



August 14, 2020

Distance Learning Parent Newsletter, Issue 12

English Learner Support Division
California Department of Education (CDE)

Opening Letter

DEAR PARENTS,

Some of your children may have already begun the 2020–21 school year. The CDE hopes that you and your children are off to a happy start and continue to experience a positive year going forward. This Distance Learning Parent Newsletter will be published monthly during the 2020–21 school year to help provide you with the information and resources you need to support your children.

The August issue of the newsletter provides resources to help you start the school year off right, including how to plan for the new school year, communicate with teachers and administrators, get involved in school and district decision-making, set a schedule, and use common educational technology.

Remember, one of the greatest gifts you can give your child is to talk with them in the home language! Use this time at home to share your language and culture with your child!

New Informational Resources

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Back to School Planning: Checklists to Guide Parents, Guardians, and Caregivers

The CDC released a guide for parents and guardians to help them plan for going back to school this year. The guide is available in multiple languages and includes information for parents whose children are returning to in-person instruction as well as for those whose children will be engaging in at-home learning.

The “Planning for Virtual or At-Home Learning” section includes a planning guide that parents can use to start the school year off strong!

Four main tips for a successful start to a distance learning school year from the guide:

1. **Try to attend school activities and meetings.** Schools may offer more of these virtually. These meetings can be a way to express any concerns you may have about the school’s plans.
2. **Create a schedule with your child and make a commitment to stick with it.** Structure and routine can greatly help your child from falling behind with assignments. Discuss your family’s schedule and identify the best times for learning and instruction, as well as family-oriented physical activity, such as walks outside. A family calendar or other visuals could be useful for keeping track of deadlines and assignments.
3. **Try to find a space where you live that’s free of distractions, noise, and clutter for learning and doing homework.** This could be a quiet, well-lit place in your dining room or living room or a corner of your home that could fit a small table, if available.
4. **Identify opportunities for your child to connect with peers and be social—** either virtually or in person, while maintaining physical distance.

The guide is available on the CDC Back to School Planning: Checklists to Guide Parents, Guardians, and Caregivers web page at <https://bit.ly/CDCBacktoSchoolGuide>. The information on this page is available in multiple languages by selecting “languages” below the web page title.

Public Charge

Under longstanding federal policy, the federal government may deny a non-US citizen entry into the United States, or adjust a green card status, if the person is determined likely in the future to become a public charge based on the totality of the individual's circumstances. Public charge means that the individual is likely to become primarily dependent on the government for subsistence.

Last year, the federal government released a new public charge policy that changes how this determination is made. **Effective July 29, 2020, a federal court ruling prohibits the application and enforcement of this new public charge rule so long as there is a declared national emergency related to the COVID-19 pandemic.**

For more information about public charge, visit the California Immigrants Guide Public Charge web page at <https://immigrantguide.ca.gov/en/publiccharge/>. The page can be accessed in multiple languages by selecting a language in the upper right corner of the page.

For questions about your specific case, visit the California Department of Social Services Public Charge Provider List web page at <https://bit.ly/CDSSPublicCharge>. This page includes the contact information for organizations by region that are able to assist individuals with questions about public charge.

State of California Help for Immigrants

The California Help for Immigrants web page includes information on the July 29, 2020, federal court ruling prohibiting the application and enforcement of the public charge rule; information on testing and treatment; information on the Housing for Harvest program for agricultural workers; how to avoid utility power shut-offs; and information on disaster relief assistance for immigrants.

This information is available on the State of California Help for Immigrants web page at <https://covid19.ca.gov/guide-immigrant-californians>. The page can be accessed in multiple languages by selecting a language in the upper right corner of the page.

Informational Resources Included Every Week

School Lunch Information: CA Meals for Kids

Parents can still pick up school lunches during COVID-19 related school closures. Use the "CA Meals for Kids" mobile app to find meals or you can contact your school district directly for more information. Some districts now offer home delivery for school lunches. Parents should contact their child's school to see if the school has opted into this optional program.

