



AUSD FLEXIBLE PLAN FOR INSTRUCTIONAL CONTINUITY

1. SCHOOL IS OPEN. INCREASED ABSENCES.

Introduction: Courage & Confidence
The "Level 1" Scenario and What We're Solving For
Five Planning & Communication Practices to Start Now
Build Your Repertoire: Essential Downloads and Training

2. SCHOOL IS OPEN. SIGNIFICANT & PROLONGED ABSENCES.

The "Level 2" Scenario. Teaching During a "Level 2" Event
Supporting Absent Students: Virtual Attendance for Live Classes
Discussion Questions for Teams

3. PHYSICAL SCHOOL IS CLOSED. CLASSES ARE HELD ONLINE.

The "Level 3" Scenario
Anticipated Challenges in Shifting to Online Teaching & Learning
Key Terminology for Remote Teaching
Teaching During a "Level 3" Event
Modified Weekly Schedule for Online Classes
Expectations for Classroom Teachers
Best Practices for Online Teaching and Learning
Ten Tips for Running a Synchronous Class
Rubrics and Resources for Discussion Boards
Expectations for Counselor, Social Worker and Mental Health Support Staff
Expectations for Moderators of Activities and School Clubs
What You Can Expect from Administration and from Tech
Contingency Plans if You're Sick
Quick Links to Tutorials for Tech Tools

INTRODUCTION: COURAGE & CONFIDENCE

Overnight our world has changed. All across our community and the world people are staying connected online using a range of technology tools. As a District, we have done an excellent job with our initial response to the Covid19 health crisis. We have been able to provide meals to our community, Chromebooks to our students, digital learning resources, wifi accessibility to our community, social and emotional outreach to our students and families to name a few. As a school district, we have a serious obligation to ensure we are preparing and planning for any emergency that could create large-scale impact to the breadth of community members and campus operations. Sometimes, this means exploring alternative instructional delivery methods. This document does not address employment issues. Instead, it addresses how we, at Alpine Union, can best prepare ourselves for prolonged absences and/or school closures.

As you read through this document, you will see an escalation in our instructional protocols for how we, as a caring and creative community of educators, might support students' well-being and academic progress when the conditions for teaching and learning aren't ideal or like anything we've experienced before. First and foremost, we have a plan to support our staff. We realize that our staff have varying levels of skills. Please know we will be here to support each of you. In short, we ask that you assume positive intentions, be courageous, support one, another and have faith. We are in this together and will be stronger as we remain united.

In the coming pages, we discuss some of the implications for potential significant, though temporary, adaptations in your teaching practices. We want to begin by once again acknowledging that we all function differently when it comes to taking in a lot of information at once, especially in times of uncertainty. For some of us, the amount of information shared in this document, as well as the conditions of uncertainty, may cause anxiety, concern, frustration, or agitation. For others of us, having all the available information actually helps us begin to feel more comfortable about planning for the possibilities.

There are many resources available to support you. Of course, if you are unwell or unable to process the information effectively, the first priority is for you to take good care of yourself, rest up, and get better. Our District and your colleagues and teams are incredible resources; these brilliant educators can help lighten the load when we're all lifting together. Your principals, assistant principals, and the District staff are ready to partner with you. The tech department is always available to help you with any technology needs you may have.

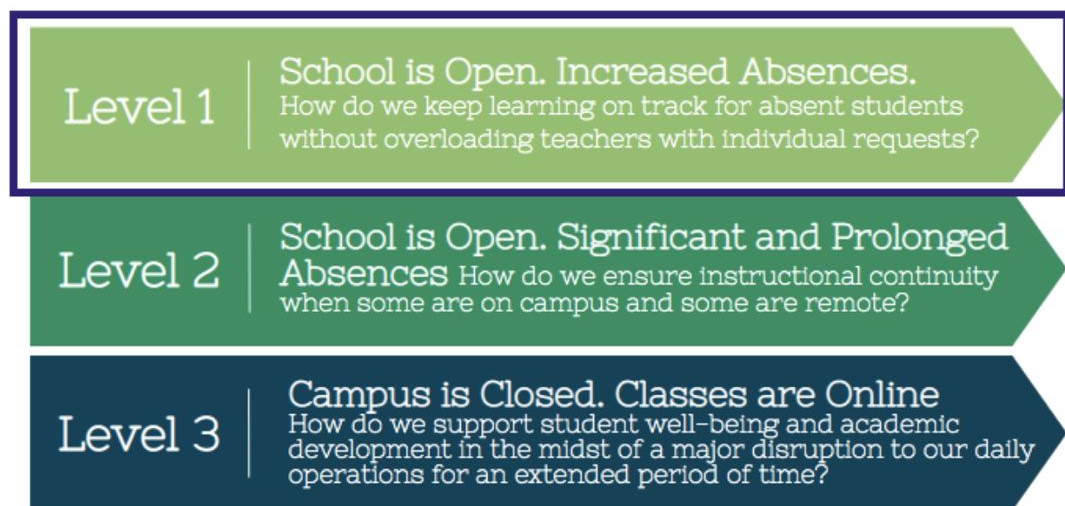
Courage and Confidence, colleagues. We can do this if we do it together and assume positive intentions. We want to reinforce positive intentions as that is our focus on all the work we will undertake.

