SVHS Distance Learning
Student and Parent FAQ

How does distance learning work?
A: Students may attend or participate in classes in “real-time” in Google classes, Google Hangouts, Zoom or they may participate asynchronously at different times. In some cases, teachers may have recordings of virtual hangouts. Please inquire with your teacher.
  ● Each week will begin with an assignment posted in each Google Classroom by Monday at 9:00 a.m. Students are responsible for reviewing the assignment. To receive credit assignments need to be turned in on Monday of the following week. Assignments do not need to be “correct” but a significant effort must be demonstrated through work completed, class attendance, and/or communication with teachers.
  ● Credit is given based on effort versus mastery.
  ● Students are expected to contact and engage with their teacher via email, through Google Hangouts or virtual office hours. Other communication options are determined by the classroom teacher.
  ● Teachers are monitoring student attendance, engagement and assignment completion.
  ● AP students are expected to follow their teacher’s guidelines in preparation for the upcoming AP assessment.

How will distance learning be graded?
A: Students will earn “Credit” or “No Credit” marks on their report card and transcript. Weekly assignments will be reviewed for completion.

What is the basis for the credit / no credit grading policy?
A. Leaders of the California Department of Education, State Board of Education, and California college systems have all stressed the requirement that students be ‘held harmless’ from any impacts of school closures. SVUSD administration, staff and VMTA considered a variety of factors in weighing grading policies; there was consensus that this policy was the most equitable and humane solution.

SVHS Temporary Grading Practices

How will a student’s GPA be affected by this change?
A. The GPA will not be affected when a student receives a Credit/ No Credit. The cumulative GPA remains the same as at the end of the Fall 2019-20 Semester.

How will credit/ no credit affect a-g requirements for college admission?
A: The UC and CSU systems - during this crisis - have stated they are willing to accept credit/no credit marks in lieu of letter grades for all courses, including A–G courses, and that marks of credit/no credit will not affect the UC or CSU calculations of GPA. On April 2, 2020, the University of California, California State University, the California Community College System, and the Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities have stated that they will accept Credit/No Credit marks in lieu of letter grades for all courses, including A–G courses, completed in winter/ spring/ summer 2020 for all students. Marks of Credit/No Credit will not
affect the UC or CSU calculations of GPA. (https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/he/hn/gradegraduationfaq.asp).

What is the expectation for communication between teachers and families?
A: Teachers are available for communication with families via email, initially, and can follow up via phone or virtual meeting as necessary. Questions on curriculum and individual student progress should be directed to teachers via email (parents) or the online platform the teacher is using (students).

Are students allowed on school sites to work with teachers, and are teachers expected to be there? Can teachers provide 1:1 help with students - in person or remotely?
A: At this time, following the Shelter in Place Order, our schools are not open. Teachers will be able to provide assistance to students via email, phone, or online video conferencing. Students are encouraged to take advantage of teacher office hours. Each teacher/class schedules their office hours; please reach out to individual teachers to clarify days/times.

Where and when are meals distributed to students?
A: Meals are being distributed Monday through Friday at Altimira, Sassarini and Adele school locations from 11:00 am - 1:00 pm. Meals are distributed to all children through age 18. Please remember to maintain social distancing of 6 feet between people during meal distribution.

Are we still planning to do State testing?
A: State standardized testing has been canceled for Spring 2020 by the State of California.

Will there still be AP testing?
A: AP Tests will be transitioning to at-home exams for the 2019-20 school year. Dates and times of exams (beginning May 11): AP Exam Schedule 2020- COVID - 19 changes. For more detail on what to expect from the at-home exams in terms of structure, format, length, etc: Covid - 19 College Board Update AP Informational Flyer AP teachers will be in communication with students about details related to exams.

Will there be SAT and ACT tests?
A: SAT tests are scheduled to resume starting in August 2020, with expanded testing capacity each month through the remainder of the year. This includes a new administration in September as well as the previously scheduled tests on August 29, October 3, November 7, and December 5. For more information: College Board SAT and PSAT Information: COVID - 19. The ACT exam is offering makeup exams on June 20 and July 25 at various testing centers. In the fall, students will be allowed to take the exam from their home. For more information please visit the ACT Website.

What are my options for financial aid if my ability to pay for college has been adversely impacted by circumstances related to COVID-19?
A: Many colleges and universities recognize that a student’s need for financial aid could have changed (due to financial impacts related to COVID-19) since submitting the FAFSA. We encourage you to reach out to higher education institutions directly to inquire about being re-evaluated for financial aid.

How will decisions about events (senior week, graduation) be made? When can we expect to hear about these decisions?
A: We very much want to honor the achievements of our high school seniors for attaining the milestones of high school graduation. School administration and staff are working with students, parents, and District leadership to develop alternative plans to the traditional graduation ceremony and “senior week.” A survey sent to all seniors of the Class of 2020 has provided input that will be considered by a graduation committee that is forming. We will provide updated communications as available.

How will we get our yearbooks?
A: Once yearbooks are received, a safe pick up schedule that provides for adequate physical distancing will be established by school staff and communicated to students and families.

How will we turn in textbooks, Chromebooks, library materials, PE locks and other school property?
A: Administration is working on a schedule that will enable return of school materials at the end of the academic year. Once details are determined, the plan and details will be communicated to students and families.

What if I have a problem with my Chromebook?
A: Please contact Tarah Neubacher, our Library Technician, tneubacher@sonomaschools.org who will provide support and arrange for chromebook borrowing if necessary. Although the offices are closed, students are still able to get needed materials.

How can I pick up PE clothes or other personal belongings left in my locker or on campus?
A: A plan will be developed and students will be contacted by SVHS Staff regarding an appointment or schedule that allows you to collect your belongings in a safe manner that provides for adequate physical distancing.

How can we communicate with our teachers?
A: You may send an email to teachers directly at ateacher@sonomaschools.org (most emails are the teacher’s first initial and last name, followed by @sonomaschools.org). You may find email addresses on each school’s website. Teachers will check email Monday - Friday during normal school hours.
How can we communicate with school administration?
A: School principals and vice principals will be available via email throughout the shelter in place order, Monday - Friday. You may also leave a message on their office phones, which they may be able to retrieve remotely. Email is recommended.

Will there be counseling available? What about opportunities for students to connect with a school counselor or psychologist?
A: We understand the need for support of students, family members, and staff throughout this time. Students who feel the need for support are invited to send an email to their school counselor to request a phone call or correspondence during this time. Additionally, we offer mental health resources on our website that may provide support.

Will the school year need to be extended?
A: Because of these extraordinary circumstances, the California Department of Education has indicated that schools will receive a waiver for the required number of days students are in school. The school year will not need to be extended.

Will we still have summer school?
A: Summer School registration is temporarily paused as we move forward. We will update you regarding summer offerings as information becomes available.

Will the next school year still start on August 17, 2020?
A: We are planning to start our 2020-21 school year as planned on August 17, 2020. At this time, we recognize that even by August our “normal” school experience may be different, as we may still be dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic. Whether or not the start of the school year will be on our campuses or from a distance will depend on direction from our state and county governments. We will provide updated information once we know more.

How do I update my email, phone number or other contact information?
A: If you need to make any changes to your contact information, please send an email to our registrar, Amber McCann-Howlett, amcannhowlett@sonomaschools.org. The changes will be made.