Saratoga-Adirondack Network

Distance Learning

Reference Manual

2006-2007 School Year

7/31/06

I.   INTRODUCTION

    A.   <u>Project Goal</u> - The primary goal of the Saratoga-Adirondack Distance Learning Network is to expand educational and vocational opportunities.

    B.   <u>Project Description</u> - The Saratoga-Adirondack Network is a multi-way, fully interactive, full-motion video and audio system using fiber optic cable and telecommunications equipment to connect specifically designed classrooms in the participating school districts.

    C.   <u>Distance Learning</u> - The Saratoga-Adirondack Network uses real time integrative full-motion video 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 in the network. The simultaneously interactive environment means that teacher and students remain in visual and verbal communication at all times during the class.

    D.   <u>Schedule of Classes</u> - Courses were first offered in the 1996-97 school year. Sixteen (16) sites are currently participating in the project:

Corinth	Mechanicville
Fort Edward	Myers Education Center
Galway	Newcomb
Glens Falls	Saratoga Springs
Granville	Schuylerville
Hadley/Luzerne	South Glens Falls
Johnsburg	Warrensburg
Keene	Waterford-Halfmoon

Twenty-five (25) additional sites on the Capital Region / Franklin-Essex-Hamilton BOCES and Hamilton-Fulton-Montgomery BOCES Networks are also connected to the system. Other districts may join the system next year or in later years as well. The bell schedule and course offerings are provided in the appendix.

    E.   <u>The Distance Learning Classroom</u> - The classroom in which the teacher is located is the host site. The classrooms to which a host site transmits are called the remote sites.

Each distance learning classroom is similarly equipped with two-way, fully interactive audio/video equipment (see the classroom diagram in the appendix). The equipment consists of:

    1.   an overhead-mounted document camera to display visual material and serve as an "electronic chalkboard,"

2. a camera focused on the teacher, usually in the back of the room,
3. a camera focused on the students in the front of the room,

4. microphones located throughout the room. In many rooms microphones are surface-mounted at each student table and the teacher station,
5. a sufficient amount of diffused light to transmit video properly,
6. monitors or projection system in front of the room for student viewing (and in some rooms, teacher viewing) of each remote site and any material displayed by means of the overhead camera, play VCR, DVD player or computer,
7. monitors in the back of the room (in most rooms) for teacher viewing of the students in each remote site,
8. teacher station touch screen controls to select the camera to be active and to adjust the camera (pan, tilt, and zoom),
9. two VCRs, one to play a prerecorded video tape and another to record a lesson or record activity at any of the sites. Some sites are equipped with a DVD player,
10. a fax machine to transmit hard copy between sites (e.g. for quizzes, tests, homework, instructions).

Equipment for new sites will be determined based on current research and the latest, viable technology available. All sites will be completely interoperable.

II.   OPERATING GUIDELINES

The Saratoga-Adirondack Network is an exciting venture including several school districts in the Washington-Saratoga-Warren-Hamilton-Essex BOCES region. As teachers and administrators, we understand that this is a new project and that there will be changes and adjustments which may have to be made as the project develops and expands. As a starting point, we agree to try, in good faith, to work together within the parameters of the following general guidelines:

A. The purpose of the Saratoga-Adirondack Network is to improve and expand student learning opportunities.

B. Teacher participation in the Saratoga-Adirondack Network is voluntary. Local district teachers will have priority to conduct identified network courses during regular school hours.

C. The Instructional Planning Committee (IPC) meets regularly to coordinate this program. See appendix for a description of the Committee functions and composition.

D. A program evaluation design will be developed. The IPC will oversee this evaluation design and implement it annually.

E. In order to support a teacher's participation in the Saratoga-Adirondack Network, coaching and mentoring are encouraged.

F. BOCES will provide a single point of contact for resolving technical problems. This information will be posted in each distance learning classroom.

G. Each district is required to provide an administrative and technical point of contact. This information will be posted in each distance learning classroom.

H. Teacher training will be provided before and during the school year as determined by the Instructional Planning Committee.

I. Classroom supervision is a desirable component of an effective distance learning environment and will be provided at each distance learning site, as determined by the building principals.

J. Saratoga-Adirondack Network class enrollment will reflect consideration of course content, teacher input, and local contractual arrangements.

K. Every effort will be made to accommodate visitors. (see XIII)

Any understanding dealing strictly with the Saratoga-Adirondack Network project does not change or replace any agreement or practice currently enforced in the local school districts.

III. TEACHER RESPONSIBILITIES

The responsibilities of teachers participating in the Saratoga-Adirondack Network are essentially the same as any teacher in the respective school districts.