THE “LEVEL 1” SCENARIO & WHAT WE’RE SOLVING FOR

School is open and there are increased absences. Students and adults are absent more frequently and in greater numbers. There may be some students here and there who have temporary medical accommodations for attendance in place.

The challenge we’re solving for is this: How do we keep learning on track for absent students without overloading teachers with a flurry of individual emails and requests for re-teaching? How might we instead create a system for communicating daily work, keeping the learning moving forward, and supporting students who are trying to get back on track after an absence?

AUSD Flexible Plan for Instructional Continuity



FIVE PLANNING & COMMUNICATION PRACTICES TO START NOW

The practices listed below are quick and easy ways to help absent students access their curriculum while they are home. Though each requires a little time up front, they will make your teaching life easier in the long run, allowing you to get ahead of the steady drip of emails asking, “what did we do in class today?” Or worse, “did you do anything while I was gone?”

1. Post **daily updates to your Google Classroom and, if necessary, email to parents** including: links to resources, notes, slide decks, and copies distributed to students who were present; expectations for homework.

2. Set up the **buddy system** with your students. Ensure that everyone in class has a way to communicate with at least two classmates.
3. Set **expectations** with students so they know what to do when they are absent. Remind them and/or their parents to check email, Google Classroom, your website, and to connect with their buddy to call/video conference into class if they are well enough to do so and it is appropriate for your class.
4. Remind students to **stay home** when they are sick, and reassure them that you will support them in keeping up with their work, to include allowing them to attend remotely if appropriate.
5. Start **screencasting** your lectures/lessons when possible and as your skills develop and posting them as part of your daily update. You can, quite easily, record your screen during an in-class lecture and capture your audio narration while you teach. Or, if you anticipate that you will be absent, you can pre-record a lesson for students to watch with the sub. Screencastify and Screencast O'Matic (recommended software) auto-saves the video lesson to your Google Drive, and from there, you can post to your method of communication. Again, we will support you in the development of these skills.

BUILD YOUR REPERTOIRE: ESSENTIAL DOWNLOADS AND TRAINING

The best time to build your repertoire of tools and skills is *before* you need them. We will leverage a combination of Google classroom, Google Suite, Zoom, and Screencastify and Screencast O'Matic to support you and our students and keep the learning moving.

Download and set up [Zoom](#)

Classroom teachers should set up an account. The accounts are free and if needed, we will purchase a district site license. The accounts allow for 100 people to attend a meeting.

Test Drive Zoom in Teams

Practice the five essential skills listed below with at least one other person in Zoom. For tutorials on how to do each of these tasks, please refer to the [Quick Links to Tutorials](#) at the end of this guide.

1. Joining a meeting
2. Scheduling a meeting
3. Sharing your screen
4. Troubleshooting audio
5. Setting chat/mute parameters for participants

Download and set up [Screencastify and Screencast O'Matic](#) (required)

Please add the Screencastify and Screencast O'Matic to your Chrome browser. This tool allows you to create instructional videos by recording your screen with audio narration (ie: tutorial, virtual lecture, feedback on work). When prompted, sign in with Google and select your email account. Videos from Screencastify and Screencast O'Matic autosave in your Google Drive. You can post to Google Classroom from there. Students can also use screencastify, so feel free to include it in your lesson planning.

THE LEVEL 2 SCENARIO

School is open, but with significant and prolonged absences. The question here is how do we ensure instructional continuity in a hybrid model where some students are physically present, some are virtually present, and others are absent? In Level 2, we are trying to find creative ways to support families with mitigating health circumstances who are more vulnerable and may need to stay home, those who may be quarantined but otherwise able to participate in school, and those who are recovering from illness and want to get back on track. This means making sure we can keep track of students who are learning from home, and finding new ways to support each other in grade and school teams.

AUSD Flexible Plan for Instructional Continuity

Level 1

School is Open. Increased Absences.
How do we keep learning on track for absent students without overloading teachers with individual requests?

Level 2

School is Open. Significant and Prolonged Absences
How do we ensure instructional continuity when some are on campus and some are remote?

Level 3

Campus is Closed. Classes are Online
How do we support student well-being and academic development in the midst of a major disruption to our daily operations for an extended period of time?

TEACHING DURING A LEVEL 2 EVENT

Teaching during Level 2 is going to require both planning and flexibility. It is likely going to be the toughest of the different teaching scenarios. You have to plan for students whom you may not see face-to-face and students who will be in your class physically. The best way to think of it is like you are teaching in a blended or hybrid

classroom. We realize this concept is brand new for most everyone. You will need to plan your lessons so that those students at home can move forward with the rest of the class without being physically in the class. Even if the students FaceTime or Zoom in, it is not the same as being there. Frankly, Zooming or FaceTiming into a running classroom is often difficult to follow, the sound quality of discussions can be poor, and you may miss a bunch that is going on in the room. Still it does provide some degree of community and allows the student to still feel, at least partially, a part of the class. So how do you do this? What follows are some strategies for making a hybrid model as successful as possible.

