



WESTERN SIERRA
CHARTER SCHOOLS

DISTANCE LEARNING HANDBOOK

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WSCS TK-12 GENERAL INFORMATION

Introduction

WSCS has created this Distance Learning Handbook to help effectively communicate with parents, students and staff the responsibilities and practices of our Distance Learning program. We understand that this method of learning is new and may be challenging. We were hoping to be able to have onsite class options for all of our students. Unfortunately, at the time of this writing, Fresno and Madera County are both on the COVID-19 Watchlist and are not allowed to provide onsite instruction.

Please know that our leadership team and WSCS staff have been busy training in technology and collaborating to help make this year's Distance Learning experience exciting, effective and successful for all students.

**Please Note: All Zoom Live Instruction Class Sessions and Tutoring Sessions Will be Recorded.*



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Preparing Your Student's Learning Environment

For your students, the learning environment is your home and surroundings. Parents, please help your children establish a quiet work space, with expectations and routines. Where age-appropriate, you might like to discuss distance learning with your children and include them in some decision-making processes, such as how he/she would like to set up his/her learning space and organize materials.



Parent(Guardian) Responsibilities

WSCS is committed to Parent-led education. We thank you for your trust in our educational program and appreciate working together with you in ensuring a quality educational experience. To ensure success for your student it is important that both the teaching staff, student and parent are actively keeping up with their various responsibilities. You as the parent have a vital role to fulfill with regard to distance learning.

Below is a list of Parent Responsibilities that would greatly help your child's success in Distance Learning.

- Make sure your internet and bandwidth are working properly.
- Read Emails/Parent Square messages that our schools send out regarding Distance Learning updates and information
- Make sure you and your child know the class schedules
- Let your teacher(s) know about any challenges with technology or assignments right away. If your child is in high school, advise them to reach out to their teachers(s) directly for clarifications on assignments.
- Know how to access your Student Portal in School Pathways and Google Classrooms
- Stay up to date on progress grades (sent out monthly to your student)
- If your child will need help staying focused and meeting the classroom expectations please be prepared to sit next to your child during the Zoom class to assist them

Why We Use Zoom & Google Classroom

FOR ALL DISTANCE LEARNING, WSCS HAS CHOSEN **"GOOGLE CLASSROOM"** AS OUR LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM AND **"ZOOM"** AS OUR VIRTUAL INSTRUCTIONAL DELIVERY SYSTEM.



Google Classroom

- Easy to use and manage with Chromebooks
- Versatile for teachers to use in a variety of classes and keeps consistency for students to access classes
- Lots of resources for teachers
- Easy communication from teachers to students and parents.



zoom

- Better quality of picture
- More built in features for teachers and students
- Easier to use
- Easier to monitor and secure

Zoom/Google Classroom & Teacher Instructional Videos

Teacher Responsibilities

Instructional Delivery Methods:

Scheduled Live Zoom Classes: See class schedule for details. Each class has at least one scheduled live class meeting time per week.

Recorded Classes:

All Zoom classes are recorded, however attendance is taken during live sessions. Recorded class links should be posted in the Google Classroom.

Instructional Video Links:

Teachers may post links to instructional videos in their Google Classroom that will replace or supplement student learning in that class.

Student Tutoring Sessions:

Teachers will create individual or small group tutoring sessions for students that need additional help. These tutoring sessions are also recorded but may or may not be posted in Google Classroom. Many classes have at least one scheduled live tutoring session per week. See schedule for details.



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Student Responsibilities

Students have access to join these live Zoom classes. There are various benefits to joining live classes:

- students can ask questions directly to the teacher
- students will see/interact with their classmates
- students will experience a more consistent schedule

If a student is not able to join Zoom at the scheduled time, the student must watch the class recordings. Students are responsible to join live classes on time. Attendance is taken at the beginning of each live scheduled instructional class. **To be marked present, the student's camera and mic must be active. Attendance is part of your class grade.**

If a student is unable to join a live zoom class session, it is the student's responsibility to inform the teacher of absence and watch recording of the missed class. **Viewing the recorded class does not substitute for attending scheduled live Zoom class.** Please communicate with your teacher for additional information.

Students need to know how to log-in and access Zoom, their Student Portal on School Pathways to view their grades, and Google Classroom.

Students need to know the class schedule and attend all scheduled live sessions. This is part of their grade.

Students are able to reach out to their teachers and schedule individual or small tutoring sessions.

