

Acalanes Union High School District

Distance Learning Guidelines for Parents/Guardians and Students

Updated 3/23/2020

Introduction

During the current period of school closure, the staff of the Acalanes Union High School District remains committed to supporting the students, parents/guardians and the staff of our school communities. The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic presents all of us with significant personal and professional challenges and we remain committed to providing learning opportunities, social connection, and a degree of normalcy for the students and families of our school communities.

The AUHSD “Distance Learning Guidelines for Parents/Guardians” provides information about our transition from classroom-based instruction to distance learning. Under the distance learning model, we remain committed and continue to provide all of our students with an engaging, standards-based education with the necessary support structures.

School Closure

On March 13, 2020, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and in accordance with recommendations from Contra Costa Health Services and the California Department of Public Health, the AUHSD Governing Board took action to close all AUHSD school campuses. Details about school closure duration and our expectations follow:

School Closure Duration

On March 13, 2020, the AUHSD Governing Board acted to close all district schools, March 16 through April 3, 2020. Governor Newsom issued an executive order on March 19, 2020 mandating statewide shelter-in place restrictions. These restrictions will remain in effect for an indefinite period of time. AUHSD schools must remain closed while shelter-in-place order is in place. AUHSD schools may remain closed after the shelter-in-place order is lifted to encourage social distancing. The AUHSD Governing Board will reconvene and, if necessary, act to prolong the closure of AUHSD schools. The community will receive regular updates about the school closure timeline. AUHSD staff is preparing for long-term closure and there is currently no plan for extending the school year beyond May 29, 2020. At this time, AUHSD is moving ahead with planning for a regular summer school session.

Office Closure

For the duration of school closure, all AUHSD school and district offices will remain closed to the public. Parents and guardians may contact staff via email. District office contacts may be found at [this page](#).

- AUHSD staff will be available during regular, pre-closure office hours. During their work hours, staff should be available via district email.
- Parents and guardians should contact their child's teacher via email with any questions regarding distance learning specific to a particular course.

Technology Requirements

Students can work on most devices and access their AUHSD School Loop and Google Apps for Education accounts. There is no assumption that all families have a device available or internet connection. Wireless hotspots and devices were distributed to families in need. Families still in need are asked to contact their principal immediately.

Online Platforms

To ensure the effective implementation of distance learning, teachers will utilize designated online platforms to complete the following: communicate course expectations, deliver instruction, collect and return student work, communicate student progress, and provide academic support.

- School Loop will be utilized for communication about course expectations, assignments details, and student progress.
- Teachers may also utilize additional online platforms such as Google Classroom or another platform to deliver curricular content, collect student work and return teacher-evaluated work.

It is the goal of our staff to streamline the use of online platforms to avoid confusion and placing an additional burden on our students. Unfortunately, the District does not have one online platform that can perform all necessary elements of distance learning and due to a rapid shift to this mode of instruction, multiple platforms will be utilized.

Distance Learning

Distance learning refers to instruction where a student and teacher are in different locations. AUHSD recognizes that teaching remotely requires a different approach than classroom instruction.

Curriculum and Content

AUHSD staff will continue utilizing the district curriculum framework to deliver instruction based on the state standards. Considering the challenges that come with distance learning, lack of classroom instruction and the rapid shift to this model, teachers have been asked to focus on teaching the essential skills and standards that are critical for student success in subsequent courses. The primary focus for the remainder of the school year will be on ensuring that our students are prepared for the next school year.

Students should expect:

- 2-3 hours of focused, undistracted coursework each week for every course they are taking. This includes all assigned work for the class as there is no distinction between classwork and homework. Students taking AP courses may have additional work as they prepare for the rescheduled AP exams.
- Work will be assessed and teachers will provide students with feedback on their progress towards mastering the standards and skills.

Student Support

The majority of our students have never participated in a distance learning model and it is understood that they will initially struggle during the transition. Our teachers and support staff will provide our students with the necessary support as they develop the skills and habits necessary to be successful in a distance learning environment.

- AUHSD staff will closely monitor for students who are falling behind, not logging on or not making progress during distance learning.
- Students with IEP and 504 plans will be provided with appropriate support as designated in their plans.

Grades

Based on the recent guidelines from the California Department of Education (CDE) and considering the dramatic changes in our education circumstances and our shift to distance learning, AUHSD will implement the following guidelines with respect to 4th Quarter grades:

4th Quarter Grades

AUHSD is modifying grading practices for the 4th Quarter of the 2019-2020 school year:

- Overall 4th Quarter Grades -- Students will not earn an overall letter grade for the 4th Quarter; instead, they will receive "Credit" (CR) or "No Credit" (NC).
- Second semester grades will be recorded as Credit/No Credit grades. These guidelines may be revised - please see "Future Considerations" below.

Future Grade Considerations

AUHSD staff may need to respond by changing the above grading guideline based on new CDE or federal guidance. Key variables that will influence decisions about grading practices, include, but are not limited to the following: length of school closure, new guidelines from the CDE, new policy from the Governing Board, decisions made by colleges and universities, and changing health and safety conditions in the community.

Should the closure of school be much shorter than anticipated and students return to school with significant time for traditional classroom-based instruction, AUHSD may consider a return to the regular letter grading system. The AUHSD staff is also examining the possibility of providing students with a choice of selecting their 3rd Quarter grade or Credit (CR) at the end of the Second Semester if they successfully completed all distance learning work. Students and parents/guardians will be updated of any changes once the staff knows more.