A More Thorough Update. Similar to Level 1, you need to post daily updates in Google Classroom. At Level 2, you need to expand these updates. They need to explain more of what you did in class, not just an overview. Your learning targets and success criteria will be key. Think of it as more of a "This is what you should have learned today," rather than a list of "This is what I taught/we did today."

Screencasting is Your Friend. Try to screencast your lectures and reviews whenever possible and post the link to Google Classroom. You can do this real-time in your class, afterwards, or as a dry-run while you prep for class. This practice will save you from having to try to catch individual students up later. Screencasts work well for many purposes, not just a lecture or tutorial. Consider screencasting your feedback to student work, or screencasting a model or sample (i.e. art project or lab). For labs, consider having the students in class run the lab and partner with a student at home to help do the analysis and write up via Google Doc.

Preload Resources. We use a wide range of resources in all our classes. Try to preload handouts, instructional materials, guided notes, links, etc. into Google Classroom before class begins. That way, if a student is attending remotely, he or she will have access to the materials you are distributing in person. Don't forget about the white board. If you use the board extensively in your lessons, take a picture at the end of the period and post it to Google Classroom. If you have a physical copy that doesn't yet exist in electronic form, you can take a picture of it, or create a PDF using an app like Scannable. Again, this is more work up front, but the resources can be used by both groups of students. You may save yourself a trip to the copier!

Assessments. Assessments with online students and on-ground students will require some careful planning. It may be that students learning remotely cannot take the same assessments as those in school. Traditional assessments can put remote students in a tricky position where a quick Google search makes cheating both easy and tempting. It's our job to create a learning environment that sets students up for success rather than for a moral dilemma. You can always create two different types of assessments. You can create collaborative tests using google docs, individually assign assessments in Google Classroom, build tests in

Google Classroom. If you set limited time windows, remember that accommodations still apply. Students with learning plans will need online accommodations just as much as they need on-ground accommodations. You may also choose to give everyone an alternative type of assessment for this period of time (long-term project based learning, for example).

Check in points. Figure out how you are going to check in with your virtual students. On-ground, this is easy. We physically see them. How can you do this virtually? Do you want to do an update in Google Classroom with a quick thumbs up for those who have seen it? Do you want to have small group check-ins on Zoom? Do you want students to email you? Could you make a “water cooler” discussion board for students to post questions and issues they are having? Encourage classmates to respond, too. The goal with these checkpoints is both to ensure students are following along *and* to share the responsibility of building and caring for the learning community with the rest of the class. It is essential that you check in with the remote students at least twice a week to see how they are doing and so that they do not fall through the cracks. If students are slipping behind, please notify your principal, assistant principal, counselor or social worker, who will follow up with the family and loop in the appropriate administrator if necessary.

Flexibility. As teachers, we know how to adapt. (Fire drill during a key part of the day , interruption during your favorite lesson?) As you begin to think about the possibility of remote learning, either for some or all of your students, start thinking of what is most essential for student learning. Some of your existing expectations and policies may not serve students in this unique moment. Please approach late and make up work with some flexibility while students and/or faculty are asked to stay home. Teachers should work with the student and administrative staff to devise a plan for student work and recovery. Also, most *but not all* of our families have access to the Internet and computers, it may not be constant and there may be expectations that students share computers with family members. We will need to work with each student, trusting that they, too, are doing the best they can.

SUPPORTING ABSENT STUDENTS: VIRTUAL ATTENDANCE

If a significant number of students are absent for a prolonged period of time, we will use a flexible attendance plan. If students cannot physically be on campus but are able to attend virtually, they can join their classes remotely to keep up with their studies.

Keep Posting Daily Updates to Google Classroom, including: links to resources, notes, slide decks, and copies distributed to students who were present; expectations for homework; screencasts of lessons and lectures whenever possible.

Enlist Students: Ask students to bring their devices (where applicable) to school for the foreseeable future. Set up a buddy system to ensure every student has at least two other classmates they can call to attend class virtually. Remind students that they can (and should) still attend class if they are able.

Teacher Hosted Virtual Classroom: Teachers should use their Google Classroom so that many students can join. Create a meeting in Zoom and post the link or meeting code to Google Classroom. For support hosting a zoom meeting, please see [tutorials](#)

Loop In The Administration/Counselors/Social Worker: Principals, counselors and social workers are the “point people” to make sure teachers and other stakeholders (student life, nurse, coaches, etc.) are aware if a student is on an extended absence when families notify the school.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR TEAMS

If we reach a point of significant and prolonged absences, it’s time for slightly different conversations. We’re all going to have to let go of some of the practices and policies we value and expect under normal teaching and learning conditions. The questions below are meant to drive discussion around how we might collaborate to best support students and make teaching tenable, especially in anticipation of a possible move to a fully-online program:

Teams

- What’s the baseline that students need to know, understand, and be able to do for us to be confident that they have met our learning objectives?
- What assessments are coming up? Will these work for students at home *and* students in class? How might we tweak these to work for both?
- What major assignments are coming up? Will these work for students at home *and* students in class? Will students at home face a moral dilemma around academic honesty? If yes, plan something different.
- What is the most essential work remaining in this unit? This grading period?
- What practices, assignments, and assessments can we streamline or prune altogether? Is there anything we can make optional/extension work?
- What lessons can we collaborate to build together? How might we divide the instructional load and share what we create (screencasts, notes, adapted assignments and assessments, etc.)?
- What constitutes “present” for this course in a given week? What will remote students need to do to “attend” while classes run on campus? How will we communicate our expectations to students?

