

Vacaville Unified School District Distance Learning Plan - Middle School and High School Effective April 20, 2020



Purpose

Vacaville Unified School District is committed to helping our students make educational progress while school is closed. This plan is intended to ensure our students are gaining the essential knowledge and skills necessary to be prepared for their next grade and/or level.

Daily Schedule

It is suggested that students spend no more than 3 hours daily on school assignments. Daily learning times may look something like this:

Grades 7-8	35-40 minutes daily four times a week per subject
Grades 9-12	45-50 minutes daily four times a week per subject
Advanced Placement Courses	50-60 minutes daily four times a week per subject

[Sample Daily Schedule Template](#)

Grading - Beginning April 20, 2020 Distance Learning assignments will be required and graded

Middle School students will be graded with **Pass** or **No Mark**. **NM** will be used for students who do poorly on assessments, were unable to complete work and prepare for assessments due to circumstances, or for students when there is not enough data on to determine their grade. Students should do their best and attempt the work.

For all High School classes and Middle School IM1 math, grades will continue to be **A-F** and students will earn credits accordingly. In special circumstances, an **Incomplete** may be issued as a grade. Final Grades should not be significantly lower than previously earned at the third quarter unless a student has full access and opportunity and chooses to not perform work, or their lack of completing work was within their control. Teachers have been given guidelines for grading that address the issues of equity and access during the closure.

We are confident our teachers and students will work together to make this grading system work for everyone during this time.

Distance Learning Platforms

The following Distance Learning Platforms support both Distance Learning and staff/student/family collaboration to ensure a quality student learning experience when planning and delivering remotely:

1. **School Loop** and **Blackboard** are the communication tools used to communicate with VUSD families.

2. Google Hangouts, Google Meet and Zoom are the online Distance Learning platform used for interactive support.

3. Google Classroom, the Clever Portal, and SchoolLoop are the online Distance Learning platforms used to share weekly assignments by class. It is through these platforms where students gain access to their Distance Learning Plan, which includes weekly learning goals, assignments, support methods, and assessments.

- If you would like to request alternative physical work packets, please complete the [Work Packet Request Form](#).

4. What if we don't have a computer/laptop/Chromebook for our student to use?

- If you would like to request a Chromebook for home use, please complete the [Chromebook Request Form](#).

What do we expect of students?	Other Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Check email daily, if you have access to a device. - Check your Google Classroom and/or Flexisched (depending on your school site) for teacher office hours and online meetings. - Complete assigned work by the required due date, when possible. - Completed assignments will be recorded in the gradebook. <p><u>For students completing work using an online platform:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All online student work from the previous week will be submitted by the required due dates. <p><u>For students completing work using paper packets:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Student work may be picked up from your school office during posted office hours. - The previous week's work should be returned when picking up the next week's work. <p>We understand that school closure poses significant challenges to learning. Therefore, if for some reason a student is struggling to meet the above expectations, or are having difficulty accessing materials, please contact your teacher(s) so that we may collaborate to find additional ways to support you.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Try to maintain a routine: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wake up each day by 8 am and eat a healthy breakfast - Go to bed at a consistent time every night to ensure you are getting enough sleep - Spend at least 45 minutes per day engaging in activities that promote positive mental wellbeing (meditate, stretch, go for a walk, play with your pets, play outside, yoga, etc.) - Spend at least 45 minutes per day engaging in activities that explore your creative side (draw, sing, dance, read for fun, etc.)

FAQs

1. What about the student work that was assigned prior to school closure?

Teachers may modify, accept, grade, and add scores to existing assignments.

2. **My student’s teacher is posting assignments on Google Classroom. What is that?**
 “Google Classroom” is our universal online platform for teachers/students to utilize for managing assignments. [Distance Learning Resources](#)

3. **What if we don’t have a computer/laptop/Chromebook for our student to use?**
 - If you would like to request a Chromebook for home use, please complete the [Chromebook Request Form](#).
 - If you would like to request physical work packets, please complete the [Work Packet Request Form](#).

4. **What does this school closure mean for my student’s grades?**
 Even though school is physically closed, learning will continue. Teachers will be assigning work, providing feedback, and issuing grades. As long as students are engaging in assigned work, connecting with teachers, and submitting assignments, they will earn grades and credits towards graduation.

5. **What about assignment due dates?**
 We know that these are unusual times and we can be flexible with due dates. If for some reason a student is struggling to meet specific deadlines, please contact your teacher(s) so that we find additional ways to support you.

6. **My student earned a D/F grade for the semester, how can they make this up?**
 We will work with students on an individual basis to support them in making up below average grades. This may be done through intervention, summer work, or online credit recovery/concurrent coursework next school year.

