# Guidelines for Delivering Online Instruction via Web Conferencing Platforms

It is the goal of the **<<School District>>** ("District") to provide students with access to high quality education and the most effective curriculum and instructional materials as well as tools and applications for learning. In accordance with guidance from the State of California and the California Department of Education, the District may, as part of its distance learning program, deliver online instruction to students and conduct virtual classroom activities. To facilitate the delivery of educational instruction and related services to students, the District may use one or more web conferencing communication platforms. These platforms may include [Insert: District approved web/video conferencing platforms].

When delivering online instruction and facilitating educational activities via these platforms, District employees are expected to engage in conduct that that is consistent with professional standards required of District employees, including compliance with all District Board policies, Administrative Regulations, and all applicable internal District policies and practices. District employees are also required to comply with the guidelines set forth in these Guidelines for Delivering Online Instruction via Web Conferencing Platforms ("Guidelines") to establish settings and controls for virtual educational activities and to provide notice to meeting participants of District guidelines and expectations for such activities.

When a District employee utilizes a District approved web conferencing communication platform to deliver online instruction and/or facilitate group educational activities, the employee is expected to abide by these Guidelines. The Guidelines are intended to ensure that District employees facilitate District approved virtual instruction in a responsible manner, and to promote a safe and secure learning environment for all students, while recognizing the limitations on District control over certain features and functions of these platforms.

## Recommended Meeting Settings

- **District-Issued Accounts**. District employees should only use District-issued accounts for creating and setting meetings via web conferencing platforms. Personal logins should not be used.

- **Unique Meeting ID**. If possible, create a unique meeting ID for your meeting. To the extent you have a personal meeting ID available, do not use it to create a meeting.

- **Meeting Password**. If possible, set a meeting password so that participants will be required to enter a password to join the meeting.

- **Do Not Enable Participants to Join Before Host**. Some platforms have settings that control whether participants can join a meeting before the host joins. If available, do not allow participants to join the meeting before the host joins. If possible, enable a "waiting room" feature, which will place participants in a virtual waiting room until the host is ready to start the meeting.

- **Do Not Share Meeting Information**. Avoid sharing meeting ID information via public websites such as social media websites or a District-sponsored website.

- **Limit Screen Sharing**. Some web conferencing platforms will allow the host to limit the ability of participants to share their screens. If screen sharing will not be required for your meeting, check your settings to ensure that only the host can enable screen sharing.

**Guidelines for Sharing Meeting Invitations with Participants**

- **Forwarding Meeting Invitations**. When disseminating a web conference meeting invitation, only forward the invitation to the individuals who will participate in the meeting. Send invitations to District-issued accounts and avoid sending invitations to personally owned student accounts. Avoid forwarding the calendar invitation to any third party whose participation is not required in the meeting.

- **Instructions to Participants.** When transmitting your meeting invitation, include instructions for recipients who may not have used the platform in the past, or who may not be familiar with the settings offered by the platform.
    - Some platforms are set to automatically enable cameras and audio settings once a user joins a meeting. If applicable, notify users ahead of time that this will occur so that they can be prepared to adjust their settings prior to joining the meeting.
    - Most platforms give users the ability to mute their microphones when they are not speaking. If applicable, instruct users of this feature and direct participants to mute their microphones if they are not speaking during a particular portion of the meeting.

- **Meeting Expectations.** When sending your meeting invitation, distribute a list of meeting expectations to students. Guidelines may include the following:
    - Do not share login information, meeting links, or passwords with others.
    - School and classroom rules apply to the virtual instruction environment.
    - It is recommended that students review the District Technology Acceptable/Responsible Use Policy regarding expectations for behavior while conducting themselves online and on District devices.
    - Dress appropriately for virtual instruction sessions.
    - Do not conduct audio or video recordings or take screen shots of virtual class meetings or activities unless you have received prior permission to do so from a teacher or authorized District official.
    - To the extent possible, participate from a quiet and neutral location that will be free of distractions.
    - Students who use inappropriate language, share inappropriate images, or in any way behave inappropriately on a video conference will be subject to appropriate discipline.
    - Once the meeting is over, be sure to close out of the meeting platform entirely. Make sure that your camera is covered and that your microphone is off to avoid inadvertent transmission following the meeting.

- **Recording**. If you have received District approval to record a meeting, let participants know that the meeting will be recorded when you send out the meeting invitation. The District will provide necessary notices to parents/guardians, but it is best practice to remind participants ahead of the meeting that recording will occur.

