

# Capital Region / FEH BOCES / Questar III Distance Learning Project

## Student Handbook 2017-2018 School Year

<http://dl.neric.org>

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

**Project Goal** - The principal goal of the Distance Learning Project is to expand educational and vocational training opportunities in the Capital Region BOCES, Franklin-Essex-Hamilton BOCES, and Questar III regions.

**Project Description** - The distance learning network is a two-way, fully interactive, full-motion video and audio system connecting specially designed classrooms in participating school districts. The network uses fiber-optic cable and telecommunications technology to enable a teacher and students in a distance learning classroom in one school to see, hear, and talk to students in comparably equipped classrooms in other schools on the network. The simultaneously interactive environment means that the teacher and all students remain in visual and verbal communication at all times during a class.

**Project Participants and Schedule of Classes** – 31 districts are currently participating in the project. They are:

Averill Park	Maple Hill HS (Schodack)
Beekmantown ( <i>Expanded DL only</i> )	Middleburgh
Berlin	Moriah
Berne-Knox-Westerlo	Rensselaer
Burnt Hills – Ballston Lake	Saranac Lake ( <i>Expanded DL only</i> )
Brushton-Moira	Schalmont
Cairo-Durham	Schoharie
Catskill	Scotia-Glenville
Chatham ( <i>Expanded DL only</i> )	Sharon Springs
Cobleskill-Richmondville	St. Regis Falls
Cohoes	Taconic Hills
Columbia HS (East Greenbush)	Troy
Coxsackie-Athens	Tupper Lake
Duanesburg	Voorheesville ( <i>Expanded DL only</i> )
Hoosic Valley	Watervliet ( <i>Expanded DL only</i> )
Malone (Franklin Academy)	

29 additional schools in the Hamilton-Fulton-Montgomery and Washington-Saratoga-Warren-Hamilton-Essex BOCES Networks are also directly connected to the system. The distance learning course schedule of classes can be found on the regional Distance Learning web site at <http://dl.neric.org/>.

**The Distance Learning Classroom** - The classroom in which the teacher is located is the host site. The classrooms to which a host site transmits are called the remote or receive sites.

Each distance learning classroom is equipped with two-way, fully interactive audio/video equipment. Most distance learning classrooms utilize the following equipment:

- a. An overhead-mounted document camera to display visual material and serve as an "electronic chalkboard."
- b. A camera focused on the teacher. In most rooms, this camera is in the front of the room.
- c. A camera focused on the students in the front of the room.
- d. One (1) or two (2) ceiling microphones, a surface-mounted microphone at the teacher station, and a lavalier wireless microphone for the teacher. In a handful of rooms, surface-mounted microphones at each student table are utilized instead of ceiling microphones.
- e. Two displays (most often one projection system and one LCD flat panel display) in the front of the room for student and teacher viewing of each remote site and any material displayed by means of the document camera, computer, and interactive whiteboard panel.
- f. A Blu-ray player for local presentation use.
- g. Teacher station touch screen controls to select the camera to be active and to adjust the cameras (pan, tilt, zoom).
- h. A phone/fax/copy machine to transmit hardcopy between sites (quizzes, homework, instructions, etc.) and to contact students individually through a phone call.
- i. Computers at the student desks (in some classrooms).

A diagram of the typical distance learning classroom, showing equipment and layout, is provided in the appendix of this manual.

## **2. STUDENT POLICY**

### **2.1 Course Registration**

- a. Guidance counselors in the respective school districts schedule students for courses on the distance learning network.
- b. Guidance counselors generate a list of student names and submit the list to the host schools' guidance counselors by August 31<sup>st</sup> for classes beginning in the Fall Semester and full-year courses.
- c. Students registering for a distance learning course understand that classroom activities will be video recorded. These class recordings may be shared securely with other members of the class for educational purposes. It is further understood that enrollment in the distance learning class serves as student and parental permission to be recorded within the classroom, as noted in the Student Agreement Form in the appendix of this manual.

### **2.2 Student Orientation**

All students scheduled for distance learning courses:

- a. Are provided with an opportunity to visit the distance learning classroom before the course begins.
- b. Receive a copy of the distance learning student handbook.
- c. Must sign, along with their parent(s)/guardian(s), and return the student agreement form before starting a distance learning class.

### **2.3 Student Evaluation**

- a. Distance learning students are evaluated in accordance with the approved course outline/requirements. The host-site teacher will inform students of the evaluation methods and processes at the beginning of each course.
- b. The final examination schedule is coordinated through and disseminated by the building principals.

