



SLSD Ed Tech Guide

2020-2021

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Purpose

The purpose of this document is to guide teachers through best practices and educational tools to use in a Blended Learning environment (on-site & distance learning) or during Comprehensive Distance Learning (CDL). This reference guide was created to support and encourage you to create the best CDL and/or Blended Learning experiences possible for your students. While this guide focuses on how to support a Comprehensive Distance Learning format, digital tools are the tools of our age and our children's futures. This guide contains information and guidance that can be applied in any modern learning to support our modern learners in any learning context. You can navigate through this document by clicking on the table of contents below.

We've created a sample template to help you set up your [Google Classroom](#). You can also join the class as a student using the code: klkxjfc.

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Best Practices for Distance Learning

These best practices are designed to save you time and support you to create systems and structures that optimize Blended or Comprehensive Distance Learning, and minimize disruption if conditions dictate that we need to move back and forth between these two instructional formats.

The SLSD has adopted these best practices to help teachers, students and families experience successful teaching and learning across elementary, middle, and high school divisions. The closer you are able to follow these guidelines, the better it will be for all involved, especially for our families who have students attending multiple schools across our district.

Best Practices for Care & Connection: Start First With the Relationship

- **Help students establish their personal connection with you** before you require work, buy-in and vulnerability from them.
- **Communicate your expectations** (for classwork, projects, behavior, etc.) clearly and frequently; remind students of expectations in real time when they are needed.
- **Be consistent** in how you word instructions, especially when you use multiple methods, to ensure that all instructions are extremely comprehensible and accessible.
- **Read student cues** to assess when to be graceful and when to be firm. Reading cues and seeking to understand students, helps you know what to do and how to support students and families.
- **Monitor student engagement** - know when students are overwhelmed, or under-engaged, and take action to help them get what they need.
- **Check for understanding frequently** - plan lots of check-ins to insure engagement and understanding and class momentum.
- **Check-in on emotional status of students** - Provide opportunities for students to express stress levels, take a break, complete work that allows for reflection.
- **Help students stay at the appropriate level of academic stress** (not too much, not too little), while also ensuring academic rigor.
- **Assess when to be graceful and when to be firm.** This may be difficult to navigate, but everything rises and falls on relationships with students and families. This year, more than ever before, we need to navigate this well for our families in crisis.

Best Practices for Instruction: Keep It Simple and Focus on the Big Picture

- **Maintain consistent routines/procedures** so students know how to navigate your course (e.g. how to see what work is due when, how to submit work, etc.).
- **Reduce the chunk size of new content** since distance learning increases cognitive load demands.
- **Balance on-screen and off-screen tasks** to reduce screen time. Reducing on-screen time can increase engagement and on-task behavior.
- **Create a Criteria for Success checklist** for important lessons, units, and content areas so students know what is expected of them in the big picture.
- **Check for understanding more frequently** than during in-person class.
- **Make sure every student is “seen and heard”** by giving opportunities for comments, both verbally and digitally.
- **Weekly check-ins:** integrate non-graded questions/quizzes/surveys about their well-being, the workload of your class, their overall workload, needs (academic and non), mental health, etc., which can all be done using various simple tech tools
- **Develop a repertoire of engagement activities** that focus learning at start of class and freshen things up as needed during class. (think of them as “Scooby Snacks”).
- **Design for engagement** with projects and activities, and ways students can interact with one another, as well as with you.
- **Review the Criteria for Success During Lessons** at various points so every student knows what they know and what they are still working on.
- **Explicitly link the current lesson** to prior knowledge, skills and lessons.
- **Provide lots of concrete examples** especially when introducing abstract concepts.
- **Have class discussions.**
- **Use student-generated input** to help drive a lesson.
- **Utilize quick checks for understanding** (formative assessments) in content delivery.
- **Plan for guided practice** (live in class, synchronous).
- **Create independent practice opportunities** where students can work at their own pace, at a time that works for them.
- **Integrate games and whole group** interactions for engagement.
- **Design self-reflection activities** for all students.
- **Use spaced practice and retrieval activities** for long-term memory storage.