Administrators, Counselors, and Social Worker

- How are we communicating with teachers about students with “anticipated prolonged absences”?
- How will we regularly collect/solicit information from teachers about the progress of students, and any students of concern? How will we communicate our plan to teachers and coaches? Who will take point to connect with families if a student is “remote” but isn't keeping up with his/her studies?
- What are the current needs of our community, especially those at home? Who is checking in and connecting with these community members?

THE “LEVEL 3” SCENARIO

Campus is closed; classes are held online. The essential question here is, How do we support student well-being and academic development in the midst of a major disruption such as Covid19 to our daily operations for an extended period of time? How do we continue to foster student learning without being able to meet our students in person?

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How do we keep learning on track for absent students without overloading teachers with individual requests?

Level 2

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Level 3

Campus is Closed. Classes are Online

How do we support student well-being and academic development in the midst of a major disruption to our daily operations for an extended period of time?

ANTICIPATED CHALLENGES IN SHIFTING ONLINE

When traditionally on-ground schools move unexpectedly to fully online learning, there are some anticipated challenges. Fortunately, we aren't the first school to think through this move. The questions below come from a plethora of resources and we are deeply indebted to Sacred Heart Schools for their work in curating this document.

Schedule. What's the schedule? This is useful even if there aren't any synchronous classes being held. It gives kids predictability.

Attendance. How will you take attendance? What constitutes "present"?

Community. How will you support kids' needs to socialize and connect? Opportunities for peer-to-peer connection will be especially important.

Clarity. For kid's sake, clearly put all assignments in one place (Google Classroom), explain objectives and expectations up front, and "meter" the workload. Teachers who don't customarily give regular homework in this way (which is almost all of us) tend to overload.

Administrators. Train administrators how to walk the halls of a digital school and provide some measure of accountability and support for students and staff. Decide who will have access.

Assessment. Have a game plan for assessments (Formative only? Allow summative?).

Screen time. Think creatively about what students are doing/working on so they aren't glued to a screen for 8 hours each day.

Set Expectations. Clarify expectations for students/families, including attendance, participation, work load, communication if absent, etc.

Tech Check. Clarify expectations for home technology requirements. We offer WiFi at our schools for parents who do not have access at home but are also working on other options to support families.

Transition. What's your transition back plan?.

KEY TERMINOLOGY FOR ONLINE LEARNING

Though much of teaching and learning online is the same as in the shared physical classroom, there are a few key terms that will help you navigate the shift.

Asynchronous: Class interactions happen via Learning Management System (Google Classroom) without real-time interaction. Students engage in class materials and complete work at their own pace, typically within a given timeframe, often using discussion boards to drive peer-to-peer engagement. If you're comfortable using Google Classroom, you are already totally capable of running your classes fully online.

Synchronous: Class interactions happen in real time, at the same time. Students may virtually attend class together via video conference, livestream, or chat. We have Zoom for synchronous meetings. Most online courses are a blend of synchronous contact and asynchronous study/work. In describing their experience of shifting school completely online, A good point to think about is that *asynchronous* instruction often works best for deep learning, whereas *synchronous* instruction was essential for maintaining relationships.

Screencast: A digital video recording of your computer screen, usually including audio narration. Screencasts are a form of instructional video. Screencastify, QuickTime, and Camtasia are common tools for screencasting.

Video Conference: A virtual meeting in which participants in different locations are able to communicate with each other with audio and video. We will use Zoom for this function.

TEACHING DURING A LEVEL 3 EVENT

At Level 3, the school will be closed and all students will be learning remotely. Faculty and staff may also be working remotely, but could work from school if they do not have internet access at home. If the school is closed, but the campus is open, teachers might be able to collaborate in real-time at school albeit health guidelines would dictate what that looks like. At some schools, we have seen staff collaborate using Zoom from their respective homes. If there is a quarantine or it isn't safe to gather, departments can gather virtually using Zoom. Either way, it is expected that teachers will gather at key points as a team and even as a whole faculty. We will need this time to stay in touch, support each other, and plan.

At this level, the way we teach fundamentally changes. You need to think about teaching in chunks. It is very hard to post work everyday for all your classes. Instead, you want to make some decisions. Do you want to post everything for a week-long chunk? Do you want to post a 2-week unit? How are you going to scaffold the work for students? How often are you going to commit to do updates and post resources? Remember that students will meet with you virtually, and you will use other tools to communicate with them (Google Classroom, email, screencasts, individual zoom sessions). Because of this, you need to rethink how you will lay out your course. Remember your students are not just taking your class, but trying to keep up with other classes (middle school). Although they do that now, doing this totally online will be different and take some practice. The shift may be particularly challenging for students with executive function learning differences. You will not be able to "read the room" to gauge their understanding, so you need to figure out ways to check-in on every student individually. It is super easy to fall behind virtually and hide in the back of the virtual room. You'll need to double-down on checking for understanding and touch points.

