

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

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October 20, 2020

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Re: Monitoring Student Engagement

Michael Minnick
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Dear Mr. Fisher:

We write to follow up on our letter of September 23, 2020, regarding compliance with the requirements of Senate Bill 98, and specifically the mandate to document daily participation and weekly engagement. (Education Code 43504(d), (e)). We are aware, as you likely are as well, that the California Department of Education (CDE) recently convened a working gkd akelin5.041e6eneIngn

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INTRODUCTION

For the 2020-21 school year, local educational agencies (LEA) (<https://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/cr/dl/distlearningfaq.asp>) providing instruction through distance learning in whole or part are subject to the provisions of the distance learning statutes (*Education Code (EC)* Section 43500, et. seq). Included within those provisions of law are requirements that the LEA document student attendance, daily participation, and weekly engagement, as well as certifying to the instructional time being assigned to students. As distance learning instruction is only applicable to the 2020-21 school year, the implementing statutes become inoperative on June 30, 2021. The California Department of Education (CDE) recognizes that implementing significant changes to the delivery of instruction to students along with additional recordkeeping requirements in a short span of time is tremendously challenging.

To that end, this document provides information on the various options available to meet distance learning recordkeeping requirements by modifying existing internal student information systems (SIS), learning management systems (LMS), or by creating a local process/system that includes all the required elements. The guidance does not constitute legal advice or a legal service.

DISTANCE LEARNING DOCUMENTATION AND RECORD KEEPING REQUIREMENTS

As mentioned previously, many of the distance learning documentation requirements cover elements of attendance, participation, and student assignments for which LEAs already have a documentation process (e.g. SIS, LMS, lesson plan/grade book, etc.). Therefore, these requirements might most easily be accomplished by modifying local systems or processes. LEAs that choose to do so versus using the CDE Template should use the following checklist to ensure the modifications to local system/processes meet all the requirements below.

| Check Box | Distance Learning Requirement | Statutory Reference | Summary of Requirement | Documentation Level |
|-----------|--|-------------------------|---|---|
| | Instructional Assignment/Delivery Method | 43504(e) | Documents synchronous or asynchronous instruction for each whole or partial day of distance learning, as part of the weekly engagement record. | Class |
| | Assignment Tracking | 43504(e) | Documents assigned instruction, school work, and assessments assigned to meet each whole or partial day of distance learning instruction, as part of the weekly engagement record. | Class |
| | Attendance/Absence Documentation | 43504 (d)(1) and (f)(1) | Attendance and absences must be documented to facilitate reporting chronic absenteeism and meet compulsory education requirements. | Student |
| | Daily Participation Documentation and Verification | 43504(d)(2), (e) | Daily participation may include, but is not limited to, evidence of participation in online activities, completion of assignments/assessments, contact with student, parents/guardians. Verifying participation is a requirement of the weekly engagement record. | Student |
| | Instructional Time Certification | 43502(e) 43504(c) | Certification by LEA certificated staff to time value of assignments so that minimum instructional day and annual school year length requirements can be met. | May be certified at student, class, or grade level. |

The above distance learning requirements, in addition to the LEA's tiered reengagement strategies for students absent from distance learning, will be checked during the annual

audit and have a fiscal consequence if not met. *EC* Section 43504(f)(2) requires an LEA

Distance Learning Documentation – Illustration of LEA Options

Detail of LEA Options to the CDE Template

(not an inclusive list)

Options

**Attendance/Absence
Documentation and Daily
Participation Verification**
EC Section 43504(d)(e)(f)

Instructional

Options

**Attendance/Absence
Documentation and Daily
Participation Verification**
EC

LEA Combinations

The following visuals of Combination A thru C are meant to help a LEA with modifying existing local systems to meet these requirements. CDE identifies under each how the proposed combination meets the requirements and what modifications are needed to meet the distance learning documentation requirements. While a sample is not shown for Combination D, the other visuals can inform the needed modifications to use a SIS for all elements. Note: The content in the lesson plan and local LMS visuals are an example of documentation and are not intended to be exemplars of content. Additionally, it may be helpful to increase the percentage using the Zoom feature under the View ribbon for enhanced visibility.

Combination A: Lesson Plan and Local SIS

| How does Combination A meet the requirements? | What modifications need to be added to Combination A to meet requirements? |
|--|---|
| LESSON PLAN Tracks class assignments | LESSON PLAN Modify to document in-person, synchronous, and/or asynchronous instruction for full or partial day. Create an instructional time certification document to be completed by a certificated employee of the LEA certifying to the time value of assignments. |

| How does Combination B meet the requirements? | What modifications need to be added to Combination B to meet requirements? |
|---|--|
| <p>LOCAL SIS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documents attendance and absences Documents daily participation and verification methodology* Certifies to accuracy and correctness of attendance | <p>LOCAL SIS</p> <p>The SIS in this example meets the student level documentation requirements shown on page 5.</p> |

*LOCAL SIS CODING: A – Absent & No Participation; 7 – Present in DL; 8 – Not present in DL but submitted work; 9 – Not present in DL, verified student participation in asynchronous assignment thru parent contact.