## **2.4 Student Grading**

- a. All grades are the responsibility of the host-site teacher. The teacher keeps grades in numerical form. The teacher ensures that grade reports are sent to the remote-site schools in a timely fashion. The host school calendar will guide the timeline for submitting grade reports.
- b. Host site teachers submit interim reports to the remote sites.

## **2.5 Student Record Keeping**

- a. Student records for distance learning courses are kept by the host-site teachers. This includes grades, attendance, and any other information deemed necessary.
- b. Supervising staff members at the remote sites take daily attendance in the distance learning classrooms and report all absences to the appropriate authority, in accordance with school attendance procedures.

## **2.6 Student Discipline**

- a. The teacher conducting a distance learning class is expected to maintain an appropriate learning environment.
- b. Inappropriate student behavior at the remote sites is handled by the site administrator (or designee). The supervising staff member at the remote site is responsible for communicating any discipline problem to the appropriate administrator.

## **2.7 Student Discipline Policy**

The success of the distance learning program requires the cooperation and support of students. The following expectations must be understood and agreed upon by students and parents alike.

Students are expected to:

- a. Follow all school rules, including those specifically developed for the distance learning program.
- b. Handle distance learning classroom equipment only if authorized to do so.
- c. Sit within camera view at all times, unless instructed by the teacher to do otherwise.

In cases where rules are not followed, students are subject to local procedures administered by the teachers, site administrator(s), and/or others as designated.



### **3. COURSE SCHEDULE**

The current distance learning course schedule can be found on the regional Distance Learning web site at <http://dl.neric.org/>.

### **4. CALENDAR**

- a. The calendar of the host district is used for each course being offered.
- b. The schedule includes the dates for end of marking periods and the due dates for interim reports and grades.
- c. Calendars for participating sites will be shared among all sites in the course cluster.

### **5. CLASS CANCELLATIONS AND INTERRUPTIONS**

- a. Classes are canceled only for factors at the host sites, such as equipment failure or snow days.
- b. Cancellations at remote sites are treated as days missed and the students are responsible for making up the work.
- c. Scheduled interruptions, such as fire drills or field trips that take students out of distance learning classes, are held to a minimum. Whenever possible, remote sites are notified in advance of such events.



**TWO-WAY INTERACTIVE TELEVISION CLASSES  
DISTANCE LEARNING PROGRAM  
STUDENT AGREEMENT FORM**

The Distance Learning Program represents an opportunity for students to take advantage of the latest technology and instructional techniques and to receive courses that might not normally be offered in this school. The program can only function with the cooperation of the students. Students enrolled in distance learning courses and their parents will enter into an agreement whereby the students will conduct themselves in such a manner as to ensure the optimum utilization of the program.

Please carefully read the information below and sign in the space provided to indicate your understanding of the rules and your agreement to abide by them.

As a student taking a course on the Distance Learning Network, I understand that:

- A. Appropriate behavior is expected at all times. Insubordination (defined as anything that interferes with teaching or learning in the classroom) of any kind will not be tolerated.
- B. I will follow all school rules as outlined by my school's code of conduct, and those established by the host-site teachers and receive site supervisors, including those rules specifically developed for the Distance Learning Network. In particular:
  - Inappropriate language or gestures will not be tolerated.
  - I will treat school property with respect and I will be held responsible for intentional damage or destruction that I do to any property in the distance learning classroom.
- C. I will handle distance learning classroom equipment only if authorized to do so.
- D. I will sit within camera view at all times unless instructed by the teacher to do otherwise.
- E. I understand that classroom activities will be video recorded. These class recordings may be shared securely with other members of the class for educational purposes. I understand that enrollment in the distance learning class serves as student and parental permission to be recorded within the classroom.
- F. Any electronic devices (including cell phones) must be turned off to avoid interference with the classroom audio system, unless otherwise authorized by my host-site teacher or local school district policies.
- G. I will only attend conflicting local school assemblies when I am directly involved in the assembly program or required to attend by my school's administration. I further understand that, if I must miss a class other than due to illness, advance notice to my teacher is my responsibility.

In cases where rules are not followed, students will be subject to a range of penalties from verbal warning to exclusion from the course.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, understand the significance of the Distance Learning Program environment.  
Student's Name

I further understand the rules listed above and agree to adhere to them. I am making a commitment to complete the course for which I have registered.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Course Name(s)                      School year

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Student                      Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent(s)                      Date