Educator Guidelines: Distance Learning

Ensuring the Safety and Confidentiality of Students, Staff and Families

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Ensuring the Safety and Confidentiality of Students, Staff and Families

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Ensuring the Safety and Confidentiality of Students, Staff and Families

The San Diego Unified School District is committed to ensuring the safety and confidentiality of our students, families, and educators when accessing Distance Learning tools through devices issued and platforms purchased by the District.

This guide outlines how educators can ensure the safety and confidentiality of students when providing Distance Learning.

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Ensuring Student Wellbeing: Attendance in a Distance Learning Environment

SDUSD believes that it is essential for educators to continue to foster positive relationships with students and families who may be experiencing stress related to COVID-19. Principals and school site teams play a key role in organizing efforts to support all students in feeling connected to their school during Distance Learning.

“Teachers will use PowerSchool to track participation on a weekly basis.”

Participation Tracking vs. Attendance

Teachers will use PowerSchool to track non-participation.

The purpose of participation tracking during the school closures is to ensure students are safe, have access to educational resources and access to the educators who provide their instruction or other services.

As all Californians are quarantined, we must remember that the child’s home is not a classroom. Our students may be helping a sibling, caring for a parent, or may have to share a device with other family members. For these reasons, educators should be generous in tracking a student’s participation.
Teachers will track students who have not participated in PowerSchool as follows:

- It is understood that students may not “see” all of their teachers on a daily basis, however, we ask educators to track the student’s non-participation in PowerSchool when they have contact.
  - Student contact is defined as their participation in Distance Learning activities. Participation should be considered in various forms such as: participating in a live class, virtual discussion, assignment submission, posting of comments on discussion boards, logging into a teacher’s virtual classroom, attending an online meeting, participating in a chat, posting in an assignment, submitting written assignments, emailing the teacher, or other forms of participation in distance learning activities assigned for the day and/or any other trackable formats that the teacher uses.
  - Participation can be counted any time during the week. Teachers should monitor student participation throughout the week. If you do not have any contact with a student within a week, you would mark them as Absent (“A”) on Friday.
  - You only need to provide one mark per student, per week based on your schedule if the child was expected to participate based on the teacher’s and/or school’s schedule and they did not make any contact.
  - Student participation will be reviewed once a week by school administrators and attendance staff in order to monitor student participation and identify which students require additional support.

Connecting with Students and Families

- If a student has not been participating in distance learning, the school’s attendance team (as defined by the site administration) should follow these steps:
  - Check-in with the parent/guardian
    - Ask if they are ok and if they need assistance with devices and/or connectivity.
    - If the student or parent/guardian needs a computer, make sure they know the pick-up date for your school (Device Distribution Schedules). And if the date has passed, the site will use the special
circumstances process (site administrators will activate this process.

- In order to support students and their families, the District will also be monitoring participation centrally.

School administrators will continue to use mass communication tools such as School Messenger, school websites, as well as social media pages dedicated to school use (use of personal social media accounts should not be used to communicate information to families).

Teachers and administrators may be connecting with families using Zoom or other video-conferencing platforms. It is important for all users to be mindful of safety precautions when using video-conferencing tools. Do not post meeting codes or passwords on social media or school websites. Meeting codes should be treated as passwords and sent only to those you intend to join your Zoom conference.
Creating a Sense of Belonging

In order to increase our students’ sense of belonging, teachers and educators have to determine the ways in which your students belong to their virtual classrooms and the way in which parents/guardians can interact in their child’s learning. The following approaches will be initiated to ensure all students are connected to Distance Learning:

- **Connecting with students**: Families may be feeling overwhelmed, anxious and/or isolated.
  - Principals can create school strategies for letting families know our educators and District will do their best to provide valuable information for accessing basic needs, including food distribution centers and/or accessing an electronic device.
    - Ex. Schools making a phone call to students to say: “We’re thinking about you in these trying times, and we’re calling today to let you know our community is here to support you even while our building is closed. How can I help?”
Prioritize personalized supports: Educators can help provide connection by tracking participation and following up.
  ○ Are your students connecting to classroom meetings, daily content mini-lessons, differentiated instruction/ small group instruction, etc.?
  ○ Providing personalized assistance for students, who are not yet engaging with these instructional opportunities, helps ensure barriers for access and Distance Learning are minimized.