Thorough Update in Google Classroom. With every step away from the physical classroom and into the virtual one, updates in Google Classroom need to be more comprehensive and detailed. You'll need to give context for the week's worth of work, including your objectives, expectations for learning, a preview of the assignments, and where to find the resources, assignments, and assessments. Think: Lesson Planning 101. Start with the end in mind: what do my students need to know and how will I know they learned this? If you do one big post with everything in it, you will help students plan out their week. If the unit spans several weeks, you will still need weekly updates with assignment checkpoints to ensure they are progressing and not waiting until the very end.

Screencast Your Update Once you set up your Google Classroom update with the overview of the week, we recommend that you screencast yourself walking students through your post, just as you would in class. This is your chance to tell them verbally what they will be doing that week/unit and what your expectations are. This practice is especially important if students are working for multiple weeks on one project or one unit. They need to know where they are headed in their learning, not just what is due right now. Post the screen cast in your Google Classroom update. You may want to screencast a sample final project or a model of student work so students know what to expect. Importantly, as a school where fostering relationships with students is core to our pedagogy, a screencast with your voice will help make a switch to online learning feel less impersonal and more relational.

Preload & Vary Your Resources. Just as you did in Level 2, preload all your resources and point to them in your weekly post. Consider the types of resources you expect students to access. Our library databases are mostly available off campus, but it's worth double-checking. It's good practice to add PDFs of readings and to vary the type of media (ie: screencasts, TED talks, video tutorials, etc.) to make up for you not being in front of them.

Assessments. As we noted in Level 2, assessments with online students require careful planning. Traditional assessments can put remote students in a tricky position where a quick Google search makes cheating both easy and tempting. It's our job to create a learning environment that sets students up for success rather than for a moral dilemma. This is a good time to consider other types of assessment. If a traditional test is out, how else can you evaluate what students understand? How else can you assess the development of a key skill? Project based learning, with multiple checkpoints along the way, is a great fit for remote learning.

Check in points. You need to make sure you are checking in with students often. Attending virtual classes, posting to discussion boards, email, submitting assignments, etc., all constitute check-ins. The point is that you want to know

students are working and not falling behind. If they are not checking in, we want to catch them early. Consider creating a “water cooler” discussion board for students to post questions and write about issues they are having. You can call it “Questions, Concerns, Comments” as an example. An open forum like this will allow not just you, but classmates to respond as well.

Flexibility. This is the time to adjust your curriculum to fit into a virtual school world. What is your comfort level? How will you use the synchronous and asynchronous tools? Make your plans, lay out your course, take a deep breath, and be flexible. If something doesn’t work, just like in your classroom teaching, adjust and go back or move on. Remember to reach out to your colleagues and administrative team for support. We can do this...together.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE IF SCHOOL IS CLOSED

We will run a modified weekly schedule if school moves from on-campus to online. Online learning is, by nature, more independent and often self-paced. We tried to balance the need for predictability and structure with the need for flexibility... and some grace. In the schedule below, the designated time slot for each class period indicates when teachers will need to sync with students and/or when teachers will host virtual class via Zoom or other means. Unit members will regularly provide instruction, resources, and support through Google Classroom. Considering the personal challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, the sample daily schedule provided below is flexible and can be modified. **Such schedule changes must be communicated to and approved by the unit member's site administrator in advance.** It will take all of us to reiterate to students that school is still in session, just in a different space.

Time	Monday - Friday
8:30 to 9:00	Upload Materials to Google Classroom
9:00 to 11:30	Core Subject Instruction / Zoom meeting /Small Group Instruction / Break Out Sessions / Office Hours
11:30 to 12:30	Lunch
12:30 to 2:30	Core Subject Instruction / Zoom meeting /Small Group Instruction / Break Out Sessions / Office Hours / Collaboration / Professional Development
2:30 to 3:00	Lesson Planning/Prep for Next Day

Although teachers have approximately one to two hour windows in which to sync with students in a given period, we certainly aren't advocating for a two-hour virtual class. If you do decide to host a virtual class via Zoom, you may choose what time within that window your class will meet. If you are Zooming with students individually or in small groups, the goal is that you have a sufficient block of time to do so.

EXPECTATIONS FOR CLASSROOM TEACHERS

Communication Teachers are expected to be in their courses on Google Classroom every school day. Post all instructions, assignments, and learning materials to Google Classroom. Each week, post an update with an overview of the learning objectives and expectations. It pays dividends to be overly-clear; we don't have the benefit of reading the room and clarifying on the fly. Please answer all emails within 24 hours.

