



Livermore Valley Joint Unified School District

COVID-19 Distance Learning Plan

Introduction

During the spring 2020 period of school dismissal in response to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, the staff of the Livermore Valley Joint Unified School District (LVJUSD) remains committed to supporting the students, staff, and parents and guardians of our school communities. LVJUSD staff remains focused on providing learning opportunities, social connection, and a degree of normalcy for the students and families of our school communities.

Governor Newsom issued an Executive Order to continue delivering “high-quality educational opportunities to students to the extent feasible through, among other options, distance learning.” Under the distance learning model, LVJUSD provides our students an engaging, standards-based education with the necessary support structures.

These guidelines take effect on April 14, 2020 and remain in place until such time as students and teachers return to in-class instruction on school sites.

Defining Distance Learning

Distance learning refers to instruction that takes place when a student and teacher are in different locations. LVJUSD staff will primarily engage in distance learning through online platforms. It is recognized that teaching and learning remotely requires a different approach from in-person classroom instruction.

LVJUSD staff may utilize a combination of the following instructional practices that help make distance learning effective:

- Lessons where teacher and student simultaneously engage (synchronous learning). These could be in the form of a virtual or live stream lesson (e.g. Via WebEx, Zoom) or live class discussion boards.
- Lessons where the teacher provides instruction and the material for reading or viewing, and assignments for completion with a flexible time frame (asynchronous learning). These lessons could include power-points with voice-over, screencasts, streaming video, recordings of WebEx, Zoom, etc., posted lecture notes, exchange across discussion boards.

- So that students will not have concurrent learning sessions, school sites will develop a schedule that helps teachers to avoid offering live content that conflicts with that being offered by other teachers.

Curriculum

Teachers will focus on facilitating mastery of each course's essential standards based on pacing guides: foundational standards that are critical for student success in subsequent units and courses. Non-essential standards are not required to be covered. The primary focus will be on ensuring that our students are prepared for next school year, providing them with learning opportunities and feedback to obtain the necessary knowledge.

Instruction

The shift from traditional classroom-based instruction to distance learning is significant, and it is understood that teachers may no longer be able to use some of their traditional instructional strategies. Using approved online platforms, teachers will deliver curricular content and instruction. The length of instruction and the time expected from students will vary based on the grade level and course:

- Elementary teachers will design approximately 2-3 hours *per day* of focused coursework, including time spent reading. This timeframe of 2-3 hours includes both coursework to be done during online lessons and required work to be done independently.
- Middle school and high school teachers will design approximately 2 hours of *weekly* coursework per subject. This timeframe of 2 hours is inclusive of coursework to be completed during online lessons and work required to be done independently.
- Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate courses may include additional expectations in preparation for the modified AP exams. Honors courses may also have additional time expectations.
- Teachers selecting to offer synchronous lessons (live engagement) cannot mandate student engagement with a lesson at a specific time. If a lesson is offered in a synchronous format, it must be recorded and archived for student access at a later time. Students are facing various circumstances at home (e.g. having to share technology devices with other family members) and therefore cannot be required to attend mandatory sessions.
- To provide academic support, teachers are encouraged to provide targeted intervention time. Intervention time may include general "office hours" or a more targeted support lesson.

Student Support

Students are encouraged to maintain communication with their teachers via email and/or through Google Classroom or other online tools implemented by the teacher. Students and families may seek individualized support from teachers. Counselors and Nurses will also be available via email, initially, and through phone or Webex meetings, to provide social emotional support, as needed.

Students with Individualized Education Plans (IEP) or 504 plans need additional support and their accommodations and modifications must be met to the extent possible while our District implements distance learning.

The Special Education case managers will take the lead and create specific plans, in consultation with service providers, to be implemented for students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) on his/her caseload.

- IEP Meetings: During this dismissal time, IEP meetings will be held as calendared, if possible, but only telephonically or through WebEx.

Assessment

Effective assessment in a distance learning model will require LVJUSD teachers to adjust many of their current assessment strategies. When developing assessments, teachers should consider the following guidelines:

- Assessments should focus on determining student proficiency of essential standards and students should receive regular feedback on their level of proficiency.
- Formative assessments are appropriate given the current educational circumstances. Formative assessments should be utilized to provide students with feedback on their learning progress and need for instruction and intervention.

