



September 3, 2020

MEMORANDUM

To: Members of the Board of Education

From: Dr. Michael J Martirano, Superintendent

Subject: Video Recording Live Instruction

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide you with information related to supporting students who are struggling in the virtual learning environment. This memorandum will include an update on the challenges associated with recording live instruction as well as a description of two new initiatives supporting students and families.

For the past month, several of you have inquired about the possibility of using video recordings of live instruction as a tool to ameliorate the challenges experienced by families finding it difficult to adhere to the agreed upon school schedule. While a seemingly logical solution to some, recording live instruction poses three significant challenges to our system. They are:

- **Adhering to State and Federal Laws** - The HCPSS believes that recording and rebroadcasting live lessons constitutes a violation of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). FERPA applies to any electronic or hard copy document that directly relates to a student, including video recordings. Examples of circumstances when classroom instruction may relate directly to a student include the display of student names as part of Google Meet (taken for attendance), student participation in discussion and activities, students presenting independent or group work, formative checking for understanding, and student misconduct and discipline. The platform HCPSS will be using for synchronous lessons, Google Meet, does not allow for recording only the teacher, so any recording will capture instructional circumstances that directly relate to a student. Further, posted videos are required to be closed captioned to provide accessibility to all students and closed captioning is automatically turned off when recording is occurring in Google Meet.

NOTE: It is important to note that while a few neighboring districts are planning to use live recordings as a resource for families, the HCPSS does not agree that their implementation procedures meet our interpretation of FERPA.

- **Honoring the work with our bargaining units.** – During the spring, the HCPSS and Howard County Education Association (HCEA) signed a MOU to provide

guidelines for virtual instruction during the pandemic. That MOU, which expired at the end of the school year, included a statement that prohibits recording live instruction. And although the MOU expired and FERPA guidelines permit the creation of a pre-recording video lesson featuring only the teacher, the increased workload associated with the creation of these videos is unreasonable considering that teacher workload is already increased due to the shift to virtual instruction and, at the secondary level, the 4x4 instructional schedule. Teachers are permitted, but not required, to create their own videos as a tool for learning.

- **Ensuring High Levels of Student Engagement** - Student engagement during a lesson is a critical component of learning. HCPSS teachers are charged with creating a positive learning environment that encourages students to take risks, to make mistakes, and to learn from those mistakes. Recording live instruction introduces an additional barrier to this pursuit. In an August 21 email to the Board of Education, student Board member, Mr. Zach Koung, offered several enlightening statements that explain how recording a live lesson is likely to suppress student voice. In addition, students may fear possible shaming or bullying through the misuse of the recorded video (memes) on social media platforms.

Given these significant challenges, the HCPSS will not be using video recordings of live instruction as a tool to support student learning. However, the HCPSS will continue to provide families with access to resources to support learning at home and outside of the synchronous lesson time. In addition to the robust set of resources available for teachers to share with families, the HCPSS is launching new support initiatives that will not only serve families and students during this crisis but will also serve to them for years to come.

Supporting Students Beyond Scheduled School Hours

The HCPSS will be contracting teachers to support students beyond the school day. It is important to note that each school designs an afterschool program to support struggling students. But, starting this fall, the HCPSS will launch an evening support program to help mitigate the challenges associated with virtual learning. These evening sessions are designed as a supplement, not a replacement, to instruction provided during the school day.

Elementary School Student Support

For grades K-5, two sessions, held three times per week, will be available on Google Meet and open to students with HCPSS accounts. Two, one-hour sessions, starting at 6:00 pm and 7:00 pm respectively, will be held on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays beginning in mid-October. For these sessions, parents will be invited and encouraged to attend with their students. A schedule of concurrent session options will provide 20 - 30 minutes of direct support for Math and English to small groups (10 - 20) of students. After the direction instruction portion of the session, students/parents will have the opportunity to ask questions.

In the event that the demand for this support exceeds HCPSS's capacity, the following criteria will be used, in priority order, to identify student participants.

- Students struggling with attendance. (Identified by the child's school)
- Students struggling with academic achievement in a virtual learning environment (Identified through the school's Student Support Team (SST))
- Parents requesting additional support for their child (Sign up procedures will be communicated)

Middle School Student Support

For grades 6-8, two sessions, held three times per week, will be available on Google Meet and open to students with HCPSS accounts. Two, one-hour sessions, starting at 6:00 pm and 7:00 pm respectively, will be held on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays beginning in mid-October. For these sessions, parents will be invited and encouraged to attend with their students. A schedule of concurrent session options will provide 20 - 30 minutes of direct support for Math, English, science, and Social Studies to small groups (10 - 20) of students. After the direction instruction portion of the session, students/parents will have the opportunity to ask questions.