Combination C: LEA Created Template

| How does Combination C meet the requirements? | What modifications need to be added to Combination C to meet requirements? |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tracks class assignments* Documents attendance and absences Documents daily participation and verification methodology | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Modify to document for each day the delivery of instruction methodology, in-person, synchronous, and/or asynchronous instruction for full or partial day. Modify the Weekly Signature to include |

Key Considerations in Developing LEA Processes

The following highlights the distance learning documentation requirement grouped by those that may be maintained at a class level versus those at a student level and identifies additional information an LEA should consider when creating a process to capture each of the necessary elements. Again, it will be important for LEAs to have a plan in place to collect and manage information from employees, including teachers that are documenting and maintaining these records, so that the information is available and easily attainable at the time of the annual audit.

Instructional Assignment/Delivery Method, Assignment Tracking, and Instructional Time Certification

- x **Instructional Assignment/Delivery Method:** documents synchronous or asynchronous instruction for each whole or partial day of distance learning, as part of the weekly engagement record.
 - o A class schedule may be used to meet the requirement to document in-person, synchronous, and or asynchronous instruction. LEAs that choose to use this method will still need to meet the assignment tracking or instructional time certification requirements.
 - o If maintaining class level records in a departmentalized setting, multiple records will need to be combined across departmentalized subjects to show a full school day for a specific student.
- x **Assignment Tracking:** documents assigned instruction, school work, and assessments assigned to meet each whole or partial day of distance learning instruction, as part of the weekly engagement record.

student information. For additional information refer to question 19 under the Attendance Accounting and Reporting header of CDE's FAQ (<https://www.cde.ca.gov/fg/aa/pa/pafaqs.asp>).

- x For audit purposes, this information will need to be combined with student level participation records to meet the statutory requirements.

Attendance/Absence Documentation, Daily Participation Verification, and Certification

- x **Attendance/Absence Documentation:** attendance and absences must be documented to facilitate reporting chronic absenteeism, and meet compulsory education and audit requirements.

- x **Daily Participation Documentation and Verification:** daily participation may include, but is not limited to, evidence of participation in online activities, completion of assignments/assessments, contact with student, parents/guardians.

- o Indicating the method used when verifying and documenting participation helps meet the daily participation verification requirement for the weekly engagement rule.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

- x **Assignment:** The instructional day for each student participating in distance learning is based on synchronous and/or asynchronous assignments, including assigned instruction (e.g. participating in a synchronous online lecture with the teacher, watching an asynchronous lecture, etc.), class discussion, school work, and assessments to meet the instructional day or portion of instructional day made by and certified to by a certificated employee of the LEA.
- x **Assignment Tracking:** Documents assigned instruction, school work, and assessments assigned to meet each whole or partial day of distance learning instruction, as part of the weekly engagement record. If completing assignment tracking at a class level and a teacher is differentiating instruction for groups of students within the class by making separate assignments for each group, the assignment for each group should be indicated.
- x **Asynchronous:** Asynchronous assignments and instruction occurs without direct, simultaneous interaction of participants.
- x **Full or Partial Day:** A full instructional day is the length of the school day established by the local governing board, which is no less than the minimum number of instructional minutes for each grade level. Any amount of time that is less than the full instructional day is a partial day of instruction. A class period in a departmentalized setting may need to be treated as a day for the purpose of indicating the instructional delivery method. This does not mean that a period is the equivalent of a day for instructional time purposes. All students still need to be scheduled for the instructional minutes that apply to their grade span each day in order for a LEA to meet instructional time requirements.
- x **In-Person:** In-person instruction is instruction delivered under the immedia (oos)4 (es)4 e7 (uc)

participation in online activities, completion of assignments/assessments, and contact with student, parents/guardian. Statute does not limit the means of participation to those listed.

- x **Synchronous:** Synchronous assignments and assigned instruction in distance learning takes place in real-time, with delivery of instruction and/or interaction with participants such as a live whole-class, small group, or individual meeting via an online platform.

The following terms are listed in *EC* Section 43504(d)(2) as types of daily participation. Daily participation is not limited to the terms listed below.

- x **Assigned Work/Assessment Completed:** A student turns in any of their assigned work or completes an assessment that is included in the assigned day of distance learning or part of a day of distance learning, whether or not the student participates in any synchronous portion of the day. This would not include a homework assignment that is in addition to the synchronous and/or asynchronous assignments that constitute the instructional day for distance learning.
- x **Evidence of Participation in Online Activities:** A teacher or LEA employee is able to verify that a student participated in assigned online instruction, school work, or assessments.
- x **Student or Parent/Guardian Contact:** A teacher or LEA employee is able to verify through contact with a student or parent/guardian that the student participated in at least some part of the assignments or assigned instruction that is included in the student's distance learning school day or distance learning portion of the school day.
- x **Other:** Any other means an LEA has than those listed whereby a teacher or other LEA employee verifies student participation in their assigned distance learning school day or part of the distance learning school day.

RESOURCES

- x CDE's Combined Daily Participation and Weekly Engagement Template and User Guide
<https://www.cde.ca.gov/fg/aa/pa/instructionalttime.asp>
- x 2020–21 Funding and Instructional Time FAQs
<https://www.cde.ca.gov/fg/aa/pa/pafaqs.asp>
- x Distance Learning Frequently Asked Questions
<https://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/cr/dl/distlearningfaqs.asp>
- x Distance Learning Instruction Planning Guidance
<https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/he/hn/guidanceplanning.asp>
- x CDE's COVID-19 Web Page
<https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/he/hn/coronavirus.asp>