Best Practices for Communication: Be Clear, Concise, and Consistent

- **Plan for timely and useful feedback on assignments and assessments** to ease family stress and concerns with student progress.
- **Impress on your students the importance of eliminating distractions:** smart phones, music, other media, should all be silenced during dedicated school work time. Students may need instruction on how to plan their day or create space for concentration. Recognize the economic and familial challenges for some students.
- **Provide more structure for executive functioning tasks** (eg. planning, monitoring progress through a project, ensuring work is submitted correctly, providing rubrics when appropriate).
- **Engage students and families regularly**, find the different modes that work for different students and families.
- **Enter grades promptly** to reduce student and family anxiety. Offer opportunities for revision where appropriate, as it may be harder for students to produce their best work in a new learning environment. Consider establishing a proficiency standard.
- **Include a Criteria for Success Checklist** for every unit, or large assignment.
- **Provide a clear path** for your students to succeed in or pass your course. Revisit it often, not just when they appear to struggle.

Teacher Planning: A Practical Example

As you're setting up your classroom, think of using the ideas above in terms of CPA (Content, Practice, and Assessment). It could look something like this:

STEP 1: Content Creation & Delivery

- Building Engagement
 - Start of class
 - Engagement activities to focus learning at the start of class
 - Designing for engagement when we create projects and activities
- Delivering Content
 - Making videos and narrated lectures of lessons to post
 - Making interactive lessons
 - Tools to work with videos that already exist (to create engagement & check understanding)
 - Tools to help with live presenting
- Discussion as an instructional strategy and content delivery option
 - Having a discussion
 - Using student generated input to help drive a lesson
- Quickly checking for understanding as we deliver content (building formative assessments into the content delivery portion of your lesson)

STEP 2: Practice & Feedback (Formative)

- Practice of/with recently taught material
 - Guided practice (live in-class, synchronous)
 - Independent practice (not live in class, asynchronous, students working "self paced")
- Giving students timely feedback and a chance to act on it
- Formative assessment of recently learned work (to inform next teaching and studying)
- Robust storage of material in long term memory (spaced practice & retrieval practice)

STEP 3: Assessment Options & Tools (Summative)

- Mini-projects (quick, simple multiple-modality demonstrations of learning)
- Transfer of recently learned knowledge and skills to a new context

Tutorials:

Below you will find links to a valuable resource of over 150 trainings/shortcuts for online teaching. We have made both the teacher and the student/parent tutorials links available to you. The extensive list of resources are available online. In each link, there is one sheet/table for Google Apps and one for "Other Apps." Some of these are also listed in our Tech Tools section below. These are live links. They should take you directly to the online resources you might need to help make Comprehensive Distance Learning a success for you and for your students.

[Teacher Tutorials](#)

[Student/Parent Tutorials](#)

Tech Tools:

SLSD has worked to create a list of tech tools our teachers and schools use to reach our students. We've done our best to organize this list in a helpful manner. You are not required to use any of these tools, however, we hope this will be a helpful resource as you seek to increase engagement and elevate your teaching practices for the upcoming year and beyond.

- Nearly all tools can be used in all content areas K-12, but if not they are marked accordingly:
 - (E) = Elementary
 - (S) = Secondary
 - (M) = Math
 - (LA) = Language Arts
 - (SS) = Social Studies
 - (SC) = Science
- A note: if you do not see a resource, website, or app that you value and utilize in your classroom, reach out to Heather Bridgens so that SLSD can add it to this list. We hope this resource will be one we can continue to expand and improve upon to help all teachers find resources to create the best learning environment possible for their students.

This table is organized according to the CPA categories listed above.

Step 1: CONTENT Tech Tools

Building Engagement:

Website or App	Notes and Tips	Training Video/Task
EdPuzzle	Limited Free Model allows 20 unique videos for each teacher, there is a district license that allows unlimited and includes PD. Adapt your own videos or youtube videos to include questions within the video for students to answer.	Included with paid district subscription: https://edpuzzle.com/webinars
Flipgrid	All subjects/grades. Video scavenger hunts, interactive topics.	http://blog.flipgrid.com/gettings-tarted Once you're there, there are numerous "how to" videos for the various tools.
Wide Open School	K-2	Free Distance Learning Tools for K-12 students, curated and vetted by Common Sense Media, an organization that supports parents and teachers to provide their children with safe, meaningful engagement with all kind of media.
CIS (S)	Multiple Subjects	
Bitmoji for Classroom	All subjects/grades. Extension on Chrome.	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uq4n0J6h-ik

Delivering Content:

Website or App	Notes and Tips	Training Video/Task
CommonLit (E) (S) (LA) (SS)	Syncs with Google Classroom but requires some regular maintenance/work to use effectively	
Prezi	This is a great PowerPoint alternative. There are some	Tutorials in the program

	updates.	
Loom	Recording videos. The Pro version is free for teachers and students. Maybe another way to present video lessons. Might be useful for ELL and Speech classes. It appears that this can be used with Google Classroom	
NewsELA (LA) (SS)	-NewsELA Pro is by building, on the order of ~\$6000 -NewsELA Free allows access to the articles and lets students take quizzes but does not provide access to performance data for individual students and does not sync as readily with Google Classroom - <u>NewsELA PRO</u> allows access to performance data (grading) and other advanced features, and syncs to google classroom's grading system.	How does it work? (VIDEO)
Screencastify	Program that allows you to record short videos of your screen while you narrate.	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1UljoeHGwt-RtuwhHxt_FecuTUcoBneWm/view
Flipgrid	Students respond to topics by making short video recordings - all students can see, share and respond to them.	http://blog.flipgrid.com/gettings-tarted , http://blog.flipgrid.com/flipgridp-d
Hyperslides for Google	More dynamic presentation capabilities, using Google Slides.	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4uPMGYxwkQk
Sketch up (S)SketchUp: 3D Design Software 3D Modeling on the Web	Digital Design	This is a great tool with a steep learning curve. Also, almost impossible to use without a mouse.
Pear Deck	Presentation tool, interactive, requires downloading appropriate Google Add On software.	
Nearpod	Instructional platform, self-directed lesson or	https://nearpod.com/resources/#calendarLiveWebinar

	teacher-guided, teachers can create or choose from 1,000's already made. Requires Google Add On.	
SafeShare	K-2 Math	
Microsoft Office Suite (S)	Business (Paid for by CTE Dept)	
Knowledge Matters (S)	Business (Paid for by CTE Dept)	
Deltamath (M) (S) Teacher Sign-Up/In, Please Consult department first	Math (6-12) Paid for by CGHS math dept/admin (\$65 per teacher per year)	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xz5kWYyzILo
Odysseyware (Login)	Multiple subjects & grades (Online Learning Platform)	
Khan Academy	Multiple subjects	
Actively Learn	Online Learning Platform - Middle and HS	
Montana Meth Project	HS Health	Specific Meth Lesson
Read&Write	Text to speech and speech to text	Free for teachers - you do have to sign up to receive the full platform of tools
EquatIQ	Allows teachers and students to write math equations by drawing on a touchscreen, speech or typing	Free for teachers - you do have to sign up to receive the full platform of tools
Discussion:		
Flipgrid	Students respond to topics by making short video recordings - all students can see, share and respond to them.	http://blog.flipgrid.com/gettings-tarted , http://blog.flipgrid.com/flipgridp-d
Padlet	Students can post ideas, questions for discussion.	
Backchannel Chat	Free version for 30 students. Students can chat between one another - teacher	http://backchannelchat.com/Benefits

	moderates/approves comments. Chat can be embedded in your class website.	
Google Classroom	Using the “Question” feature under “Classwork,” propose a discussion question and make sure “students can reply to each other” is checked. Students will need to be instructed to look for other student’s answers by clicking on the assignment/question and choosing class comments or student answers. If they just “submit” they won’t see other’s answers.	https://writeonwithmissg.com/2018/06/03/7-ways-to-use-google-classrooms-ask-a-question-feature/
Quick Check for Understanding:		
QR Code Reader	All Subjects	This is built into current versions of iPhone and Android camera software.
Poll Everywhere	Live check-ins during synchronous lessons.	On website Paid Subscription required for groups larger than 20.
Straw Poll	Very quick, easy tool for checking for understanding in a digital setting.	Simple but effective. Saving data is tricky.
AnswerGarden	Live responses, brainstorming, feedback.	https://answergarden.ch/about-AnswerGarden/
Kahoot!	Can be used synchronously but polls have to be prepared in advance in most cases.	-Students must use kahoot.it as login url -More features available with \$36-\$72-\$108 yearly subscription models
Kami	Create and assign google classroom assignments in a PDF format that allows you to observe as students fill them in live. Allows feedback to be provided on the document	Basic plan is free Teacher plan is \$99 per year and allows teachers to place video instructions into documents and allows more feedback options.

