



JUNIPERO SERRA HIGH SCHOOL

March 12, 2020

Dear Parents,

As we transition from abbreviated distance learning to extended distance learning, we know that parents have a lot of questions about how this is going to work at Serra. There is a lot to talk about and today, we will discuss how (extended) distance learning will work at Serra. Over the next few days, we will discuss teleconferencing etiquette, best practices to succeed at distance learning and the social-emotional aspect of distance learning.

Distance Learning and Assignments

Teachers at Serra will be doing asynchronous online learning. In other words, teachers will be posting assignments online and students will be completing those assignments by the designated due dates. Students are not expected to sign on at a specific time during the day to “virtually attend” their classes. However, teachers will be available during office hours to answer questions, explain concepts, review problems, etc., as students complete their work.

We have asked teachers to create “units of time.” In other words, instead of posting assignments every other day (similar to the A/B schedule), teachers will be posting multiple days worth of assignments at once. The purpose of this is for students to have a better understanding of how the different assignments relate and build upon each other, and work toward understanding the concepts and overarching topic/question. Seeing multiple days worth of assignments also allows students to better plan their days and figure out when assignments for each class need to be completed. Students also have the opportunity to work ahead if they choose.

Assignments will vary depending on the class and teacher. For example, one unit could be the “circulatory system.” Assignments could include: watching a Youtube video explaining the circulatory system, reading an article about the diseases associated with the circulatory system, answering questions about the similarities and differences between the respiratory and circulatory system, and creating a drawing of the circulatory system. Afterward, students would then do a virtual lab on the circulatory system.

Also, we understand that distance learning may be challenging for some students and we will also talk about “Best Practices to Succeed at Distance Learning” in the future.

Office Hours - Teacher Support

Teachers will be offering office hours three times a week for one hour each session through Zoom (or other similar platforms.) Teachers will be posting office hours days and times on their website/Google classroom. This is an ideal time for students to ask questions and get direct help and support from their teacher. This would also be the time where teachers would answer questions, explain concepts, review problems, etc. We encourage students to take advantage of teacher office hours.

We did not have the opportunity to discuss with students appropriate teleconferencing etiquette. We will talk about this tomorrow and we hope that you will discuss these with your son so that he is prepared before joining his first online office hours.

Student Work Expectations

In general, students will be completing, at minimum, a few hours of school work every day. We would anticipate students spending approximately four to six hours each day completing school work which may be shorter or longer depending on student needs and how fast they work. We encourage parents to plan for students to complete school work from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. minimally each day, just as he would be attending classes at Serra. This structure will help students stay focused, organized, and current with their classes. Students should know that playing video games and getting on social media, etc., would not normally occur during the school day, so they should similarly focus their time during distance learning.

If you or your son has any questions, teachers are available by email. Counselors and the ARC are also available to students. Please reach out if needed. I know the counselors and the ARC have already emailed all of their students. Mrs. Rosenberg and the ARC team will be reaching out again to the ARC students very soon.

AP Classes

We have also received a few questions about AP classes. Our AP teachers are continuing to prepare students for the AP exam. At this time, we are still planning for students to take AP Exams in May. However, things are changing day by day and as we get closer to May, we will provide you with updates if anything changes.

Technical Support

In addition, if your son is having technical issues, our IT Department is also ready to assist you. You or your son can submit a ticket to our ticketing system by sending an email to support@serrahs.com and they will respond as soon as possible.

In Summary

As a college prep school, distance learning mirrors some of the expectations that students will experience in college, so this is a good test for the future. We understand that distance learning is different and can be challenging for some students. Therefore, teachers, counselors, the ARC and administrators will continue to work with students as we transition to extended distance learning.

We hope this answers some of the questions you may have about (extended) distance learning at Serra. If you have any additional questions, please feel free to email [Rita Lee](#) or [Keith Strange](#).

Over the next few days, we will discuss teleconferencing etiquette, best practices to succeed at distance learning, and the social-emotional aspect of distance learning.

Sincerely,

Keith Strange
Assistant Principal: Academics

Rita Lee
Dean of Studies