MUSD Distance Learning Guidelines

Thank you for your flexibility and efforts in providing continuity of education for our students. The landscape is changing very quickly as new events occur, and as a result, we will need to adapt to those changes. As we embark on a new method of educating our students, please use these guidelines to keep students and employees engaged in distance learning while being safe and respectful at all times. These guidelines may change as new information comes in.

All students and personnel have access to *Google Apps for Education* (Google Hangouts, Meet, and Gmail). In order for these apps to work, students and personnel must sign in from their MUSD accounts. This will help Information Technology to provide any technical support that is needed.

Gmail
- Students can email anyone who has an email account in MUSD.
- Remind students to be careful about what they send, such as personal information, inappropriate language, cyber-bullying, or anything they do not want published on the internet.

Google Hangouts and Meet
- Personnel can use Google Hangouts and Meet for meetings, collaboration, and discussion. These apps can be used for live chats and discussions. It may be effective to mute everyone so that other voices aren't a distraction.
- Be conscious of student privacy. It is recommended to get parent permission first (parents can send an email giving permission) before engaging in video conferences with groups of students. There is not enough information about student home environments and no control of anything that happens in the background of a video conference. Be alert and ready to mute or turn off students' mics and cameras if needed.
- If you would like to start a video conference and have students participate using only audio, this would be an appropriate way to leverage technology to provide a sense of community. Again, please get parent permission first.
- Pre-record any lessons without students present in the video chat and upload the video to Google Classroom.
- Office Hours - Ask students to submit questions ahead of time, record yourself answering questions alone, and then upload the video to Google Classroom.

*You can use Google Meet to record yourself. It saves the video to your drive which you can then upload to Google Classroom. Keep in mind it takes a while for Google to generate the video file and then additional time to process it. Depending on the length, it could be minutes to hours.

March 25, 2020, 2:00PM

Group Work
Per social distancing policies, please do not encourage students to physically get together to work as a group. All work during school closure should be online activities and should not be done face-to-face. Be explicit in giving directions.

Videos and Photos
Please do not ask students to record themselves and upload any videos/photos of themselves or their classmates. This is a privacy issue. Instead, ask for logs, or view the timestamp of their postings and work.

Google Voice
You may not want parents and students to have access to your home/personal phone numbers. Google Voice is a telephone service that provides call forwarding, voicemail services, and voice and text messaging. Google Voice provides a U.S. telephone number, chosen by the user from available numbers in selected area codes, free of charge to each user account. The user can then make and receive calls, text, and receive voicemails using the Google Voice number.

Class Schedules
In order to provide structure and organization during the day for students, it is suggested that you adhere to your daily schedule, especially for intermediate and high school students since they have multiple classes during the day. For instance, if three classes are occurring simultaneously, and the student is enrolled in all three classes, the student will only be able to attend one of the classes and will miss instruction for the other two classes. An alternative approach is to record your lessons and post them, so if students cannot attend a live session, they can review the recorded session.

Social Media
Teachers should not use social media for instruction.

Other Considerations
While some homes may not have internet, many families have smart phones with data plans. Some cellular phone companies are now providing additional data (some even unlimited data) for the next 60 days. Consider the use of mobile friendly websites.

A lot of households have televisions. Consider the use of the television for instructional activities, such as having students watch PBS and educational programming.

Many of our elementary teachers use Class Dojo or See Saw to communicate with students and parents. Continue to use these apps to provide distance learning.

March 25, 2020, 2:00PM

Digital Citizenship

Teach/review the Digital Citizenship lessons that were created for the Chromebook roll out. The 4th grade lesson can be used for all elementary students, the 6th grade lesson can be used for all intermediate students, and the 9th and 11th grade lessons can be used for all high school students.

Curriculum

Core English language arts and mathematics workbooks will be purchased and mailed to students (Eureka, Carnegie Math, Benchmark, Study Sync, and Collections). Continue to use the core materials as primary instructional materials. A notification will be sent to teachers letting them know when workbooks are sent out.

Suggested Practices

Be Present as the Instructor

- Post weekly videos so that students can connect with the teacher's image and voice. The video can be short, 3 minutes or less. Review highlights from the previous week and provide a quick introduction of what is coming in the current week.
- Engage students by asking questions and responding to questions.
- Use frequent formative assessments (Poll Everywhere, Google Forms, etc.).

Work as a Group

- Work together to create engaging lessons and activities for students. Sharing with colleagues will reduce stress and the workload. When working with colleagues, remember you can share classes and resources through Google Classroom. This could enable teachers to assign activities in one class from other shared classes.

Focus on Active Learning

Consider creating a mix of:

- Robust discussions
- Collaborative work
- Video and audio clips
- Hands-on exercises
- Individual work time

Chunk Content into Smaller Pieces

- Avoid frequently assigning long text passages or long videos.

Hold "Office Hours"

- Consider setting specific times during the day that you would be available via a web-conferencing tool. Students could check in if they have questions about assignments - or if they just need to see and hear their teacher.

March 25, 2020, 2:00PM

Create Smaller Groups
- Assign students to smaller groups to review and comment upon each others' work. Smaller groups are also more effective at ensuring that all students participate equitably.

Be Careful with Your Time
- In a face to face classroom, when a question is asked by the teacher, one or two students might answer. When a teacher uses a discussion board online, the expectation is that all students will respond. A teacher can get lost in trying to respond to each student's response.
- Respond directly to some of the students. Keep a tally to make sure you respond to each student at least weekly, but not for every discussion assignment. Grade levels and specific needs of students will help drive how frequently to respond to each student.
- Establish start and end times for when you will respond to students and parents and communicate them so students and parents know when you are "active."
- Respond to emails within 24 hours. Responses do not need to be immediate, as that can be overwhelming. Set aside some time during the day to respond to emails.

Give Multimedia Options for Assignments
- Engagement and learning can be enhanced when students are encouraged to create content through the use of slides, videos, podcasts, blogs, data visualizations, websites, infographics, etc.

Stay Flexible with Pacing
- Have work for the week posted by the start of the week and due at the end of the week (or even over the weekend, although you may not review the work until Monday).
- Try working with "windows of time" instead of specific due dates for some assignments.
- Be prepared to differentiate due dates for students who struggle with the rigor or style of distance learning.