

Distance Learning Plan Template

This template is intended to support Minnesota school districts and charters in ensuring they have meaningful, relevant, and equitable learning plans in place to address the needs of all students. Districts are not required to use this template and can use whatever formats support their distance learning programming. Districts are not asked to submit their distance learning plans to MDE.

Distance Learning Defined: Students engaging in distance learning have access to appropriate educational materials and receive daily interaction with their licensed teacher(s).

It is important to note that distance learning does not always mean e-learning or online learning. It is critical to provide this learning in a format that can be equitably accessed by all students.

Overall Equity Considerations

- Who are the racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, and other marginalized groups that are affected by the distance learning plan? What are the potential impacts on these groups?
- Does the distance learning plan ignore or worsen existing disparities or produce other unintended consequences? Who does the distance learning plan benefit?
- How have we intentionally involved stakeholders who are also members of the communities affected by the distance learning plan? How have stakeholders and community members validated or invalidated our conclusions to questions 1 and 2?
- List all the potential barriers (structural, human, financial, community, etc.) to more equitable outcomes related to the distance learning plan.
- How will we mitigate the negative impacts and address the barriers identified above?
- Once the distance learning plan has been implemented, how will we gather and use the input from those impacted?
- What qualitative and quantitative evidence will we gather and analyze to determine the effects of the distance learning plan?

Template

- 1. How are we ensuring students have access to appropriate educational materials, including technology?**

Additional considerations

- If we are using an online learning system, how are we ensuring it can effectively support the district's unique learning and teaching needs, including the ability to provide differentiated instruction as well as one-on-one support for students who need it?

- If we are using an online learning system, what additional options are being made for students and families who will not have access to this system? How will we ensure that the options are of the same, if not better, quality than the system students and families cannot access?
- If we are delivering materials or asking families to pick up materials, who are the families that will have barriers to getting materials? How will we address those barriers?
- How are we ensuring that a variety of educational resources that reflect multiple and silenced perspectives are being identified and used?
- How are we ensuring that our distance learning model is secure and will not allow for the release of protected student or staff information?

Our plan:

- All students have been assigned a paraprofessional who will check in with their students on a daily basis to ensure they understand any assignments and have the materials necessary to complete their work.
- All classes are utilizing Google Classroom for posting assignments, videos, questions, etc.
- All students have been surveyed as to their internet capabilities. Some students are adding internet/wifi spots to their homes utilizing free resources. If a student does not have internet, then work and instruction will be delivered in a paper form.
- The school will utilize the Google Suite of products when appropriate
- We will be using Google Meet to have 1 on 1 meetings to check on Mental Health, school work and IEP goals.
- We will be using a combination of Google Classroom for assignments as well as sending home information if internet connection is an issue.
- Students will still be receiving Mental Health care from their provider via phone, or video conference.
- We are sending out expectation letters
- We will be contacting students and parents at least once a week to address any concerns or needs.

2. How are we ensuring students receive daily interaction with their licensed teacher(s)?

Additional considerations

- How are we defining engagement and student-teacher interactions? What are our expectations?
- How are families' perspectives and experiences centered in our efforts to engage students in learning and interactions with their teachers?
- How will we determine and support the various modes by which teachers can interact and engage with students?
- How will teachers be culturally responsive and relevant during their distant learning interactions with students?
- How will we utilize support staff to engage with students and families?
- How will we differentiate instruction for various levels of learning?
- What are we doing differently for students in daycare settings, both on and off school grounds?

Our plan:

- Each day students will need to complete some activity related to their class and the teacher will be responsible for grading and/or commenting back to the student.
- Each class has a daily class logistic plan, meaning, some classes will meet via Google Meet a couple of days per week, while other days they need to complete an online activity.
- Paraprofessional staff will also be in daily contact with each student to ensure the student is on track and answer any questions.

3. How will we support the mental health needs of students?

Additional considerations

- What information will we share with families regarding mental health services and supports?
- What community resources and partnerships can be used or leveraged to help support students and families?
- How can online resources and resources that don't require internet access be used to support students and families?
- How will we support students who are not connected to a mental health provider?
- How will we assist families in obtaining medical assistance benefits?
- How will we assist students who are participating in telehealth options via school linked mental health providers?
- What information will we provide to help staff and families talk with students about COVID-19 and its impact?
- How will we proactively address bullying?

Our plan:

- We will utilize the resources of Range Mental Health when needed.
- In our daily interactions with our students we will ask questions to find out how they are doing and if there is anything else they need.
- In our weekly home deliveries we will add information about mental health along with phone numbers and resources available.
- We will be using Google Meet to have 1 on 1 meetings to check on Mental Health, school work and IEP goals.
- We will be using a combination of Google Classroom for assignments as well as sending home information if internet connection is an issue.
- Students will still be receiving Mental Health care from their provider via phone, or video conference.
- We are sending out expectation letters
- We will be contacting students and parents at least once a week to address any concerns or needs.

