

## **FLEX LEARNING DURING COVID-19**

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### GUIDELINES FOR SCHOOLS TO CONSIDER AS THEY IMPLEMENT FLEX LEARNING

- Develop written plan for continued learning in partnership with boards of education, staff members, families, and following guidance of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and South Dakota Department of Health
  - Plan may include a variety of instructional models such as blending of non-technology and technology-based options
  - Plan may include remote “touch points” with students
  - Plan may include use of printed learning materials, teleconferencing, online instruction, emails, telephone check-ins, SD Public Television, remote office hours, and other innovative approaches
- Make decisions that are appropriate for local student population, families, staff and available resources
- Plan instruction based on South Dakota state standards and grade or course expectations
  - Focus on *essential learning* for students
- Ensure all students have equal opportunity to succeed
  - Consider whether all students will have access to resources needed to engage in learning expectations and complete assignments
  - Ensure that students with disabilities have equal access to the same opportunities and, to the greatest extent possible under current conditions, provide special education and related services identified in the student’s IEP or 504 plan
  - Review and incorporate modifications and scaffolds from the student’s Language Acquisition Plan (LAP)
- Provide students with at least weekly assignments, projects and, if possible, remote check-ins with teachers
  - Establish a consistent and agreed-upon framework to measure student progress (completion of assignments, pass/fail grades, letter grades, etc.)
  - Understand that the time commitment for students engaged in flex learning will *not* be equal to the time involved in regular face-to-face instruction
  - Establish designated hours each teacher will be accessible; try to space out teacher availability over the course of the day

- Engage in consistent communication with teachers and other staff
  - Ensure that staff working with student information systems (Infinite Campus, etc.) update school calendar once local decisions are made
  
- Communicate with students and families regarding learning expectations, teachers' availability, processes for returning assignments, and other important information
  - Consider streamlining or implementing a common method to communicate with students and parents
  
- If using technology to deliver instruction, use systems that are already in place and consistent across the school
  - If implementing new technology, provide training for teachers and students
  - Consider implementing a centralized process for teachers, students and families to communicate tech issues and receive support (eg., Tech Help Desk)
  
- When using technology platforms, use all necessary settings/configurations to ensure a safe learning environment
  - Review privacy policies for technology platforms
  - If deemed necessary, gather parental consent
  - Do not post webinar (Zoom, Google Hangouts) information/invitations on social media; utilize "waiting rooms" to ensure only invited participants can join
  - Review resources from U.S. Department of Education's Student Privacy Policy Office, including:
    - [Protecting Student Privacy While Using Online Educational Services: Requirements and Best Practices](#)
    - [Protecting Student Privacy While Using Online Educational Services: Model Terms of Service](#)
  
- Contact local internet providers and telecommunications companies; some are offering free services during this time of COVID-19 for families that qualify