Action team assistance: Each school has been assigned an Action Team Lead. The Action Team includes central office support staff members who can provide assistance in problem-solving concerns with educators, schools and families. As Distance Learning is new for everyone, we must work collaboratively to ensure all students are participating and use these teams to support students.

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Digital Citizenship

Digital Citizenship is defined as the responsible use of technology by anyone who uses computers, phones, the internet, and digital devices to engage with others during Distance Learning. Displaying Digital Citizenship when using devices for Distance Learning will be expected of students and educators.

Student Expectations for Distance Learning

As our students engage in Distance Learning, our District looks to continue to foster safe communities for all students, families and educators by helping students understand their digital identity. In order to prepare students to continue their education and support their learning, educators should prepare their students as follows:

- Students engage with educators and peers in online communication that promotes a Positive School Community and that follows the District’s Student Use of Technology Expectations as well as the Acceptable Use Agreement (signed during the student enrollment process).
- Students understand the role they play to ensure and promote everyone’s well being when engaging in Distance Learning.
- Students promote collaborative conversations with peers and educators as well as support and respect for their community, learning environment, and peers.
- Students become knowledgeable about ethical issues related to Digital Citizenship such as identity, privacy, ownership, trustworthiness, participation (the meaning of interacting within a community).
For more information on teaching Digital Citizenship, please visit: Common Sense Education for helpful resources and Digital Citizenship Curriculum.

**Online Safety: What Every Educator Needs to Know**

In order to assist our students in engaging safely in Distance Learning, it is important to understand how students use technology and how to help students avoid online risks. As educators, it is helpful to keep-up with how students use technology. This 17 minute course provides you with a brief overview about how your students may use social media and other online resources and how to help them avoid online dangers. Topics include student social behavior online, online dangers and smart tips for school staff members. To take this course, click on the link, log in with your employee ID number and password, click on “Extra Training”, then “Information Technology.” If you need additional information, use this Job Aid.
Distance Learning Platforms and Confidentiality

As our District transitions into Distance Learning, the protection of students’ confidentiality is of most importance. The following online platforms have been authorized by our District to be used for educational purposes: Google Classroom, Canvas, SeeSaw, and Zoom. The digital platforms will be used to post assignments, access content, class information, etc.

Programs and services offered via Google Classroom, Canvas, SeeSaw, and Zoom are District protected platforms that allow educators in SDUSD to provide educational services to students. The District licensed accounts are protected to allow students (and their parents) to log-in and access class materials. Videos, lessons and other online educational materials provided to students are guided by educators in order to protect students.

For those educators who use Zoom, be sure to review these important safety considerations and set your privacy settings in Zoom before hosting a meeting using the guides provided below.

1. These slides with security information will take you through a step-by-step process to secure your Zoom meetings. The last bullet on slide 7 in this deck will show you how to Review Security Options before you run your meeting.
2. This is the one pager with similar information.

Web Content Filtering

To ensure student safety, the District has implemented a new cloud-based web filtering software for students.

- In compliance with state and federal law, the web filtering for student devices has been extended to ensure safe access regardless of the location in which they are learning. The security system is cloud-based which ensures that the same level of protection and compliance is applied to a student regardless of whether they are on campus or at home.
- All district distributed Chromebooks will have the web filtering extension installed on it, no action will be required from the parents, students or school staff.

Educator tip: always log into these platforms using your sandi.net account to ensure you have the correct filters and protections in place.
Privacy, Confidentiality and Security Requirements

FERPA. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) 20 U.S.C., 1232g protects Personally Identifiable Information (PII) from students’ education records from unauthorized disclosure. FERPA defines education records as “records that are: (1) directly related to a student; and (2) maintained by an educational agency or institution or by a party acting for the agency or institution. FERPA provides parents and eligible students the right:

● To access education records and seek amendment of education records;
● To provide consent to the disclosure of personal identifiable information (PII) from student education records, unless a FERPA exception applies;
● To file a complaint under FERPA

Educators can access Personally Identifiable Information of students as long as the employee has a legitimate educational interest in the educational records. For more information about PII and student records, please review: Administrative Regulation 5125: Student Records

Specific adjustments have been made to these confidentiality guidelines in order to ensure services can be provided to students in a Distance Learning environment. Please see the Special Education Guidelines regarding these adjustments.
Educator Safeguards: Best Practices for Adult and Student Online Interactions:

The online safety of our educators is important to us. The following guidelines have been created to provide you with safeguards as we engage with students and families during Distance Learning.