Work Load. Plan your workload accordingly, including: time for reading/watching/listening, engaging with students via discussion boards and docs, attending class virtually via zoom, assignments/learning tasks, etc. Given the dramatic shift in teaching and learning, students, and families will rely on your feedback to track progress. Please post and grade one to two assignments per week (it's up to you how big or small these are), spread out over the week. In order to help students plan their week and schedule their time, please strive to post all work for the week by 4pm on Monday (this is meant to be a guide to support your workload). This will be difficult at first so daily posting may be necessary until we all become more adept at the process. At a minimum, you should give 24 hours notice for all work due, with the exception of any work completed during your designated class period. When assigning timed work within your class period, please be sure to respect extended time for students with accommodations. Assignments may not be due during other class periods nor any later than 9pm.

Attendance. Please take attendance by 9:30 am each day your class meets. What constitutes "present and participating" is, of course, different for remote learning. There are many ways for you to sync with students to ensure they are following along with their studies. You could ask students to join a virtual class on Zoom, reply to a discussion board post on Google Classroom, collaborate on a google doc, submit an assignment, or simply respond to an email. Regardless of the method you choose to make sure students are out there, the expectation is that you hear from each student during your designated class period.

Office Hours. Plan on being available to answer student or parent questions for the duration of Office Hours. You may choose to host office hours via email, 1:1 zoom meetings, small group zoom meetings (by opening up a meeting and posting the code on Google Classroom), the chat function within Google Docs -- or any combination of these methods. Please post an update on Google Classroom

explaining to students where they can reach you and/or how they can schedule time with you during Office Hours.

BEST PRACTICES FOR ONLINE TEACHING & LEARNING

The flow of online learning is unique. In any given week, we recommend each course accomplish three tasks: preview, prepare, and engage in learning.

	Teacher Posts...	Using These Tools...
Preview	<i>Google Classroom Update:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overview of the lesson Objectives & connections to prior lessons/learning Quick Attendance Check (to ensure students are present and following along) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Post an update in Google Classroom Screencast (via screencastify)
Prepare	<i>Google Classroom Assignment:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Course readings (textbook, novel, packets), digital texts, podcasts, video content, recorded lecture, screencast lesson, etc . 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create/Post content: upload audio, video, screencast, text, links to docs, images... Access existing curated content: SHP Library, Library of Congress, TED, NatGeo, PBS, Smithsonian, Bio.com, Discovery Education, History Channel, Khan, ListenWise, Bozeman Science, CommonLit, NYTimes Learning, Newsela
Engage	<i>Google Classroom Assignment:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reflective writing, journaling, guided note-taking Discussion boards, assignment submission, post/share/respond to audio, video, images, media Writing, collaborating, peer editing google docs Virtual labs/simulations; home labs/observations Remote synchronous class Practice problems Research, writing, projects Online assessments Quiz, formative assessment Summative assessment 	<i>Asynchronous Tools:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Google Classroom Google Suite (docs, slides, forms/surveys, sheets) Screencastify Quizlet, Kahoot Flipgrid Checking for Understanding <i>Synchronous Tools:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zoom (audio or video) Google Hangouts Livestream.com

TEN TIPS FOR RUNNING A SYNCHRONOUS CLASS

A synchronous class can take many forms, and a video conference is certainly not the only way. Below are a few tried-and-tested suggestions to get you started if you do choose to get your class together on Zoom.

1. Determine the length of your class. Holding attention online for over an hour is difficult. Consider this ahead of time.
2. Login ahead of students and greet them when they enter "class."
3. Set up Chat parameters. We recommend allowing public chatting only. We do not recommend allowing students to chat privately.
4. Call roll to bring the class to order. You can ask them to say here, type here in chat, or take a screenshot of your participants list. You will need attendance records for later, so make sure you do this up front.
5. Once class begins, either change your settings to mute students on entry, or, work with your class to establish some shared Zoom norms, such as: mute your mic when not speaking, say your name before you participate (sometimes it's hard to tell who is speaking).
6. Remind students that the same tech rules apply to a virtual classroom as to the physical classroom. No taking or posting images/video of classmates and instructors to the web or to Social Media without permission. Students have the ability to screenshot and screencast.
7. Begin your instruction by sharing your screen and toggling over to your Google Classroom class. Show the update that you posted for the class; this should have the outline of the work for the day or week. Walk students through the update, pointing out where the resources and assignments for that week are located.
8. Preview your objectives for the virtual class and any expectations you have of them during the call (notes, participation, response online after class, etc.)
9. Start your presentation, discussion, lesson, etc. Enjoy, for a brief moment, the luxury of teaching in a dress shirt and pajama pants.
10. About five minutes before ending class, go back to your Google Classroom page and remind students about the upcoming work for the week. This may seem overly-redundant. Just remember: this will be a monumental shift for students and you and everyone will need all the clarity and support they can get.

RUBRICS AND RESOURCES FOR DISCUSSION BOARDS

Discussion boards are excellent ways of fostering peer-to-peer learning. The optional rubrics and resources below are simply meant to make your life easier. You are not required to use them. You absolutely may edit, adapt, or build on them.

