With little-to-no notice, schools across the nation were faced with closing their doors for an undefined amount of time. With weeks or months until schools reopen, school and district leaders are being asked to completely reimagine school and learning by adjusting to models of distance learning that provide meaningful ways to learn, capture learning, give feedback, and assess students. Schools and districts spend years creating high-quality online and blended learning experiences; now they are being asked to do this to a larger degree in a matter of days. This guide cuts through the noise and provides leaders with a clear process for developing a distance learning plan that meets the needs of students, teachers, and families from an equity lens. This will require reflection and refinement of practice, and forgiveness as schools embark on a new journey together. Teachers will be asked to consider their shifting role from disseminators of curriculum to facilitators—or coaches—of learning; school leaders will be in the spotlight more than ever before; parents will be engaged in students’ learning to new degrees. A lot is about to change, and it can be done WITHOUT LOSING SIGHT OF EQUITY.

1. In the next five to ten weeks, what are the most important things you want your students to learn?
2. What skills would you like them to practice and demonstrate?
3. What learning is most important?
4. How will you know what students have learned?
5. What can students produce that will serve as artifacts that they have new understanding or have developed better skills?
6. What learning can students create?
7. What learning activities will students do naturally at home?
8. What resources are already available?
9. How will students learn?
10. What resources and activities can teachers still create?
11. How will we know students learned?
12. Where will students keep their evidence of learning?
13. How will feedback loops and reflection support the assessment process?
14. How will parents know how their learner has learned?

THIS IS NOT “BUSINESS AS USUAL”

The first three graphics set the stage for mindset shifts and relationships during this unprecedented time. The next four dive deeper into sets of questions to consider when designing meaningful and manageable learning plans. Follow the embedded links to find more information about each design question and to access resources to get you started in creating your school or district’s Distance Learning Plan. This is an abbreviated process, based on practices that are evergreen. It’s meant to help leaders design emergency distant learning plans that are meaningful for learners, parents, teachers, and communities. Try not to recreate the school day at home, but take this opportunity to focus on bigger skills and deeper knowledge, based on what students want to learn, practice, and demonstrate and what resources are readily available in the home.
Student – Teacher Connection

Students and teachers need connection more than ever during distance learning to:
• preserve existing meaningful relationships;
• ensure mental, emotional, and physical safety while away from school;
• encourage students’ skill and confidence as self-directed learners; and
• support students’ in goal setting and reflection.

Teacher – Teacher Collaboration

In the transition to distance learning plans, teachers are trying to figure out how to:
• create high-quality distance instruction and learning experiences;
• provide meaningful student formative feedback; and
• develop assessments with equitable opportunities for success in different learning environments.

What teachers need most from school and district leaders right now is time and support for:
• access to high-quality distance learning practices;
• collaboration with colleagues for plan development and practice reflection and refinement;
• space for self-care and conversations about managing this new learning and work experience.

Teacher – Family Partnership

School at Home will require teachers to embrace a role as facilitators or coaches of learning for their students. To support this success, teachers will depend on other adults in students’ lives to support the home learning environment. Teachers and families can work together to show for students in a number of ways during distance learning:
• Assignment/learning support
  • Teachers can embed tips for how parents can support learning in various assignments.
• Structure, routine, and learning goals
  • Explore this resource for recommendations on structure and routine in the home learning environment and this tool for student goal setting.
• Checking in on learning
  • Activities such as student-led conferences allow for students to be in the front seat of connecting their teachers and families around their learning progress.

Community Connections

How can community members help create powerful learning experiences for your students?

Ask an Expert: Virtual Conversation
• Demonstrations
• Book Reads
• Resource Sharing

“We are all in this together, working on behalf of our children. We know there is much to do, but working together, we can get through this.”

Jeffrey Riley, MA Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education
Reflecting, Refining, and Forgiving

Whether you call it distance, remote, or virtual learning, this is a new way of leading, teaching, and learning for nearly all administrators, educators, families, and learners. What will be most helpful in our pursuits to create meaningful learning experiences in this new climate are to embrace a reflective disposition and to offer yourself and others substantial amounts of grace.

Reflecting

Distance learning is a new way of life for both educators and students. As such, it's important during this time for educators to find opportunities to reflect on their new practice and to receive feedback from students about how distance learning is working for them. Below are a few questions to consider as we reflect:

• How am I doing with alignment to the priorities I set for distance learning?
• What is the quality of feedback I am offering to my learners? How can I provide feedback differently for different learners?
• How am I FEELING about my plans for distance learning? Does it reflect the best I can do for my students in this new environment?
• How are my students FEELING about my approach to distance learning? Have I asked students directly for feedback on, and how to improve, their experience at this time?

Refining

Once educators have taken an opportunity to reflect on their own practice and to hear from students, there is an opportunity to refine practice. Both creating and refining (always! And especially during a new way of learning), are practices best done in COLLABORATION with colleagues. Continuing with Professional Learning Communities, Common Planning Time, or other pre-existing collaborative spaces are great to continue in a virtual setting. Below are a few recommended protocols to use collaboratively in refining lesson plans and instruction:

• Tuning Adult Work (great for instructional plans!)
• Equity Perspectives (for checking in on how well we are doing serving our most vulnerable students)
• Consultancy, Issaquah, Peeling the Onion (for talking through problems of practice)

Forgiving

If you are going to offer yourself one form of self-care through this transition in learning, let it be grace. At best, educators, learners, families, and administrators had a mere few days’ notice that our system of education was going to drastically change in a way it never has before. Schools and districts spend years planning to implement out-of-school and technological practices in a meaningful way, and now schools are being asked to do it in a matter of days. There will be challenges. There will be “mistakes.” Students will struggle. Educators will struggle. Let’s all offer one another a bit of extra grace and forgiveness to realize that we are all growing together and will get better as we go.
What learning is most important?