7. **I am a senior. What does this school closure mean for my progress towards graduation?**
 We are considering lowering our graduation credit requirements for seniors at the comprehensive high schools and the continuation high school. This change would include dropping our local requirement of Health. These changes would be for the 2019-2020 school year only.

8. **What about AP exams?**
 AP Exams will be offered for students to take remotely. Each exam will be 45 minutes. The online exam will be offered on two dates (TBD). Digital portfolio submission deadlines have been extended to May 26th at 11:59pm EST. Only units covered until early March will be covered on the exam. Any students can cancel the exam at no charge. Instructional resources launched on 3/25/20--[free remote learning resources](#). Additional test information will be released on April 3.

Staff Expectations (to begin April 20)

STAFF EXPECTATIONS	ADVICE FOR ONLINE TEACHING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - COURSE CONTENT: - Teachers will post all assignments for the week by 9:00 am on Monday via Google 	Adapted from We Are Teachers: https://www.weareteachers.com/teaching-online-dos-donts/

Classroom

- [Weekly Learning Plan \(WLP\)](#) (Sample)
- It is recommended that teachers plan no more than 3 hours of class work per subject per week, including time for reading/watching/listening, engaging with peers via discussion boards and/or Docs, attending class virtually via Meet or Zoom, individual assignments/ learning tasks, etc.
- It is also recommended that assignments be completed over time instead of daily.

COMMUNICATION/FEEDBACK:

- Teachers and counselors will be available for office hours via email. They may also utilize other online platforms, such as Google Chat, Google Meet, Zoom, or some alternative online forum
- Communicate with and provide timely feedback to students on submitted work.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE/ ENGAGEMENT:

In the spirit of distance learning, we will not be formally taking attendance. Teachers will monitor student participation, utilizing assignment completion, participation in online activities, and communication through email, both to ensure equity and student engagement. Teachers should contact students/families directly when they have concerns regarding student participation.

DO: Be prepared.

“I always send my students some activities to print in advance so they’re not looking at the screen for the whole lesson.” - Marla

“Start your meeting with everyone muted and ask them to sign into the chat box by answering an opening question (like a drill and you can take attendance this way also).” -Christina

“Hit record on all live webinar sessions. Tell the students and parents their session is being recorded, too. This will also help them refer back to the video if they forget what you reviewed in the session with them.” -Todd

DON'T: Overwhelm students.

“Assign way less work than you think you should. Students are going to take much longer to complete it due to tech issues, stress, and the challenge of having to learn mostly on their own.” -Greta

“Give them less than a normal in-class day. They’re going to be relearning how to schedule and manage their time so they’ll be overwhelmed.” -Skye

“Our students are under a lot of stress just like we are. Just like this isn’t a vacation for us, it’s not a vacation for them. They are scared.” -Emily

DO: Collaborate.

“We’re lucky that our department has five teachers, so we each take a designated day and write up lessons for that (week/unit) and share with the rest. That way we have a full week, and since we worked together, we know it will flow with what the last person did.” -Kyoko

DO: Build Community and Social-Emotional Connections

“I’m giving my students social time before class starts so that they can catch up with friends, show them their cool stuff, and be silly.” -Angelica

“I do a daily question that is more meaningful to my

	<p>students so we can start conversations. Discussions and building relationships were a big thing in the classroom.” -Emily S.</p>
<p>- LEAVE REPORTING</p>	<p>If you are sick or caring for a sick member of your family and cannot do any of the work listed above please enter your absence in Frontline as you would any other sick leave (see below for exceptions).</p>
<p>- EMERGENCY PAID SICK LEAVE</p>	<p>Under the Emergency Paid Sick Leave Act (EPSLA), provides employees two weeks of paid sick leave for coronavirus-related reasons.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Who qualifies? All contracted employees (not substitutes), regardless of length of employment, who are unable to report to work (or work remotely) due to a coronavirus-related reason. This leave is in addition to all other leaves employees are currently entitled to. ● What is the leave benefit? Two weeks (10 days/80 hours) of paid leave, pro-rated for part-time employees (i.e. an employee contracted as a 0.5 FTE is entitled to 10 days, 40 hours, of EPSLA leave
<p>- PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY LEAVE</p>	<p>The Emergency Family Medical Leave Act, provides eligible employees 12 workweeks of leave if an employee is unable to work (or work remotely) due to a need to care for a child related to school or child-care closure due to coronavirus emergency as declared by a Federal, State, or local authority.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Who qualifies? Employees are required to have been employed with the District for at least 30 calendar days to qualify and be unable to report to work (or work remotely) due to: 1) a need to care for a child because school or place of care has been closed, or 2) the child-care provider of a son or daughter is unavailable due to a coronavirus

	<p>emergency as declared by a Federal, State or local authority.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What is the leave benefit? After 10 days*, beginning on day 11, employees receive partial wage compensation for up to 10 workweeks (50 days).
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Leaves are a complex and often confusing topic, as always, the Human Resources staff are available to assist our employees in navigating the use of leaves.