Students are expected to follow the same Attendance Policy as stated in our WSCS Parent and Student Handbook.

Materials Needed

Teacher Responsibilities

Teachers have access to the following distance learning instructional materials:

- Laptops
- Headphones
- Promethean boards
- White Boards
- Document cameras

Student class materials: if a student is in need of a specific student class material (i.e. Art pencils, graph paper, scientific calculator), please contact the site administrator.



Student Responsibilities

All students should have access to hard copies of student textbooks, novels, and/or manuals needed for each class at home. However there might also be materials provided online through Google Classroom.

Students: please contact your distance learning teachers with any student materials request.

Any other instructional aides or supports will be provided in their Google Classes.

WSCS has provided all students with the option of receiving a student chromebook as part of their school materials.

All WSCS Students have access to a student email account. Please see your Advising Teacher if you are not sure what your student email address is.

This WSCS Student Email is what you will need to access the Google Classes.

Technology Assistance & Training

Teacher Responsibilities

Teachers are expected to watch the technology training videos found in the shared Tech Drive.

Teachers will provide basic Tech Support to students while presenting in their Zoom classes.

Teachers have access to tech support in the following ways:

1. Tech Support ticket system for submitting requests

2. Tech Coordinator- Phil Blas
3. Tech Director- Eric Hagen
4. Distance Learning Help and Google Classroom support - Renee Johnson
5. Shared Drive - Tech Help

**Please attempt to direct questions to the appropriate support person*



Technology Assistance & Training

continued

Student Responsibilities

Students & Parents have access to the following Tech Support:

- Help Videos shared through Parent Square (i.e. How to Get on Zoom).

Students can:

- request Tech Support by contacting their Advising Teachers; who will then reach out to the appropriate Tech Support staff
- directly contacting Eric Hagen (Tech Director) or Phil Blas (IT Coordinator) through Parent Square
- contact the distance learning teacher for basic troubleshooting and navigating through Google Classroom features

SPED/504 Accommodations

Teacher Responsibilities

Teachers are expected to provide all current IEP and Section 504 Plan accommodations during their distance learning classes.

Teachers should contact:

Fresno

- Katelyn Carter (Endeavor RSP Teacher)
kcarter@wscsfamily.org
- Nancy Garcia (Endeavor Section 504 Coordinator)
ngarcia@wscsfamily.org

Oakhurst

- Angela Moons (Oakhurst RSP Teacher)
amoons@wscsfamily.org
- Mindy Klang (Oakhurst Section 504 Coordinator)
mklang@wscsfamily.org
- Karen Fruth (WSCS SPED Coordinator)
kfruth@wscsfamily.org

Student Responsibilities

For students with an IEP or Section 504 Plan Only: Please communicate with our staff any concerns regarding special accommodations.

1. Please attempt to FIRST communicate with the distance learning teacher.
2. You can also let your Advising Teacher know your concerns. He/She will then make sure the proper coordinator is notified.
3. You can directly contact the appropriate SPED/504 staff (← see left column).

Virtual Classroom Safety Protocols

Similar to our policies of never working one on one with a student with a closed door, the following teacher and student safety guidelines should be in place in regards to virtual learning:

1. If there will only be 1-3 students (tutoring/small group/class), teachers will invite one site administrator (Mrs. Garcia, Mr. Hagen, Mrs. Klang) and another teacher to the Zoom meetings.
2. Teachers will invite parents to attend Zoom meetings for small group instruction or tutoring
3. Teachers will record and save every class/tutoring session.
4. All Zoom links are available to site administrators.

In addition, all teachers will end the Zoom meeting for all attendees when the class is finished. Students should not be alone in a Zoom meeting without adult supervision.

Student Distance Learning Behavioral Expectations

Teacher Responsibilities

Teachers will notify parents and principal of any behavior issues.

Depending on behavior concern, **students may be denied access to commenting, chatting, and joining live sessions.** Students will still be required to watch all recorded classes and directly communicate with teachers.