4. How will the needs of students with IEPs be met?

Additional considerations

- How will lessons be delivered to accommodate students with 504 plans?
- How will students receive support from their teachers and support staff?
- What online and non-internet mandatory resources are available to help support students with IEPs?
- How will we measure IEP goals? How will data be collected?

- How will we ensure we meet evaluation requirements within legal timelines?

Our plan:

- We will be using Google Meet to have 1 on 1 meetings to check on Mental Health, school work and IEP goals.
- We will be using a combination of Google Classroom for assignments as well as sending home information if internet connection is an issue.
- Students will still be receiving Mental Health care from their provider via phone, or video conference.
- We are sending out expectation letters
- We will be contacting students and parents at least once a week to address any concerns or needs.
- Our teachers will be working at the building and will have any necessary meetings about potential evaluations or re-evaluations.

Special Education Students and students receiving 504 accommodations attending Vermilion Country School will have the same access to the general education curriculum. Accommodations and modifications from the student's current 504 Plan that are feasible through Distance Learning will be provided. Special Education student's accommodations and modification will be done through collaboration between general education teachers and special education teachers.

Special Education students will have access to Special Education services and supports as outlined in their Individual Education Plan (IEP) by licensed special education teachers. Instruction will be provided in several ways: audio/visual platforms, phone conferencing and/or packet work. The method of instruction will depend on the student's internet availability. The state mandated Distance Learning does not allow for any in-person personal contact or instruction. Current minutes of service per the students IEP will be maintained via Distance Learning. If the goals are not transferable to Distance Learning or the team feels the student may experience fatigue or have difficulty sustaining attention, service minutes will be amended and adjusted to the student's needs.

IEP goals will be measured through teacher interaction, observation and collection of work samples. Data will be collected through online resources and hard copy if available.

IEP meetings will be held on or before the annual meeting date, these meetings will be held thru google join, zoom or phone conferences.

All initial evaluations in process will be reviewed. For those that are in the final stages and do not require any in-person assessments, the Evaluation will be completed, and determinations of eligibility and need will be made. If an initial evaluation requires an in-person assessment, given the state mandated guidelines for Distance Learning that prohibit in-person contact of any kind for any reason, the initial evaluation will be on hold and will be completed once school resumes.

Reevaluations timelines will be maintained. Reevaluations typically require a review of records or interviews that can be completed over the phone or by mail. Families will not be responsible for mailing fees.

Child find will continue with a once a month meeting.

5. How will we ensure students have internet access as needed?

Additional considerations

- How can we work with local internet providers to obtain internet access for students and families?
- Keeping in mind that all areas will not have the capacity to offer internet access to students and families, what additional options can be used to get students and families the materials, resources and support that they need?

Our plan:

- We have compiled a list of internet providers and their programs and have distributed it to students.
- We will fund any wifi hot spots if needed.

6. How will meal delivery or distribution occur?

Additional considerations

- If we are delivering meals or asking families to pick up meals, who are the families that will have barriers to getting materials? How will we address those barriers?
- If we are delivering or asking families to pick up meals for multiple days, how will we ensure homeless students can refrigerate and store food?
- [Additional food and nutrition resources.](#)

Our plan:

- On a weekly basis we will survey our students to find out which students need meal delivery. Meal delivery will occur on Mondays.
- Students who are not able to refrigerate food will be given items which do not require refrigeration.

7. How will we support our English Learners?

Additional considerations

- How will we provide legally required English language development instruction for English learners?
- How will mainstream teachers provide supports for English learners within their distance learning instruction?
- How will we communicate distance learning plans to multilingual, multicultural families including translation and interpretation needs? How will we build collaborative networks with community elders, bilingual staff, and cultural organizations to help with outreach and communication?

Our plan:

This does not apply to us.

8. How will the needs of students experiencing homelessness be met?

Additional considerations

- Do we know which students are experiencing homelessness?
- Do we have methods in place to maintain communication with students experiencing homelessness?
- How can we ensure families have access to needed supports?
- How are we utilizing our liaisons, school counselors, school social workers, and other relevant personnel to conduct outreach?
- How are we working with our community to ensure access to virtual or distance learning opportunities?

Our plan:

- Through our daily interaction with our students we will monitor those at-risk students and do what we can through providing resources or advocating on their behalf for assistance.