- Ensure all communications with families and students are using official communications (e.g. your sandi.net email address, Google Classroom, etc.)
- Provide all student work through District vetted platforms as the web filtering system is purchased for these platforms.

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Educator Expectations for Distance Learning

All employees of the District are required to adhere to staff use of technology expectations as stated in Administrative Procedure 7039. Educators are expected to adhere to standards of professionalism as outlined in Administrative Procedure 7046 and 7045. Educators are expected to maintain student confidentiality as outlined in District procedure Administrative Regulation 5125: Student Records.

Create a Safe Student Environment

- Discourage non-students from observing virtual classrooms, whenever possible.
- Discuss digital citizenship and behavior expectations during online learning.
- Maintain consistent reminders of online agreements and positive communication as learning takes place.
- Develop guidelines for online participation and functionality of tools for student engagement.
- Refrain from 1:1 interactions with students.
  - If you need to discuss a private matter with a student, add another educator to your video conference.
  - If you find yourself in office hours or another classroom session with only one child, ask the child to go to a room in their home where there is another adult.
  - Specific adjustments have been made to these confidentiality guidelines in order to ensure services can be provided to students in a Distance Learning environment. Please see the Special Education Guidelines regarding these adjustments.

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Methods of Contact

Distance Learning requires some slight adjustments to our methods of communication. The list below provides educators with several communication options that enable you to protect your personal contact information:

**Email** - communicate with families using your sandi.net account. Do not use your personal email account to communicate with students and/or families.

**Text using classroom apps** - classroom applications, such as Classroom Dojo and Remind, allow teachers to privately communicate via text with families.

**Phone alternatives**

| Google Voice                  | ● Using your sandi.net account, set up your Google Voice phone number.  
|                              | ● Follow the instructions in the confirmation email sent to you. |
| Google Meet                  | ● Using your sandi.net account, log in to Google Meet  
|                              | ○ You can add someone by phone to a Hangouts Meet video meeting.  
|                              | ○ After you join the meeting, at the top right, click People to expand the side panel.  
|                              | ○ Click Add people.  
|                              | ○ Click Call.  
|                              | ○ Select the country you’re calling to add the country code to the call.  
|                              | ○ Enter the phone number for the person that you want to call and click Call.  
|                              | ○ (Optional) To enter additional numbers, such as an extension, click Dial to open the keypad.  
|                              | ○ The person joins the meeting when they answer the phone. |
| Home phone or cell number    | While you are not required to use your home or cell phone, If you do so, we recommend you dial *67 before you dial the number. This will block your number from the caller. |
Social Media

- Personal Social Media Accounts:
  - Do not add your students as a friend on your personal social media accounts.
  - Do not accept your student’s friend requests on your personal social media accounts.
  - Ensure your privacy settings do not allow your information to be seen by the public.

- Classroom Social Media Accounts:
  - If you use social media for your classroom, ensure all of your content is appropriate for students.
  - Refrain from posting or reposting links as links can be changed to lead to inappropriate content.
  - Do not post student photos. Classroom applications such as Classroom Dojo are an alternative private space for you to post, with parent/guardian permission, student/class photos.

Video Recording

- Distance learning allows students to record themselves in a classroom setting. As long as the parent has not opted out, children can record themselves for educational purposes and share recordings via classroom online platforms (e.g. Canvas, Google Classroom and SeeSaw).
- Students may only record themselves. They are prohibited from recording instruction or others in virtual classrooms (e.g. videoconferences) (Ed. Code Section 51512).
- Educators may record themselves teaching a lesson.
- If a live classroom session is recorded, you must ensure you are following the wishes of parents who have opted out (see the first bullet).
Links to Additional Resources

SDUSD COVID-19 Information Website

Instructional Continuity Website

SDUSD Distance Learning Plan

Special Education Distance Learning Information

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