Student Responsibilities

Students are expected to:

- adhere to all of the “WSCS Student Behavioral Expectations” agreement that was signed by all students at the beginning of the year
- start all classes on time. Students will not be permitted to join a class if they are more than 10 minutes late unless given prior permission from the teacher.
- attend class with both Audio & Video (camera).
- start class on “Mute”
- only post appropriate and course-related comments (this includes all “chat” features)
- log-off class when the teacher informs students that class has ended
- the expectation is that the student’s video is on for the entire duration of the Zoom class, however, if there is an emergency, and the student needs to step away from the computer, please remember to turn the microphone and video off and inform the teacher through the private chat feature in Zoom”

Student Distance Learning Behavioral Expectations

continued

Note to parents: If you feel your student cannot adhere to the behavioral expectations listed above, please plan on being present during the live Zoom classes or communicate with the teacher for alternatives such as allowing students to watch recordings of classes instead of joining live classes.

Note to students: If a student does not adhere to the behavioral expectations listed above, that student may be denied access to the live Zoom classes, to commenting and/or the chatting features in Google Classroom.

Teacher & Student Communication

Teacher Responsibilities

Teachers will typically reply to a student's question and email within a 24 hour period window (on a school day).

The preferred method of communication is EMAIL, PARENT/STUDENT SQUARE or Zoom (audio only is fine).

Student Responsibilities

Students can ask teachers questions via email, class comments and Parent/Student Square (internal communication system). If you need to speak to a teacher via phone, please make an appointment request via email so they can reach out to you and set up a Zoom conversation. *Note: video can be turned off so that this would be like a phone conversation.*



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Zoom Classroom Etiquette

- Log in to Zoom meeting 3-5 minutes before start time.
- Start Zoom Class on Mute
- The Zoom Chat function remains under the teacher's direction and should be used for questions, comments and ideas that relate to the class.
- The Chat function is not for personal conversations.
- Remember that the video is running during your Zoom class. Be mindful of what is in view in your home. Also be careful to not have private conversations while the Zoom video and audio are running.
- Do not sit in front of a bright window. You will look like a shadow on video. Please ensure good lighting in front of you.

High School and 5th-8th Grade Math Courses

Google Classroom Assignments

Teacher Responsibilities

Teachers will assign work that can be turned in virtually through their Google Classroom. They will post directions on how and when to turn in these assignments in their class syllabus.

Teachers are able to offer guidance to students regarding late assignments if students are having difficulties turning in work.

Teachers are able to help connect students to our tech support.

Student Responsibilities

Students are expected to:

- turn in class assignments through Google Classroom by the due date
- inform their teachers of any technical difficulties
- inform their teachers regarding late homework submissions
- follow the same academic honesty guidelines from the "WSCS Statement on Student Cheating" document. This statement is signed by all students

Student Responsibilities

Teachers will:

- add/invite a parent/guardian for each student into Google Classroom
- continue their normal grading policies and procedures
- email students a monthly progress report
- send school principal a monthly gradebook summary report of each class

If a student is not passing a class, the teacher will reach out to the student's parent/legal guardian and document communication. This documentation will be provided to the principal.

Students and parents have access to check grades at any time via their School Pathways portal.

If parents accept invitation to be a guardian in Google Classroom they will receive weekly reports on their child's progress in Google Classroom.

If students/parents need help with login information or directions on how to do this, please contact your Advising Teacher.

Monthly progress reports are given to students. Students should share these reports with parents. However, Advising Teachers will also share student progress reports with parents during their monthly PLP meetings.



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TK-8th Grade Distance Learning

TK-8th Grade General Information

All TK-8th grade students will have an opportunity to sign up for a grade level specific Distance Learning class. Please refer to your site's specific TK-8th Grade Enrichment Class Schedule.

Although these classes are optional, if the student is signed-up for the class regular attendance is expected.

Reminder - Google Classroom invitations will be sent out using your child's WSCS email. See your Advising Teacher if you have any questions about your child's student email.

Important Reminders for Children before joining a Zoom (live) Class

As we embark in this new method of learning, please read below for a list of reminders and preparation:

- Help them locate the MUTE and VIDEO icons at the bottom left of the Zoom meeting screen and show them how to turn them on and off.
- Before using Zoom for the first time, it may be helpful to test the headsets in advance.
- Communicate with your child that if at any time he/she feels uncomfortable, overwhelmed or needs a break, they can simply turn off video. Please communicate with the teacher after the Zoom class of any concerns.



WSCS
Distance Learning Handbook
Acknowledgement Form

WSCS Advising Teacher: _____

Note: Only one form per family is needed. Please make copies for additional teachers.

My signature below affirms I have received and read the Western Sierra Charter Schools Distance Learning Handbook.

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

Student's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Student's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Student's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Student's Signature: _____ Date: _____