	students create.	District License is available
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Step 2: PRACTICE AND (Formative) FEEDBACK Tech Tools

Student Practice:

Website or App	Notes and Tips	Training Video/Task
Poll Everywhere	Live check-ins during synchronous lessons. 40 person max “audience” for free version. For \$50/year you can group students for collaboration as well.	On website
Kahoot	All Subjects/Grades -Allows for formative assessment -Offers Pro/Premium/Premium+ on an individual basis at 35/72/108 annual cost respectfully without discounts applied -Consult link above for full feature comparison	Extended Webinar on Distance Learning With Kahoot
Deltamath (M) (S)	Math (6-12) Paid for by CGHS math dept/admin (\$65 per teacher per year)	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xz5kWYyzlLo
Nearpod	Formative assessment and dynamic media in self-paced or teacher-directed format.	https://nearpod.com/resources#calendarLiveWebinar
TinkerCAD	3D Digital Design, more basic/limited than sketchup, free and accessed using District Google Accounts	
NoRedInk	Teaches grammar, spelling, punctuation & writing	
Socrative	Like Kahoot and Poll Everywhere - a way to put out thoughtful questions to engage students	https://help.socrative.com/en/collections/1249939-launch Various articles re: “how to”

Feedback/Formative Assessment:

Website or App	Notes and Tips	Training Video/Task
Socrative	Free version is only 50 students per class/per teacher. Like Kahoot and Poll Everywhere - a way to give live feedback for student responses. Everything from multiple choice to short answer.	https://help.socrative.com/en/collections/1249939-launch Various articles re: "how to"
Flipgrid	Students can make a video (up to 10 mins) demonstrating understanding, and teachers can video or text their feedback.	http://blog.flipgrid.com/gettingstarted , http://blog.flipgrid.com/flipgridpd
DeltaMath (M) (S)	Math (6-12) Paid for by CGHS math dept/admin (\$65 per teacher per year)	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xz5kWYyzlLo
Poll Everywhere	For live instructions, interactive question/answer tool - free version 40 students max at a time.	Participants use " https://pollev.com/ " or a teacher created link.
Pear Deck	Formative practice built into teacher-created presentation. Free version includes "locks" and "timers" to keep students in sync and control the pace of the lesson.	https://www.peardeck.com/remot e-learning
Google Forms Escape Room	Students unlock 'rooms' by getting questions correct in google forms. Can be kept basic or themed as much as the teacher would like.	https://www.bespokeclassroom.com/blog/2019/10/4/how-to-build-a-digital-escape-room-using-google-forms
Kami	Create and assign google classroom assignments in a PDF format that allows you to observe as students fill them in live. Allows feedback to be provided on the document students create.	Basic plan is free Teacher plan is \$99 per year and allows teachers to place video instructions into documents and allows more feedback options. District License is available.

Step 3: ASSESSMENT OPTIONS (Summative) Tech Tools

Mini-Projects:

Website or App	Notes and Tips	Training Video/Task
Pixton	Comic maker - good for various grade levels, and possibly all subjects. Free version includes basic characters, etc.	https://edu.pixton.com/educators/reliant-writers
Storyboard That	Free version allows 3-panel storyboards, 2 per week for anyone who has an account (one for each student).	https://help.storyboardthat.com/
Animoto	Video maker with music, images, colors, etc. to creatively use, basic version free. Unlimited video creation.	https://animoto.com/business/education
Book Creator	Digital book making - music, fonts, images, students create! Free version is 1 "library" with 40 books. Lowest paid level is \$60 a year.	https://intercom.help/bookcreator/en/articles/4149394-getting-started-overview

Transferring to other contexts:

Website or App	Notes and Tips	Training Video/Task
Google Drive (Mobile App) Google Play for Android iOS App Store	Specifically the Process of photographing or filming content and uploading it via drive and organizing it (Digital Citizenship Skill). Utilizing the Mobile App on a phone allows students to parley their existing devices and even complete work on paper/live and wait until they have a secure WiFi connection to submit.	-Some Existing, may need refinement and specification

Google Classroom (Mobile App) Android iOS	To check on class work and to upload Photos or videos to Google Classroom	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xwl45PEvwi0
YouVisit	HS - Virtual College Visitation and other sites	