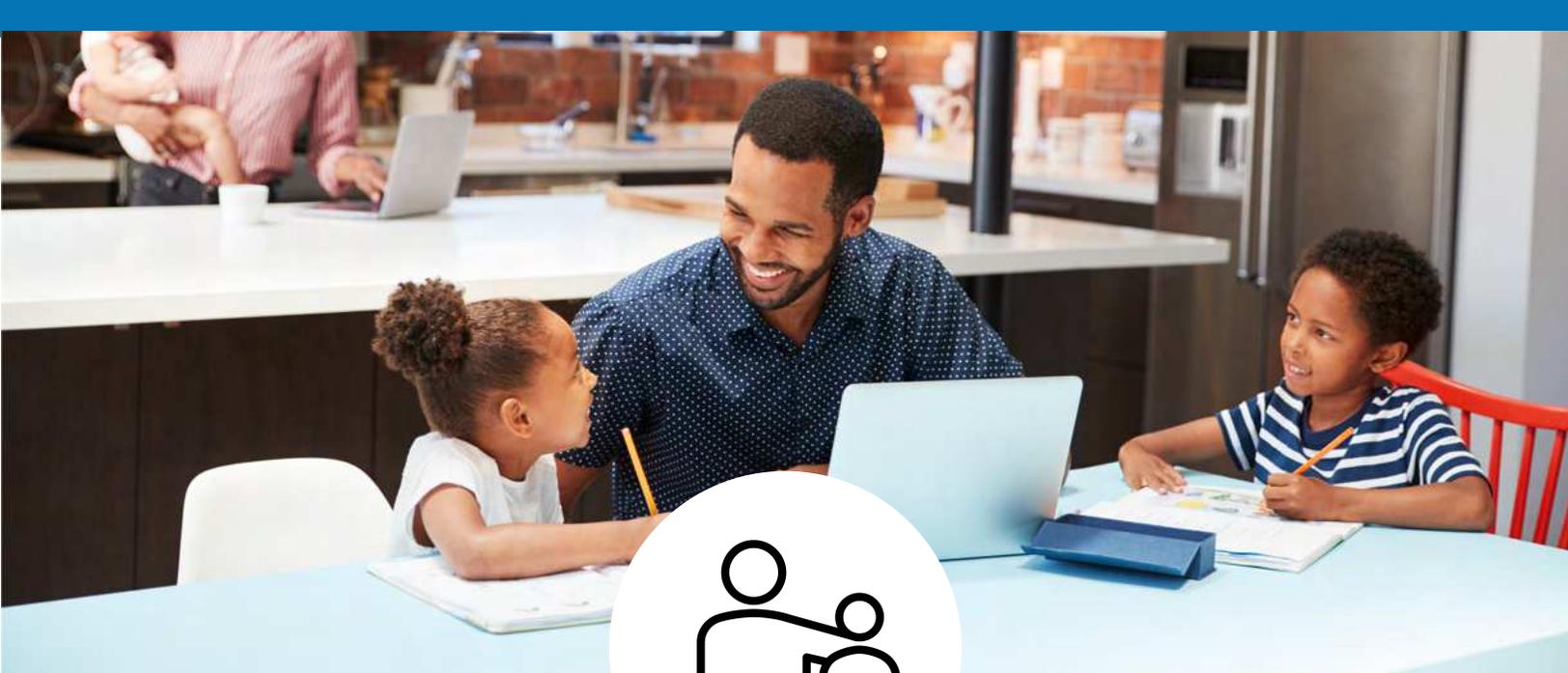
Enrollment Admin  
Elementary Social Studies Grade 4 v17\_gs\_202007-LTC-Strong-5217

Segment	Points Earned	Points Possible	Incomplete Grade	Complete Grade	MinReqMet
Segment 1	297	670	95.81%	44.33%	No
Segment 2	0	805	0.00%	0.00%	No

Module	Item	Excluded	Points Earned	Points Possible	Percentage	Submitted	Requirements
1	1		20.00	20.00	100.00%	Sep 4, 2020	
2	1		20.00	20.00	100.00%	Sep 8, 2020	
3	1		20.00	20.00	100.00%	Sep 10, 2020	
4	1		17.00	20.00	85.00%	Sep 16, 2020	
5	1		23.00	25.00	92.00%	Sep 26, 2020	✔ Competency >= 85
6	1		20.00	20.00	100.00%	Sep 21, 2020	✔ Competency >= 85
7	1		36.00	40.00	90.00%	Sep 23, 2020	✔ Competency >= 85
8	2		18.00	20.00	90.00%	Oct 4, 2020	
9	2		18.00	20.00	90.00%	Oct 1, 2020	
10	2		20.00	20.00	100.00%	Oct 7, 2020	
11	2		25.00	25.00	100.00%	Oct 16, 2020	✔ Competency >= 85
12	2		20.00	20.00	100.00%	Oct 13, 2020	✔ Competency >= 85

You should also check your email often for teacher grading feedback. Many assignments can be re-submitted based on teacher feedback to strengthen the student's mastery and to improve their score.



## Conclusion

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We hope you find these answers helpful and are feeling confident and prepared for your journey ahead.

Ultimately, our goal is to provide your student with a rigorous, relevant, and learner-centered experience. Your student is unique and should be provided with a space that allows them to learn, grow, and succeed. With our competency-based curriculum and relationship-focused approach to learning, we can achieve just that!

The digital aspect of our program is only part of the story. It's the one-on-one relationships that make our program such a personalized and meaningful experience. It will take some time to adjust to this learning format, but once your child starts learning, it will become second nature.



## Contact Us

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### ABOUT

Our mission is to provide elementary school, middle school, high school, and adult learners with rigorous, personalized, flexible learning via a relationship-focused, online experience designed to ensure college, career, and life readiness.

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