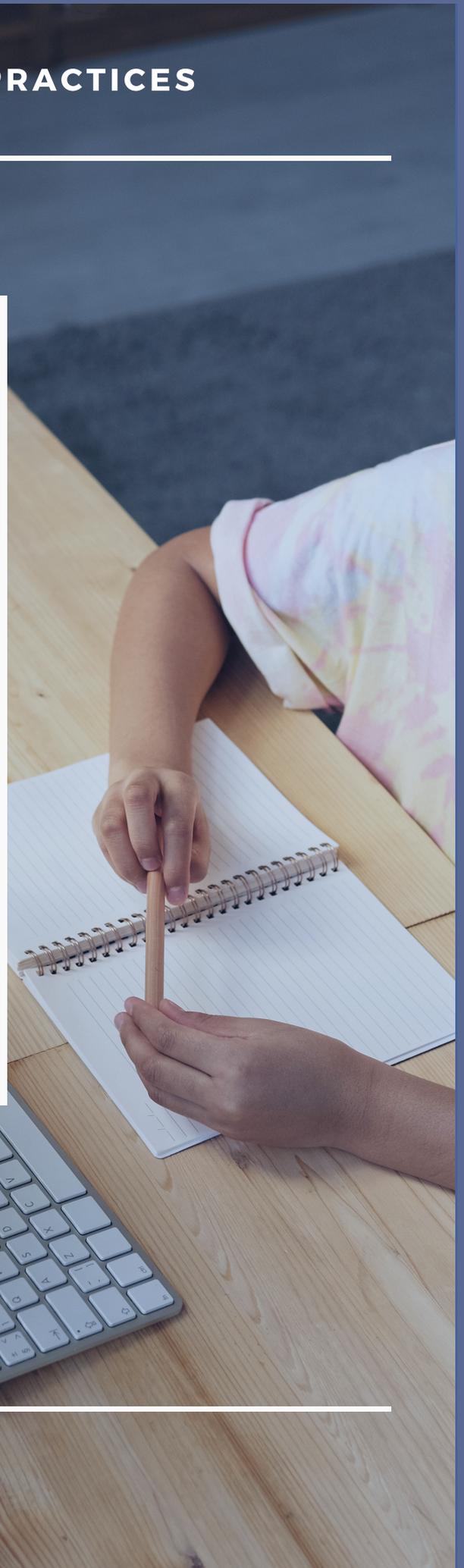# DISTANCE LEARNING TOOLKIT

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KERN COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS AND CALIFORNIA COLLABORATIVE FOR EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE

IN COLLABORATION WITH
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WHERE WE'RE AT **TODAY**

The need for distance learning resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic resurfaced a focus on the role of technology in education. While most schools in California, at the time of this writing, continue to operate in a distance learning structure, the certain return to an altered face to face landscape necessitates a thoughtful reflection on how technology will continue to impact teaching and learning.

The first step in this reflection is to define key terms. At the start of the pandemic, remote learning was implemented. This term commonly refers to the emergency-online learning that occurred rapidly and with little to no time for preparation. When schools returned online in the fall, with a bit more time to prepare, this type of learning was called distance learning. "Distance learning occurs when teachers, students, and classrooms are separate and uses a range of approaches including online usually over significant physical distances". On the other hand, blended learning "involves a 'blend' of face-to-face and digital experiences usually delivered as part of a physical classroom experience. (Schoolology, 2020). The purpose of this guide is to provide resources and strategies that will support the use of technology in both the current distance learning and blended, or hybrid, environment.

USING THIS GUIDE

This guide is a supplemental resource to the California Distance Learning Consortium's three-part webinar series on Distance Learning Pedagogy Best Practices. This series is designed to highlight simple, high-impact pedagogical practices for distance learning that can easily transfer to a blended face-to-face environment to support improved outcomes for all students.

Each section includes a brief introduction to the webinar topic, a menu of strategies and external resources to explore, as well as a featured strategy with guidelines for consideration when implementing in a distance or blended environment.

PERSONALIZED LEARNING

> ## "TAILORING LEARNING FOR EACH STUDENT'S STRENGTHS, NEEDS AND INTERESTS–INCLUDING ENABLING STUDENT VOICE AND CHOICE IN WHAT, HOW, WHEN AND WHERE THEY LEARN–TO PROVIDE FLEXIBILITY AND SUPPORTS TO ENSURE MASTERY OF THE HIGHEST STANDARDS POSSIBLE."
>
> ### -AURORA INSTITUTE

Gary Chapin of Educating for Good insists "where you can, personalize". This idea undergirds the spirit of personalized learning, which is that personalization is something that happens all the time and wherever possible, to meet the unique needs of unique learners. Below is a table of some personalized learning strategies for your consideration, with a link to an article, blog, or research to get you started on your learning journey.

