

Schools prepared in advance as classes go online in Shanghai

Yang Meiping

“My daughter began having online classes again due to the latest COVID-19 pandemic resurgence. Fortunately, my company also encourages us to work from home for the same reason. It is all for the better since I can now look over as she studies,” Luna Gao, mother of a 10-year-old girl, said on Monday.

The Shanghai Education Commission announced last

Friday that all local elementary and secondary schools would move their teaching online due to the city’s latest requirements for coronavirus prevention and control.

It’s the second time that Shanghai has mandated a citywide online teaching campaign since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2020, local students took online classes for two to three months.

“The school acted very quickly and the classes were delivered very smoothly on

Monday, thanks to earlier experiences in teaching, learning and homework management,” Gao said of her daughter’s school.

“The only problem is that children are less disciplined at home than at school. I heard the teachers had to remind students not to send unnecessary messages from time to time.”

For local schools, preparations for going online started early.

Zhang Jun, acting principal of the Chuncheng Campus of Minhang Experimental Primary School, revealed that all the school teachers worked overtime during the weekend to make sure online schooling was smooth.

“Our school actually started online teaching from Friday due to concerns about the pandemic situation in nearby areas,” she said. “We have chosen a new platform for the classes, so we trained our teachers and they practiced how to operate it on Friday.

“On the weekend, we had more training sessions and meetings about how to operate the system and how to improve class efficiency to get all the teachers and teaching materials ready.”

Zhang said the school used the city’s teaching resources of “Classrooms in the Air” which has been developed and upgraded in the past two years since the pandemic outbreak.

In suburban Baoshan District, a family of three teachers has been busy teaching with computers.

Li Shuangquan is a math teacher of the senior high division of Gucun Middle School



Students take online classes at home. — Ti Gong



while his wife Zhang Lixin teaches math in the school’s junior high division. Their daughter is also a math teacher but teaches at another school.

Li said his school provided them with tablets to livestream the classes from home. Each of them occupied a room to teach their own students with doors closed to avoid disturbing each other.

In Huangpu District, math teacher Xia Zhengxiong of Xingye Middle School showed up at the classroom even though there were no students and the school allows teachers to teach from home.

She used a chalk to write on the blackboard with a camera capturing her moves as she shared it with students of two classes.

“My husband is also a teacher and our 3-year-old son is naughty,” she said. “So I decided to work from school, worried of being disturbed by them at home.”

To make home schooling more interesting, some schools arranged extra classes for students.

Luwan No. 1 Central Primary School in Huangpu arranged a class featuring stories about fighting the pandemic and another combining several subjects such as Chinese, math, art and sports to educate students about the pandemic. For example, the first lesson of the interdisciplinary class delivered on Monday was how to do exercise at home to stay healthy.

Amid the online flurry, medical experts reminded parents to pay attention to their children’s eye health as they spend more time looking at digital screens.

Yang Yong, director of optometry and pediatric ophthalmology department of Shanghai Aier Eye Hospital, said good habits and proper time for eye use are vital for eye health.