FAQs Regarding Grading

1. Can I give students new materials to learn?

- Yes. New material may be assigned in the last 6 weeks. New material should be based on the essential standards determined by your grade/subject level. Keep in mind that students are learning the material in a different environment without your direct support. This may affect the students' level of mastery.

2. Can I give due dates for assignments?

- Yes. Students continue to need structure. However, these dates should not be hard and fast, but flexible, taking into account the myriad of issues students are facing at home.

3. What can I grade or not grade?

- At this time, it may not be necessary or possible to grade each and every assignment. Assignments are formative in nature and meant to further learning. It is suggested that teachers use assignments to check for participation and understanding. Teachers may find it useful to modify their methods of weighting grades. This would ensure that grades are not based as heavily on assignments/assessments during this time of closure. Our board policy is a great resource for this question. [VUSD Grading Board Policy](#)

4. Can I give a Final?

- Students cannot be required to return to school to take tests or finals. It is recommended that teachers forgo the traditional final exam. Assessments may be given to determine student mastery. Reminder: assessments can be in the form of a project, piece of writing, artwork, etc. as well as a test.

5. Are we still assigning A-F grades?

- For all High School classes and Middle School IM1 math, grades will continue to be A-F and students will earn credits accordingly.
- Middle School - Pass/NM grades will be given. NM will be used for students who do poorly on assessments, were unable to complete work and prepare for assessments due to circumstances, or for students when there is not enough data on to determine their grade.
- Final Grades should not be significantly lower than previously earned in the third quarter.

Exceptions to this include, but may not be limited to, students who have access/opportunities to participate in distance learning and choose not to do so or when lack of work completion is within their control.

- d. In special circumstances, an Incomplete may be issued as a grade.

OVERVIEW OF ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES (SCHOOL LEVEL)

Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and maintain plans for distance learning. • Create a process for staff to refer students to counselors and admin. for support. • Communicate with staff, students, and parents. • Support staff, students, and parents during Distance Learning. • Ensure effective implementation of Distance Learning plan and accountability to student learning.
Subject Matter Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate with colleagues to determine essential knowledge and skills for their subject matter. • Develop high-quality student learning experiences that are intended to build essential knowledge and skills. At the base level, the lessons should be accessible to all students including EL, Sp Ed, and SES. Lessons should be scaffolded to the extent possible to account for student access and ability to complete them. Opportunities for extension may be included for students who wish to go beyond. • Communicate with and provide timely feedback to students. • Share weekly/unit learning plans or similar with site administration. • Final Grades should not be significantly lower than previously earned at the quarter unless a student has full access and opportunity and chooses to not perform work (see Grading FAQs) • For all High School classes and Middle School IM1 math, grades will continue to be A-F and students will earn credits accordingly. • Middle School - Pass grades will be given. NM will be used for students who do poorly on assignments, were unable to complete work and prepare for benchmarks due to circumstances, or for students when there is not enough data to determine their grade. • For more resources available please see this link: VUSD Teacher Resources
Special Ed Teachers/Service Providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support co-teachers, when applicable, in the development of high-quality student learning experiences in accordance with distance learning plans. • Create and/or develop resources to support SPED students. • Communicate with and provide timely feedback to students. • Communicate with parents, as needed. • See Special Education School Closure Guidance for case manager guidance • See Virtual IEP Meeting Brief for guidance on holding IEPs
Rtl/Intervention/ELD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partner with classroom teachers to accommodate the online learning curriculum

/Learning Support Coordinators	<p>they are providing to the learning support students on their caseload.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate with all parents of students on their caseload the first week regarding the online learning plan and how they will co-plan with the teachers for the students to access the content of the distance learning lessons. • Recommend to parents and teachers other online learning platforms learning support students might be able to access at this time (e.g., Google Classroom, Clever, Zoom, etc.).
Counselors/Mental Health Clinicians	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create developmentally appropriate videos regarding self-regulation, anxiety and/or wellness strategies that students can practice during this time of Distance Learning. • Create counseling lessons that students could complete “at home” based on the current curriculum. • Provide developmentally appropriate “blog-type” statement/s that include resources regarding anxiety, isolation, health and wellbeing particular to grade level(s). • Respond to counseling needs of students, as needed.
Para-professionals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide support and assistance to assigned grade level and/or subject area teachers.
Office Classified Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide clerical support by printing and organizing physical packets of work requested by students, answering and returning phone calls.