

Distance Learning Policy And Guidelines

The Brandon Valley School Board recognizes the necessity of meeting the needs of the individual in a changing society. Distance learning curriculum must be flexible and adapted to individual abilities and differences. It must also be adjustable to changing conditions in order that our students may be academically, physically, socially, and morally prepared to progress.

Academics

Courses developed for distance learning must meet the same NCA (North Central Association) accreditation criteria and incorporate accepted best practices as any course being offered to face-to-face learners in the Brandon Valley School District. Submission to faculty department chair, peer review and approval by administration and school board will be required when planning a distance learning class.

Instructional days for a distance learning class will follow the calendar of the Brandon Valley School District.

Courses developed shall focus on thinking processes. For example, courses should reflect:

- Mastery of foundational knowledge
- Application of higher-order thinking processes
- Reflection on learning processes and experiences

Course development design shall address the relational basis of learning by reflecting:

- Interaction between learner and content
- Interaction between learner and other learners
- Interaction between learner and teacher
- Interaction between learner and self (reflection)
- Interaction between learner and community (includes service)

Courses developed shall create stimulating learning experiences by providing instructional variety, engaging design and relevance to real-life experience.

Courses developed shall address the individuality of learners by reflecting cultural diversity, learning styles, multiple intelligences and levels of academic performance.

Courses developed shall incorporate appropriate assessment processes with expected outcome directly to course objectives and authentic assessment.

Students enrolled in distance learning courses must meet the same admission prerequisites as students enrolled in face-to-face courses.

Grading policies and standards for courses and deficiency notices will be consistent with the policies of the Brandon Valley School District as put forth in the Student Handbook.

Surveys will be sent to students and administrators at remote sites, when a distance learning class is completed, to evaluate the degree to which the class met the needs of the student.

Fiscal

Schools who contract to receive a distance learning class from Brandon Valley School District will pay per semester to the Brandon Valley School District. Billing for the first semester will be based upon the number of students on the registration list for any class on June 15 or the actual number of students in the class on September 15, whichever is greater. Billing for the second semester will be based on enrollment in the classes on the 10th day of class during that semester.

The distance education instructor is guaranteed \$1,500 per semester. The cost per student is \$150 with a minimum of ten students. If a class has fewer than ten remote students, the total is pro-rated to equal \$1,500; more than ten the cost per student is still \$150, with any extra money going to the originating site.

Geographic

The Brandon Valley School District will pursue and provide on-line distance learning classes because of the potential to improve educational opportunities to geographically remote students within the state of South Dakota.

Governance

Principals at remote sites will provide classroom supervision sufficient to ensure that order is maintained.

Every attempt should be made to have their students in the classroom according to the host school's starting times and whenever the host site is in session.

The Brandon Valley School District as the credit granting institution will keep accurate and up-to-date records of all distance learning courses offered, and all students enrolled.

When a remote site school does not hold classes for any reason, students will be responsible for any work missed. Notification of these changes is the responsibility of the teacher. Students who know they will be absent from class may request that the class be video taped for them. Videotaping can be done by the receiving school only with the advance notice and approval of the teacher and only for the benefit of the student.

Any planned change in origination sites must have the approval of all principals at least 48 hours ahead of the change.

Field trips, social activities, get-togethers, etc. must have the approval of all principals involved. Any travel expenses associated with the trips will be the responsibility of the students' home district.

All schools on the DDN V-Tel will be responsible for providing their own textbooks for courses offered for high school credit. It is permissible to loan textbooks between schools.

Parent/student/teacher conferences may be arranged and the system may be used for the conference.

Changes in school schedules caused by emergencies such as weather shall be announced on local radio and television stations.

Faculty

Any teaching assignment that includes remote delivery will be made only with the consent of the teacher and district. Instruction of distance learning courses shall be considered part of, not an addition to the teacher's regular class load. Teachers who teach via DDN V-Tel will be encouraged to participate in a training program.

Teachers will be responsible for course content, materials and supply selection, instruction, testing, evaluation and all other necessary instructional responsibilities for all sites taking the class. The principal of the home site will be responsible for supporting, supervising and evaluating the teacher.

Teachers will be expected to maintain classroom order and discipline in the same manner that they would for any other classes.

Teachers may gather personal data relevant to their teaching and the class on their students in remote sites. Remote sites are urged to share relevant information about the students with the teacher.

Testing procedures are up to the instructor. If a local site monitor is required for testing, the instructor must notify the remote site principals at least 48 hours before the test.

The teacher will supply the remote site students with the following information on the first day of class:

- Introduction of students and teachers
- A copy of the Brandon Valley Student Handbook
- Rules for attendance, homework, incompletes and grading
- Discipline rules and procedures (see Student Contract)
- An explanation of the parent/student agreement
- Studio equipment usage, responsibilities, operations and the setup procedures.
- Syllabus

Substitute Teachers

The host site will be responsible for securing substitute teachers when they are needed. Teachers may videotape a lesson in advance for use by the substitute; however, the videotape cannot take the place of a teacher.

Legal

The Brandon Valley School District views course work developed for distance learning classes as copyrighted, intellectual property owned jointly by the school district and the faculty member who created the course.

Video tapes made for remote delivery purposes shall become the property of the school district and their sale or use by other teachers is prohibited without the permission of the teacher and the district.

Students

Principals should exercise care in selecting students to ensure that the students are academically prepared and that they possess sufficient maturity and motivation to function well in a two-way interactive class environment.

All students who take courses on the DDN V-Tel network will be required to sign a course contract. This course contract will be countersigned by one of the students' parents or guardian.

Discipline referrals are to be made to the administration of the school in which the student resides.

It shall be the responsibility of remote sites to support their students with access to library and reference materials, guidance, academic and counseling services. Remote sites are also expected to maintain the confidentiality of student records and grades as they would for any of their on-site students.

Technical

The Brandon Valley School District will provide adequate technology resources, physical facilities, appropriate staffing and access to technical assistance to support its electronically-offered courses.

The system will be available for K-12 member school use every Monday through Friday from 7:00am until 4:00pm. The system can be used during those hours only with the approval of the principal and DDN V-Tel coordinator. Use outside of those hours will require approval by the principal, the superintendent or designee and the DDN V-Tel coordinator.

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