Grades and Alternative Marks

On March 17, 2020, The California Department of Education (CDE) issued general guidelines regarding the issuing of grades during a period of school closure and distance learning, such as the dismissal due to COVID-19. According to the CDE, while delivering distance learning, grades are to be used to inform instruction and may not be punitive. The CDE has provided further guidance which specifies that Credit/No Credit may be substituted for traditional methods of grading.

Leaders of CDE, the State Board of Education, and each of the higher education segments who are part of the Governor's Council for Postsecondary Education – the University of California, California State University, and Community College systems and the Association of Independent Colleges and Universities – have determined that students should be held harmless from any impacts of school closures. On April 2, 2020, colleges and universities provided essential, clarifying information regarding potential adjustments to how 2020 grades will be viewed during the admissions process: the university systems are willing to accept credit/no credit grades in lieu of letter grades for all courses, including A–G courses, completed in winter/ spring/ summer 2020 for all students. Grades of credit/no credit will not affect the UC or CSU calculations of GPA.

Considering the dramatic changes in our education circumstances, our rapid shift to distance learning, and our focus on teaching and learning, LVJUSD will implement the following guidelines with regard to Trimester 3 grades:

- **Elementary Schools**

The focus for teaching and learning will be on essential standards for the third trimester in each grade level according to pacing guides.

Trimester 3 Report Cards:

- Teachers will enter NE (not evaluated at this time) for all students in all areas for the third trimester.
- Teachers will provide a narrative summary on student progress for ELA and math based on feedback of student progress on essential standards.

- **Secondary Schools**

LVJUSD recognizes the following principles as essential to its policy for earning credits during the COVID-19 Shelter-in-Place and the need for Distance Learning:

- The need for credits and grades to accurately reflect proficiency in a given subject
- The unprecedented strain and difficulty that this creates for students, especially students with limited time, technology, or access to support services
- The unprecedented difficulty that this creates for teachers, who are tasked with providing curriculum, instruction, and assessment through distance learning media
- The legal obligation for LVJUSD to provide students with IEPs, 504s, language services, and other special circumstances with the supports necessary to achieve proficiency and passing grades

These principles have led us to develop the following policy for earning credits during the remainder of Trimester 3 for the 2019 - 2020 school year.

- **Middle Schools**

The focus in teaching and learning will be on essential standards needed to determine student proficiency in the subject. Each course will offer 2-4 Essential Assignments and one assessment in order to determine student proficiency. Teachers will continue to offer weekly Learning Opportunities to prepare students for the Essential Assignments and the assessment.

Trimester 3 Report Cards - Middle School

- Students will receive a final grade of "Credit" or "No Credit" in all courses. These final grades will not be part of GPA calculations.

- **High Schools**

Trimester 3 Grades - High School

All classes will receive a final grade of “Credit” or “No Credit.” These final grades will not be part of GPA calculations. Courses will be divided into three tiers, based on the course’s role as a preparatory course to subsequent courses in the high school and/or post-high school curriculum.

- **Tier I:** These courses are stand-alone and do not lead into courses that rely on mastery of the content of these courses. All students enrolled will receive a grade of “Credit” for each class at the end of the trimester. Teachers will continue to offer Learning Opportunities during the time of school dismissal and will provide feedback to students to help them gauge their progress.
- **Tier II:** These courses lead into subsequent courses with curriculum that spirals as the courses advance. Due to the spiraling content, students will need to complete a set of assignments during the period of dismissal to earn a grade of “Credit” for the course.
- **Tier III:** These courses require meeting of essential content area standards for students to be ready for the following course. Students will need to complete a set number of assignments and pass a summative assessment that measures meeting of the essential standards with a minimum score of 65% to earn a grade of “Credit” and move on to the next course.

High School Principals will share information about courses designated as Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III.

Student Engagement

Teachers will monitor student participation and engagement throughout this period of distance learning. If students are not participating or engaged, outreach will include emails to students and parents and phone calls. If there is no response, each site has developed a tracking system such as Google forms so administrators and Child Welfare and Attendance (CWA) staff can provide additional outreach.

Future Considerations regarding grading and assignment of credit

LVJUSD is in a rapidly changing educational environment. Key variables that will influence decisions about grading practices include, but are not limited to, the following: new guidelines from the CDE, new policy from the Governing Board, decisions made by colleges and universities, and changing health and safety conditions in the community.