In the next 5-10 weeks*, what is most important? Think about...

- knowledge you want your students to have
- skills you would like students to practice and demonstrate
- equity

*States across the nation are currently operating on different closure timelines. Districts and schools will be able to develop better quality distance learning plans if they operate on a belief that the remainder of the school year (and subsequent curriculum) will occur through distance learning.

Identifying what is MOST IMPORTANT

What are your schools’ vision and mission?

- Does the school have school-wide learning expectations?
- Has your school adopted an essential skill framework?
- Has your community created a Vision of the Graduate?

Does your school have competencies?

If you haven’t identified what’s most important, yet, start here at the 7 C’s.

The 7 C’s

- Curiosity
- Critical Thinking
- Coping Skills
- Collaboration
- Community Engagement
- Compassion
- Communication
It’s important to ensure you set a **Guideline for Sufficiency.** This student was asked to produce 3-6 pieces of evidence that they could communicate effectively. Allowing choice in how students demonstrate skill is an Equity practice.

**Reflection is Key…**

…and it doesn’t have to be written

Check out this resource from Tom Rademacher, 2014 Minnesota Teacher of the Year
What learning activities will students do naturally at home?

What resources are already available?

What resources and activities can teachers still create?

A Simple Guide to Learning at Home

A lot of learning happens in the home already. Here’s how we can harness what is already there and guide our students in demonstrating their learning when they engage in these activities.

Games
1. Take a game you already play well.
2. Ask your child to change the game to make it more challenging.
3. Ask your child: Is this game fun? Is it a game of chance or skill? What skills did you demonstrate playing the game?
4. Create your own game.

Health
1. Take a walk or do other physical activity for twenty to thirty minutes a day.
2. Meditate or listen to a relaxation recording.
3. Keep a daily journal of how you are feeling.

Reading
1. Read for at least an hour a day.
2. Read something other than the news.
3. Keep a journal of what you read. What are your thoughts?

Media
1. Watch a film or TV show. What did you learn from watching? Did it change the way you view the world?
2. Critique the film or TV show. What would you change?
3. Research more about the topic of the movie, show, or film.

Create
1. Create a video, podcast, piece of art, craft, or piece of writing.
2. Collect feedback from peers through Google Docs or virtual tutoring sessions.

Practice
1. Practice the skills you already have, i.e., music, cooking, swimming, gardening, drawing, sports, etc.
2. Develop a new skill.

Redo
1. Is there a project, presentation, paper, or other product you created that you would like to try again?

~ PUSH BUTTON RESOURCES ~

Zinn Education Project
Hippocampus
TED Ed
Khan Academy
Teaching Tolerance

Don’t reinvent the wheel!

These resources are provided to show you what’s already available for use!

Options for student choice in how and what to learn is an Equity practice.

Engaging Students in a Virtual Environment

Text-based Seminars
How to Facilitate a Virtual Text-Based Seminar
Text-based seminars are powerful. Insights are shared from different perspectives and reflection allows for personal and group growth. Moving the venue to a virtual environment can be just as powerful, especially with embedded strategies for online facilitation which include careful pre-planning. We have a tool and some helpful tips to help you do just that.

School-wide Engagements
School-wide contests or challenges are a great way to engage learners with different interests and abilities. Virtual talent shows, poetry slams, show and tell, photo contests, art contests and virtual games are all opportunities for students to practice and demonstrate skills and knowledge.

Connect these virtual engagement strategies to competencies, learner habits, or the school vision!
How will feedback loops and reflection support the assessment process?

Student produced artifacts, reflections and teacher observations mixed together create a Body of Evidence. This can then be used to understand what students learned in relation to the school’s expectations or competencies. Together students, teachers and parents can work together to create next steps. Allowing choice in what students produce and what they showcase as evidence of learning is an asset based, EQUITY practice.

Student Led Conferences can be used to evaluate artifacts from a body of evidence. Students choose artifacts that represent their best learning and present the artifacts with reflective dialogue.

Students explain what the artifact is, why they chose it to showcase, and how it represents their learning. Family members then have an opportunity to ask questions. Once all the chosen artifacts are shared, students and families can then work together to create new learning goals.

The teacher’s role is to support the collection of artifacts, reflection, and guiding student through the process.

A Recipe for Understanding Learning

Take this opportunity to rethink assessment.

If you can, focus on feedback.

If you have to grade…pass/fail.

The standard during this time is surviving, making meaning, and learning.
Additional Resources

**Virginia's 5 C's**
An explanation of how Virginia defines their 5 C’s in videos and text.

**Irving Steam Magnet**
Vision, Mission and Student Learner Outcomes

**Los Angeles Center for Enriched Studies (LACES)**
Vision, Mission and Student Learner Outcomes

**Souhegan High School**
Academic Learner Expectations

**Building for Equity**
A CCE Guide for Inclusive School Redesign

**Quality Performance Assessment**
CCE Tools and Resources for Designing Quality Performance Assessment Systems

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Feedback
We'd love to hear how this resource helped education system leaders shape the last quarter of their school years. Send us an email: info@ccbos.org.

Additional Support
If you need additional support, thought partnership or a resource to get your plans in place, please reach out.

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