Setting Clear Expectations

When online is the only option for students to share their ideas and questions with one another, it's important to set clear expectations for posting. Here's an example: "Please post your first response by 9PM on Tuesday night. The post must be at least 250 words in length and reference the readings. You must respond to three of your classmates by Friday 10PM. Follow-up posts must be substantive (at least 100 words) and move the discussion forward. Simply saying, "I agree", etc. will not earn credit."

Resource: Discussion Board DOs and DON'Ts for Students

Do think before you post. Complete the reading or preparation work before you write.
Do post your response early to give your classmates more time to reply. Check back later to see what comments have been added.
Do explain your opinion and use examples to help others understand your points.
Do post something that furthers the discussion and shows depth of thought. The best part of a discussion board is that you get lots of think time before you post. Use it.
Do reply to several of your classmates' posts, adding examples or asking questions.
Do remember that it is harder to tell when something is a joke online. Use humor sparingly.
Don't agree with everything you read. It makes for a really boring conversation. Politely disagree when you have a difference of opinion.
Don't reply to the same people each time. Try to bring in other voices.
Don't get personal. Focus your criticism on ideas and arguments, not on your classmates.
Don't bring the outside in. No inside jokes, references to people who aren't in the conversation, or comments you wouldn't say face-to-face

Top Ten Discussion Board DOs and DON'Ts for Students. From *Power Up: Making the Shift to 1:1 Teaching and Learning* (Neebe & Roberts, 2015). Reprinted with permission.

Tips for Discussion Board Prompts

Discussion board prompts are just like the prompts you use to start discussions in your class. You just need to adjust them a bit since you will not all be in the same room answering these orally. If you need a bit of assistance with this, here are some things to consider:

- Think about the learning you want students to gain from the discussion.
- What do you want to see in the responses? Convergent ideas (how, what, why), Divergent ideas (predict, if...then), Evaluative ideas (opinion, defend, what if)?

- Since you want to avoid yes and no responses, how might you frame the question in such a way that students have to think before posting and not just answer off the top of their heads?
- Remember, just like in a face-to-face class, sometimes questions just flop. Don't give up; just adjust. Feel free to post a response that clarifies what you are looking for, gives more instruction, or poses a completely new question.
- Once you launch a discussion board, monitor it as you would in a face-to-face class. Avoid jumping in too soon or over-responding. You don't have to respond to every post. Remember you set it up to where they have to respond to their classmates. Allow the exchanges to take place.
- When responding, be sure to model how you want students to respond. Consider including links to support your statements, quotes (cite them), restating a portion of the post you are responding to, and using the name of the student(s) to whom you are responding.

Hacking the Discussion Board for Global Feedback

The discussion board platform is also a great place for providing global feedback to students, just as you would in class if you were using a student sample to retool thesis statements or craft a stronger hypothesis. Just because we're learning online doesn't mean students have to learn in isolation. We can still insist on an environment in which mistakes are expected and growth happens in community. Ask students to post a draft of their project check-point. Tell them you will give feedback directly on the discussion board (and that students will receive their grade privately). This will likely feel very awkward at first. We often aren't used to learning and stumbling with an audience. It can be a very vulnerable feeling. Remind students that we learn more deeply when we learn in community. They'll be surprised how much they grow by seeing the insights of classmates and the feedback to their challenges, which may someday be their challenges, too. Early replies from you to a few students will be seen by, and shape, the responses of other students.

Rubric: Grading Discussion Board Posts

Recall that you can add a rubric to any Google Classroom assignment and click the boxes to score student work. Here's a sample that you could use or adapt, if you choose to use them.

	5	4.5	4	3
Critical Thinking	Response clearly addresses all elements of the prompt. Exhibits attention to detail and mastery of the topic. Student evaluates and	Response addresses the prompt and demonstrates a clear understanding of the topic. Student applies and analyzes relevant	Response addresses some elements of the prompt. Student summarizes course concepts, theories, or materials. Post may reveal some	Response does not adequately address the prompt. Student relies on statements that are unsupported by course concepts, theories, or

	synthesizes course concepts, theories, or materials appropriately, using effective examples and supporting evidence.	course concepts, theories or materials, using examples or evidence for support.	gaps in understanding or familiarity with content.	materials. Post demonstrates misunderstanding of content and/or a lack of sincere effort.
Engagement	<i>Thought Leader.</i> Asks good questions for classmates to consider. Responds to multiple peers in a manner that advances the discussion. Draws connections between comments. Takes risks in developing new ideas.	<i>Engaged Participant.</i> Asks thoughtful, open-ended questions. Builds off of previous comments in the discussion board. Responds directly to peers in a manner that adds meaning to the discussion.	<i>Skimming the Surface.</i> May ask clarifying or perfunctory questions. Responds to peers in a manner that demonstrates superficial engagement with their ideas.	<i>"Post and Go"</i> Student does not make meaningful contributions to the discussion community. Does not respond to peers, even when prompted to do so. May disrupts the community with discourteous behavior.
Style & Format	Meets or exceeds required word count. Post(s) are practically perfect grammatically. Student consistently provides academic citations for ideas not his/her own.	Meets or nearly meets required word count. Post(s) may include a few errors that are minor enough that they do not distract the reader. Student references sources for ideas, but may do so inconsistently.	Meets at least 80% of the required word count. Post may include errors that distract the reader but do not detract from the argument. Student does not provide citations for sources.	Falls significantly short of the required word count. And/Or post contains multiple flaws that seriously confuse the reader. Student does not engage sources, and thus, none are cited.