In the event that the demand for this support exceeds HCPSS's capacity, the following criteria will be used, in priority order, to identify student participants.

- Students struggling with attendance. (Identified by the child's school)
- Students struggling with academic achievement in a virtual learning environment (Identified through the school's Student Support Team (SST))
- Parents requesting additional support for their child (Sign up procedures will be communicated)

High School Student Support Sessions (Evening School)

For high school students, many courses are already offered during Evening School, which allow students to supplement their schedules beyond school hours. This program provides access to credit recovery courses as well as opportunities for students to earn original credit. Space is reserved (first) for students identified by high school SSTs. Additional spaces are made available to any student as availability permits. This program will continue virtually this fall. Information about evening school sign up will be posted on the website.

Developing a Video Repository

Beginning this fall, and continuing over the next few years, HCPSS staff will lead the design of a repository of videos aligned to each set of grade-level and course-based standards. The repository will contain both existing videos that are curated from open-sourced online websites and videos newly developed by HCPSS or contracted staff. The videos will serve as a supplement to, not a replacement for, the high quality first instruction delivered by our teachers.

This fall, the team is focused on building the repository to align to the *What your Child Will Learn* guide available on the HCPSS website -

<https://www.hcpss.org/academics/what-your-child-will-learn-guides/>

A prototype illustrating the organizational framework of the video repository for a portion of the Algebra I course is found in Appendix A of this memo. In an effort to provide the Board with a vision of what this project will become, refer to the existing family Math Resource Support Center found here: <http://hcpssfamilymath.weebly.com/>. Please note that the creation of a public facing site for each grade level, subject and course is a time-consuming task. In the short term, video resources will be stored and shared with families on Canvas.

In closing, the HCPSS recognizes the challenges experienced by students and their families as they navigate the constraints associated with this pandemic. It is the expectation that each and every student attend classes as scheduled. The interactions between teachers and students, especially the formative assessment processes that exist only in live instruction, are critical to student learning. The HCPSS will continue to explore every available option in order to help mitigate these challenges. These options include the use of Home and Hospital Instruction for qualify students, the prioritization of small group, face-to-face support for students of great need, and the use of support staff to engage in problem-solving with families.

If you have further questions or need additional information, please reach out to Bill Barnes, Chief Academic Officer.

Copy to: Executive Staff
Board of Education Office

Appendix A – Algebra I Video Repository Organizational Framework

The [What Your Child will Learn Algebra I](#) document is included on the HCPSS website. The document provides an overview of the standards that students will learn in Algebra I. In order to provide support resources for students and families, we will link video resources for the major content standards of the course. The chart below provides an example of Unit 1 standards for Algebra I. A brief description of the resource will be provided.

Algebra I

Unit 1 - Representing Functional Relationships	
Key Standard	Resources
<p>Understand the concept of a function and use function notation.</p> <p>Standard - F.IF.A.1 <i>Understanding that a function from one set (called the domain) to another set (called the range) assigns to each element of the domain exactly one element of the range. If f is a function and x is an element of its domain, then $f(x)$ denotes the output of f corresponding to the input x. The graph of f is the graph of the equation $y = f(x)$.</i></p>	<p>Check for Understanding: Domain of Advanced Functions Range of Quadratic Functions: These Khan Academy activities provide immediate feedback for student practice.</p> <p>Review/Rewind: Finding Domain and Range of a Function: This video shows an example of finding domain and range from a graph</p>
<p>Understand the concept of a function and use function notation.</p> <p>Standard - F.IF.A.2 <i>Use function notation, evaluate functions for inputs in their domains, and interpret statements that use function notation in terms of a context.</i></p>	<p>Check for Understanding: Evaluating Function Expressions Evaluating Functions</p> <p>Review/Rewind: Evaluating Expressions with Function Notation</p>
<p>Create equations that describe numbers or relationships.</p> <p>Standard - A.CED.A.2 <i>Create linear equations to represent relationships between quantities; graph equations on coordinate axes with labels and scales</i></p>	<p>Check for Understanding: Linear Models Word Problems</p> <p>Review/Rewind: Linear Models</p> <p>More 4 U Watch a portion of a lesson on Modeling Expressions and Equations.</p>