9. How will Early Learning occur?

Additional considerations

- Since preschool learners are not as independent as older learners, how will learning be embedded in routines so families are not overwhelmed?
- How will we support families of our youngest learners in using screen time as a support to, and not instead of, adult-child interaction?
- How will activities accommodate hands-on experiences when families may not have a variety of materials? How will materials be provided, delivered and returned?
- How will all learning areas be addressed such as creative play, real-life exploration, physical activity, language development, and social interactions?
- How might family members like grandparents and older siblings support the young child's learning?

Our plan:

This does not apply to us.

10. How will we assess our students?

Additional considerations

- What do we believe about assessments and what they are meant to do?
- What are the various ways by which students will be assessed for proficiency?
- How will we report students' progress?

Our plan:

- Students will earn points on all their assignments, quizzes, and tests.
- Students will be assessed through projects.
- Student progress will be reported in JMC.

11. How will we regularly communicate with families?

Additional considerations

- How are families' perspectives and experiences centered in our communication plan?
- How are we communicating with families who speak a language other than English?
- How are we ensuring families understand our distance learning model? Use of the model? Student expectations?
- What are the platforms or apps that adults, students, and families utilize the most? How can these be leveraged to get information to students and families?

Our plan:

- Student attendance and grades will be posted daily in JMC.
- Parent communication will include a link to JMC along with what they will find there.
- Teacher emails will be sent to parents.
- Students who do not appear to be engaged in a class will be called along with a message to the parent.
- We will be using Google Meet to have 1 on 1 meetings to check on Mental Health, school work and IEP goals.
- We will be using a combination of Google Classroom for assignments as well as sending home information if internet connection is an issue.
- Students will still be receiving Mental Health care from their provider via phone, or video conference.
- We are sending out expectation letters
- We will be contacting students and parents at least once a week to address any concerns or needs.

12. How will we address the needs of our tribal communities?

Additional considerations

- How are we ensuring our plan is not dependent on students having internet access?
- Who will be our consistent Indian Education point person to communicate with and advocate for students and their families?
- What is our plan to regularly communicate with American Indian families?
- How are we partnering and coordinating our services with local tribes, community organizations, and/or MDE Indian Education personnel to support students and their families?

Our plan:

- Our Indian Education point person will constantly be in touch with our students and their families to ensure they are completing the work.

13. How will we utilize partnerships to meet the needs of vulnerable students?

Additional considerations

- How are we utilizing programming options for school nurses, school counselors, school psychologists, school social workers, paraprofessionals, and other school specialists and cultural liaisons?
- Who are our community partners and how are we collaborating to meet students' needs?

Our plan:

- We will continue to utilize Range Mental Health when needed. In addition, our paraprofessionals will spend extra time with students to ensure they are completing class assignments.

14. How will we meet the needs of staff?

Additional considerations

- How will we ensure consistent, clear communications exist across all staff?
- How are we providing initial and ongoing training to our staff on our distance learning model and expectations? How will we address problems of practice as they occur?
- How will we regularly observe distance learning and provide feedback to teachers and staff?
- How will teachers continue to collaborate in professional learning communities, grade-level teams, subject-area teams, etc.?
- How are we supporting the social, emotional, and mental health needs of our staff?
- How will we ensure the resources and professional development available to staff include instruction and guidance on culturally responsive and relevant distant instruction?

Our plan:

- As a staff, we will meet on a weekly basis to discuss what is working and what isn't working.
- If additional technology tools are needed, we will explore them first as a staff before requiring them of students.
- We are going to prioritize supporting each other, we are going to prioritize simple solutions that make sense, we are going to prioritize sharing resources and communicating clearly.
- We cannot just do the same thing online. Some assignments are no longer possible. Some expectations are no longer reasonable. Some objectives are no longer valuable.
- We will remain flexible and adjust to the situation. Nobody knows where this is going and what comes next.
- Everybody needs support and understanding in this unprecedented time.

15. How are we tracking attendance of students and staff?

Additional considerations

- How is attendance being defined? Are there additional ways by which attendance can be defined or achieved?
- How are we communicating attendance procedures and expectations to students and families?
- How are our practices for tracking attendance equitable? What considerations are we making for students and families that cannot connect via the internet?

Our plan:

- Each class will have a daily check-in activity that needs to be completed.
- Students who do not have internet access can complete the check-in activity via phone.

16. How will we assess and adjust our distance learning plan during implementation?

Additional considerations

- What data and information will we collect to assess the implementation and impacts of our distance learning plan?
- Who will monitor impacts? How frequently?
- How will impacts be communicated to appropriate stakeholders, including families?
- How will we monitor whether our distance learning plan is benefitting some students and presenting learning barriers to others?

Our plan:

- During the first week we will have daily meetings to assess where we are at – what went well, what didn't go so well, what needs to be improved.
- On a periodic basis, an email will be sent from the school director to all stakeholders providing an overview of activities and successes. In addition, families will be encouraged to submit feedback.