- **Answer Questions**. Invite participants to send you questions about the way the meeting will occur in advance of the meeting. If you receive questions, publish your responses to those questions to all participants in advance of the meeting so that all participants have the same information as they prepare for the meeting.

**Guidelines for Hosting the Meeting**

- **Meeting Background**. When engaging in a virtual classroom meeting, maintain a neutral and appropriate background that is free from distractions.

- **Supervising Students**. While engaging in virtual classroom meetings, teachers and classroom aides are required to supervise students and refer students for disciplinary action as necessary when students engage in misconduct.

- **Mandatory Reporting Obligations**. While engaging in virtual classroom meetings, teachers should be reminded that they are mandated reporters of suspected abuse and neglect, including while communicating with students during virtual instruction. If teachers or other mandated reporters have questions regarding mandated reporting obligations, they should consult with a supervisor for guidance and additional resources.

- **Locking a Meeting**. Some web conferencing platforms have settings that allow you to lock a meeting after all participants have joined. This feature can prevent unauthorized outsiders from joining the meeting.

- **Roll Call**. Begin a meeting by double checking that only authorized participants have joined the meeting. If there is a participant that you do not recognize or that is not authorized to participate, remove the participant from the meeting.

- **Reiterate Meeting Expectations**. Open the meeting by providing a brief reminder of meeting expectations that were shared along with the meeting invitation.

- **Video, Audio, and Chat Features**. Some platforms allow video, audio, and chat features to be enabled during a meeting. In some platforms, chats between users can be seen by the entire group of participants, and in some platforms, even chats marked as "private" can be viewed by the host. Give notice to participants that, if they enable video, audio, and chat settings, their conduct may be accessible to other meeting participants and to the host.

- **Recording the Meeting**. If you have received District approval to record a meeting, let participants know that the meeting will be recorded before you initiate the recording. Some platforms have a built-in feature that provides notice to participants when a

recording has been initiated. If the platform you are using does not have this feature, provide a verbal notice to participants before initiating the recording.

- **Screen Sharing**. Some platforms offer two options for screen sharing: sharing from a specific application or sharing an entire screen. To limit the potential for confidential District information to be shared with meeting participants, limit screen sharing to a specific application (e.g., a specific document that you need to reference) rather than sharing your entire screen.

- **Removing Participants**. Some platforms offer the host the ability to remove a participant from a meeting. If a participant engages in inappropriate conduct that is visible to other participants, give the participant a warning and an opportunity to stop the conduct. If the participant does not stop, consider removing the participant from the meeting. In these cases, the participant may need to be given an alternative method to participate in the instruction, and disciplinary action may be warranted. Check with a District administrator after the meeting to determine next steps in such cases.

- **Avoid Sharing Personally Identifiable Information from Education Records**. Just as you would in a physical classroom setting, avoid sharing personally identifiable information from student educational records during the meeting. Such information is protected from disclosure without parent or guardian consent under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA"). Protecting student privacy is just as important in the virtual setting as it is in the physical classroom setting.

- **Reminders Before Ending the Meeting**. Before ending the meeting, instruct all participants that, after the meeting ends, each participant should close out of the platform entirely and double check to make sure that cameras and microphones are disabled.

**Post-Meeting Guidelines**

- **Storing Recordings**. If you recorded a meeting, be sure to safely store the recording in accordance with District guidelines and requirements. In some cases, recordings of educational activities may be educational records that are protected from disclosure without parental consent under FERPA. If you have questions about how to securely store a meeting recording and/or securely upload the recording to District storage accounts, contact the Information Technology Department.

- **Avoid Public Dissemination**. Avoid publicly posting or disseminating video or audio recordings of virtual classroom activities to the general public via, for example, social media accounts. As noted above, in some cases, recordings may be protected from disclosure. Additionally, students may have opted-out of having their images or voices shared publicly. If you have questions about who may have access to a recording, contact District administration.

- **Sharing Recordings**. If you will share recordings with other teachers, participants, or to students who were unable to participate in the activity but require access to the recording

for legitimate educational purposes, be sure that the recording is password protected or otherwise securely transmitted to the recipient. If you have questions about how to transmit recordings in this manner, contact the Information Technology Department. Also, when you make the recording available, inform recipients that they may not share recordings with others without prior District approval. If questions arise, contact District administration for further guidance.

- **Sharing or Publishing Lesson Plans**. Employees are required to obtain permission prior to publishing or selling any online content or lesson plans created during and in the scope of their employment and intended for District use.

Questions regarding these Guidelines and specific settings for District web conferencing accounts may be directed to: [insert contact name and information].

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