Adapted from the University of San Francisco Educational Technology Master's Program scoring guides and the Phillips Exeter Academy Harkness Discussion rubric.

EXPECTATIONS FOR COUNSELOR, SOCIAL WORKER AND MENTAL HEALTH STAFF

Principals, Assistant Principals, Counselors, and our Social Worker will be available during Office Hours and schedule to meet/work with students. They will continue providing services to their caseloads, primarily in a one-on-one format, throughout the course of each work day. All of the staff above will be available to help support students who are absent/cannot participate, and may choose to lead small groups online for study sessions, tutorials, or personal support. Counselors and our Social Worker will work with the Administration, to communicate with families about attendance/participation concerns and support students in getting back on track.

EXPECTATIONS FOR MODERATORS OF ACTIVITIES & CLUBS

Staff moderators will discern, in dialogue with student leaders, how it makes most sense for an activity, club, or other community group or small group working together to continue its work in the event of a closed campus. Faculty should communicate their overall approach to the circumstances as well as clear

expectations about: (1) virtual syncs during the Wednesday Morning WXYZ Activity/Club/Group period, (2) assignments and deadlines, and (3) other shared experiences they may wish to facilitate in an effort to sustain community (e.g. a video, reading, or virtual discussion). In some cases, it may not make sense for an activity, club, or other group to continue to engage in the context of a closed campus. If a faculty moderator determines this is the case, they should communicate their decision and rationale to group members.

WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM ADMINISTRATORS

The Principal will continue to send a weekly communication to parents and students with updates, announcements, and a reminder that school is still in session. Schoolwide administration will communicate with the community *at least* weekly. Faculty and Staff can expect to continue staff meetings (full Faculty/Staff including classified). Look for Google Calendar invitations for a link to the Zoom meeting. Administrators will “walk the virtual halls” by checking Google Classroom and joining classes via Zoom when possible.

WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM TECH

In the event of a school closure, the tech department may still be working either from campus or remotely. The tech department will be monitoring helpdesk@alpineschols.net email during normal school hours. Please include a phone number so that we can contact you quickly. All effort will be made to quickly contact you to resolve the issue. This may include remoting into your computer (with permission), sending you a screencast, calling you, emailing, or opening a Zoom session.

CONTINGENCY PLANS IF YOU'RE SICK AND CAN'T FACILITATE CLASS

If you are unable to facilitate your class, please communicate with your principal and front office. Principals will have access to all courses in Google Classroom and could step in to help. If a team member needs to temporarily take over your course, please contact tech support and your administrator and they will add the teacher to your course or you can do it which is much quicker. Please be sure to log your sick time in aesop. If you require additional support, please contact HR. Remember, we are all in this together. We are all going to have to step in to help our colleagues through this.

QUICK LINKS TO TUTORIALS FOR TECH TOOLS

If you don't find an answer to the exact question you have, a great first step is to search for the software/program name + function + tutorial (such as “Zoom record meeting tutorial”). And of course, you can email the tech team with questions.

Google Classroom

- Posting an update
- Posting an assignment

- Grading student work
- Sharing and annotating documents
- Creating a discussion board
- Creating a quiz or assessment
- How to create a poll
- Embed a Youtube video
- Individually assigning work to specific students
- Uploading audio, video, and images
- Submitting assignment - student view
- How to view teacher comments - student view

Zoom

- [Downloading the Zoom Client](#)
- [Joining and participating in a meeting on Zoom](#)
- [Scheduling a meeting and inviting others to join](#)
- [Meeting Controls: sharing my screen, managing chat, muting participants](#)
- [Getting started on Windows and Mac](#)
- [Starting the desktop client](#)
- [Testing computer and device audio](#)
- [Recording a Zoom meeting](#)
- [Breakout rooms](#)

Google Suite

- [Creating and sharing a doc](#)
- [Inserting hyperlinks within a doc](#)
- [Creating a Google Form \(survey\) and viewing responses](#)
- [Creating and sharing a Google Slides deck](#)
- [Hosting a Google Hangout Meet](#)

This guide is modified from the "Flexible Plan for Instructional Continuity" from Sacred Heart Preparatory, Atherton, CA. The lead writers are Diana Neebe (@dneebe, dneebe@shschools.org) and Joy Lopez (@technomaven, jlopez@shschools.org)

Below are links to a few resources that influence this plan's approach and thinking:

- [International School Resources for Virtual School \(Google Drive Folder\)](#)
- [Next Vista: Facing an Emergency and Switching to Online Learning](#)
- [Concordia International School, Shanghai: When Virtual Learning Is Your Only Option \(podcast\)](#)
- [George Washington University Tools for Instructional Continuity](#)