



Alternative Education

Sonoma County
Office of Education

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Alternative Education Programs
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These guidelines are provided to help parents better understand expectations of distance learning for the remainder of the 2019-20 school year. Teachers will be using the “rubrics” below (which are criteria for grading) as guidelines for assigning grades for the 4th quarter. They, along with other school staff, will also be working with students and with families to understand their situations and be as flexible as possible. We will be communicating separately with families about how 4th quarter grades and attendance will impact the return-to-district process.

The most important thing to remember is that learning at home is not the same as learning in school. We have a diverse teacher and family population who are experiencing this pandemic in many different ways. Coping with this situation happens for some by focusing on school work. For some, it is focusing on mental health, and for some, it is focusing on surviving. These recommended guidelines were created with the understanding that this is a stressful time for all of us and are intended to build in some flexibility.

TIPS FOR DISTANCE LEARNING

- Set your own pace . A teacher has many students in class while parents have only their own children to manage. What may take a teacher an hour to cover in the classroom may take parents working with students less time at home. The same is true for older students who are working on their own. Trying to match hour-to-hour your students’ distance learning to the classroom is not advised.
- Alternate subjects. To maintain maximum engagement with the distance learning process, it is best practice to alternate subject areas so that not all subject areas (English, math, science, etc.) or classes are on the same day.
- Be social. At school, students have the opportunity to socialize, engage in recreation, have meals, and interact with many different people. At home, although you can’t interact “in person” with many people, you can include time for activities, and being social with the family or on the phone.
- Limit screen time. Chromebooks and computers are wonderful tools for teachers and students, but limiting the amount of time on these devices is highly recommended. We are in an isolated environment already. Be sure your student isn’t further isolating themselves by being on technology for several hours per day.

- Expand the idea of learning. We have a rare opportunity to be together with our children and the day should include activities that must be completed as a part of being home together. There is learning in cooking, yard work, exercising, singing, drawing, and just about anything, that your students can do together with the family besides focusing solely on school work. Think of this as a chance to “learn to learn.”

GRADES AND ATTENDANCE

- Grades can only improve. Student grades for the 4th quarter can improve, but cannot go any lower than the grades they had at the end of the 3rd quarter on March 13, 2020. Teachers will determine any change to a student’s 4th quarter grades based on time on activities, effort, and assessment as described below. Students who are not looking to improve 3rd quarter grades will receive a Pass/No Pass for the 4th quarter (indicating a grade of C or better).

- We are required to take attendance to ensure students are engaged in compulsory education. Attendance is considered to be students engaging in the work for each class or with their teacher at least once a week. This can be done by submitting assignments, joining a live session with the teacher, or communicating via e-mail or other means. Students who do not engage at all during a week will be marked absent.

- Weekly attendance will be taken by teachers every Friday afternoon.

Recommended rubrics (criteria) addressing time on school activities, assessment, and effort are provided below. As we learn about distance learning and how to best provide support, flexibility and understanding are the foundation of this rubric.

Recommendations for Daily and Weekly Maximum Time on School Activities

Grade Level	Maximum Per Day	Maximum Per Week	Max Use of Technology/Day
7-8	Total: 150 minutes Per Period: 25 minutes	12.5 hours/week Per Period: 2 hours	1.5 hours Per Period: 15 minutes (<i>Beyond class/teacher meetings</i>)
9-12	Total: 180 minutes Per Period: 30 minutes	15 hours/week Per Period: 2.5 hours	2 hours Per Period: 20 minutes (<i>Beyond class/teacher meetings</i>)

Grade 7-8 Rubric

Description	Excellent	Pass	No Pass
Grading	Quarter 4 grade may improve over Quarter 3 (grade of A or B)	Grade of "Pass" (grade of C or higher)	Grade of "No Pass" (grade of D or F)
Assessment	Full understanding or skill demonstrated	Some understanding or skill demonstrated	Little understanding or skill demonstrated
Effort	Regularly demonstrates maximum effort in assigned learning activities	Partially demonstrates effort in assigned learning activities	Does not demonstrate effort in assigned learning activities.

Grade 9-12 Rubric

Description	Excellent	Pass	No Pass
Grading	Quarter 4 grade may improve over Quarter 3 (grade of A or B). Credits will be awarded based on assignments completed.	Grade of "Pass" (grade of C or higher). Credits will be awarded based on assignments completed.	Grade of "No Pass" (grade of D or F)
Assessment	Full understanding or skill demonstrated	Some understanding or skill demonstrated	Little understanding or skill demonstrated
Effort	Regularly demonstrates maximum effort in assigned learning activities	Partially demonstrates effort in assigned learning activities	Does not demonstrate effort in assigned learning activities