FEATURED STRATEGY: CHOICE BOARDS

Choice boards can be used to personalize the output, or product, of student learning. This type of personalization is key when the input, or content, cannot be personalized. For example, if you're a science teacher and you can't get away from measuring students' understanding of the structure of a cell, you can personalize how they show their understanding using a choice board.
Pro-Tip: It's important to provide options that tap into different learning styles and modalities. Consider changing the choices on your board to keep things fresh and explore additional options for engagement.

Resource Library

Sketchnotes

Community Building

Genius Hour

Choice Boards

Learner Profiles

Flexible Time

Standards Based Grading

Learning Styles

SYNCHRONOUS+ASYNCHRONOUS

SYNCHRONOUS LEARNING IS LEARNING THAT HAPPENS IN THE SAME PLACE AT THE SAME TIME, LIKE IN A CLASSROOM OR ON A VIDEO CALL. ASYNCHRONOUS LEARNING IS LEARNING THAT OCCURS AT DIFFERENT TIMES, WITH STUDENTS LEARNING INDEPENDENTLY USING RESOURCES PROVIDED BY TEACHERS OR WHICH THEY CAN ACCESS ON THEIR OWN.

-DR. CAITLIN TUCKER

Teachers may need to consider when it's best to deliver certain content or activities synchronously or asynchronously. One might consider leveraging synchronous time when relationship building, immediate feedback, or complex topics are the focus. Asynchronous time might be best leveraged when immediate feedback is not required, when students need flexible times and pacing, or when students require varying entry points to the learning.

FEATURED STRATEGY: COMMUNITY CIRCLES

Leveraging community circles to build classroom community and support strong relationships between teachers and ensuring student success. Face-to-face circles are simple in structure and creating the same practice in a virtual space can pose a creative challenge, but it's worth the time and effort.

Pro-Tip: To recreate the safety of a circle, students need to know what they're talking about, when they're talking, and they need to know that their voice is a valuable part of the conversation. Use a slide-deck or digital list so students can see who is coming next in the circle.

Resource Library
Sync + Async

[Community Circles](#)

[Annotation](#)

[Brain Breaks](#)

[Podcasts](#)

[Interactive Video Calls](#)

[Off-screen Tasks](#)

[Breakout Room Tips](#)

[Async Video Sharing](#)

ASSESSMENT

ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING IS A PRACTICE THAT CAN "DEEPEN AND PERSONALIZE STUDENTS' DEVELOPMENT OF KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS, FOSTER GREATER OWNERSHIP AND AGENCY OVER LEARNING, AND CREATE MORE EQUITABLE CLASSROOMS, SCHOOLS, AND SYSTEMS". THIS IS QUITE A BIT DIFFERENT FROM THE THINKING THAT ASSESSMENT IS MERELY A TOOL FOR ASSIGNING GRADES.
-ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING PROJECT

In fact, K12 Leader Tony Siddall of **Next Generation Learning Challenge** outlines four ways that assessment can be used for learning rather than for measuring—Portraits of a Graduate, Performance Assessment, Formative Assessment, and Exhibitions & Defenses of Learning. Here, we will dive into formative assessment as a means to improve learner motivation, self-awareness, and success.

FEATURED STRATEGY: ONE-PAGERS

One-Pagers allow creative expression of thinking and learning in any content area. One-pagers are a tool that is easily used in a face to face class and is augmented by the use of technology in both distance and blended classroom models. We can use tools like word processing tools or graphic design tools like Canva and a plethora of others for this undertaking. Creating digital one-pagers allows us to leverage the power of hyperdocs so students have the ability to creatively integrated online sources.

Pro-Tip: Try to avoid adding burdensome or arbitrary rules to elevate student agency.

Resource Library

Digital Journals

One-Pagers

Elevator Pitch

Digital Portfolio

Peer Feedback

Digital Exit Tickets

Self-Reflection

Mind Mapping

LEARNING FORWARD, TOGETHER

> "CREATE A CULTURE OF INNOVATION IN THE SCHOOLS. ACCEPT THAT THERE WILL BE MANY SUCCESSES AND SOME FAILURES, BUT THOSE FAILURES WILL DRIVE EVEN MORE SUCCESS."
> -RYAN IMBRIALE, HS PRINCIPAL

CALIFORNIA DISTANCE LEARNING CONSORTIUM

The California Collaborative for Educational Excellence and a consortium of county offices of education have partnered to develop and share distance learning content, resources, and professional development opportunities with LEAs and COEs across the state. Special thanks to the counties who have contributed to meeting the needs of teachers and learners across California and beyond: Kern County SOS | San Diego COE | Orange County DOE | San Bernardino County SOS

To access the full Kern County Superintendent of Schools Distance Learning Course, click here.