CDE News Release: CA Meals for Kids App Update at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/497627>

Getting Internet Access

If you do not have access to the internet at home, there are several companies offering service to families. Contact the companies listed on the CDE Getting Internet Access Available Plans web page to discuss available plans.

Getting Internet Access: Available Plans at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/498321>

Home Learning Resources

Below are free recommended resources that can help you and your child start the school year off well!

Using Educational Technology

Google Classroom Tutorials

There are many resources to help parents feel confident using Google Classroom with their children. Many districts use this platform for distance learning to help teachers assign and organize work for students. Some teachers, schools, or districts may have created their own tutorials for Google Classroom. Contact your child's school if you need additional support!

- **Spanish Tutorial:** The YouTube video “Google Classroom Para Padres de Familia” at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G9FFLSJgOoM> provides information to parents in Spanish about how to support their children with Google Classroom, including how to join a class, check for assignments, and turn in work.
- **English Tutorial:** The YouTube video “How to Use Google Classroom for Parents!” at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lgS-hoSljnw> provides information to parents in English about how to support their children with Google classroom, including how to sign in, check for assignments, and turn in work.

Zoom Tutorials

Many districts use Zoom to hold virtual classes during distance learning. The videos below can assist parents to learn more about Zoom and feel comfortable assisting their children with Zoom. Contact your child's school if you need additional support!

- **Spanish Tutorial:** The YouTube video “How to Use Zoom (Spanish Version)” at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N4BZ5JQO_Hk provides directions on how to join a Zoom meeting in Spanish.

- **English Tutorial:** The YouTube video “How to Set up the Zoom App for Parents, Teachers, and Students” at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d7xXZxRDFUU&t=190s> provides directions on how to join a Zoom meeting in English.

Communicating and Getting Involved

Parents, teachers, and schools are partners in educating children. Here are a few tips about how you can support your child by communicating with your child’s teacher(s) and getting involved in the school. These recommendations are adapted from the CDE *Family Engagement Framework* on the CDE Parent/Family web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/pf/pf/>.

- Talk to your child about homework and offer to help your child understand and learn.
- Talk to your child about the importance of learning.
- Read notes, announcements, and newsletters from the school.
- Call the school to communicate with teachers and other school staff.
 - Your child’s teacher(s) and school should communicate with you regularly and keep you informed. If you do not feel informed, reach out to them and ask for more information!
 - During distance learning, you can also use the online learning platform your school uses (such as Google Classroom) to stay informed and to communicate with the teacher.
- Fill out and send back surveys to share your ideas about supporting your child’s learning and growth.
- Attend advisory committee meetings, including the Parent Advisory Council, English Learner Advisory Committee (ELAC), or District English Learner Advisory Committee (DELAC).
 - These meetings are continuing during distance learning. Ask your school for more information!
- Share your ideas and perspective with your child’s teacher(s) and the school principal or other administrators. Your perspective is important and valuable!

Setting a Schedule

Setting a schedule for your child during distance learning can help them be more focused and productive. If possible, write the schedule out and post it where your child can see it. Use visuals for younger children and have your child help create the schedule!

Below are some resources of model schedules that you can use to help you and your child create yours.

San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools (SBCSS) Model Schedules

Wondering what a distance learning schedule should look like for children of different ages? The SBCSS released model elementary, middle, and high school schedules that parents can use or adapt to help structure their children's day.

The schedules are available on the SBCSS Family Resources web page at <https://distancelearning.sbcss.net/index.php/family-resources>. Scroll to the bottom of the page to view the model schedules.

Tulare County Office of Education (TCOE) Model Schedules

Looking for additional models? The TCOE offers several models of how to structure a daily schedule during distance learning.

The schedules are available on the TCOE Structuring the Day web page at <https://bit.ly/TCOEschedules>.

Social Media and Email

To stay up to date with new resources and information, follow the CDE English Learner Support Division on Twitter [@MultilingualCA](https://twitter.com/MultilingualCA).

To subscribe to the English Learner Updates Listserv, send a blank email to join-english-learner-updates@mlist.cde.ca.gov.