Distance learning instruction does entail, however, several unique responsibilities. Teachers in the distance learning program will:

A. develop course descriptions in accordance with the time line developed by the Instructional Planning Committee. The time line is included in the Appendix,

B. use prescribed equipment,

C. send student class records and information to remote sites,

      D.   develop at least three emergency lesson plans to be used by substitutes,

      E.   provide opportunities for students to make up missed work and to obtain additional assistance,

      F.   communicate with parents as needed.

Overall discipline will be the responsibility of the host site teacher. Persistent or serious problems will be the responsibility of the administrative point of contact at each site.

IV.   STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Any staff member teaching a course on the Saratoga-Adirondack Network is required to complete training.

During training, the teacher will learn how to operate the distance learning system and its component parts (e.g., cameras, monitors, VCR, fax machine) and prepare and deliver a short lesson, using the equipment to transmit to at least one other site.

      A.   Teacher training will be conducted during the summer months or at convenient times within the school year. On-going staff development support will be addressed by the Instructional Planning Committee.

      B.   Additional staff, such as substitute teachers, teacher aides, room monitors, and media specialists may be trained at the discretion of participating school districts.

      C.   Teacher compensation for participation in training will be determined by local contracts.

V.   STUDENT POLICY

Course Registration

      A.   Guidance counselors in respective school districts will schedule students for courses on the Saratoga-Adirondack Network. Enrollment issues will be handled by the Instructional Planning Committee.

B. All students scheduled for distance learning courses must meet district prerequisites for participation. Students must sign, along with their parents or guardian(s), the Student Agreement Form before starting a distance learning class.

Student Orientation

All students scheduled for distance learning courses will be provided:

A. an opportunity to visit the distance learning classroom before the course begins,

B. a copy of the Student Distance Learning Handbook.

Student Evaluation

A. Distance learning students are evaluated in accordance with the course description. 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 administrative point of contact in each district.

C. Students are to maintain satisfactory performance (see the Student Agreement Form in the appendix).

Student Grading

A. All grades are the responsibility of the host site teacher. The teacher will submit grades in numerical form. The teacher ensures that grade reports are transmitted to the guidance department at the remote site schools by courier or by fax on the dates stated in the official distance learning school calendar.

B. Host teachers submit interim (five-week) reports to the guidance department at the remote sites on the date stated in the official distance learning calendar, using the official form of the sending school.

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.   The supervising staff member at each site will take daily attendance in the distance learning classroom and report all absences to the appropriate authority, in accordance with school attendance procedures.

C.   The host site teacher will send all cumulative records to the administrative point of contact at the distance learning students' respective schools at the conclusion of the course.

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, and those established by the host site teachers, including those rules specifically developed for the Saratoga-Adirondack Network,

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,

D.   attend conflicting local assemblies only when directly involved in presenting the assembly program,

E.   understand that their distance learning class(s) takes precedent over conflicting local extracurricular / co-curricular activities. If a student is to miss a class, it is the student's responsibility to give the class teacher advance notice.

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.

In cases where rules are not followed, students will be subject to local procedures, (e.g. removal from the course) administered by the teachers, site administrator(s) and or others as designated.

VI.   COURSE SCHEDULE

The current course schedule for the Saratoga-Adirondack Network appears in the appendix.

VII.   CALENDAR

The Saratoga-Adirondack Network calendar is designated as follows:

A.   The official distance learning calendar for each class is the host site calendar.

B.   The calendar includes the dates for end of marking periods and due dates for interim reports and grades, mid-term and final examination dates, and other SAN procedural dates.

C.   Calendars will be exchanged between sites at the beginning of the school year.

VIII.   CLASS CANCELLATIONS AND INTERRUPTIONS

A.   Classes are cancelled only for factors at the host sites such as equipment failure or snow days, or for scheduled events (e.g. early dismissals for conferences) appearing on the official distance learning calendar.

B.   Cancellations at remote sites are treated as days missed and the students are responsible for making up the work at the teacher's discretion.

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.

D.   Pull-outs (such as band lessons, physicals, etc.) should be minimized for students in distance learning courses.

IX.   TEXTBOOKS AND MATERIALS

Textbooks and materials for a Saratoga-Adirondack Network Course are selected by the host teacher, arranged by the host school for distribution, purchased by BOCES, if necessary, and distributed to remote sites. The BOCES will canvas the districts to assess needs by July 1.

X.   SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS

   A.   Teacher absences from distance learning classes follow the established procedures related to substitute coverage.

   B.   Each distance learning teacher is responsible for developing emergency plans for substitute teachers, including such things as videos, work sheets, etc.

   C.   Host schools will attempt to hire substitute teachers trained in distance learning procedures when a host teacher is absent.

XI.   FIELD TRIPS

Field trips for distance learning classes are arranged by agreement of host and remote sites, through the respective building principals.

XII. TRANSPORTATION OF MATERIALS

The transportation of instructional materials may be accomplished by fax, BOCES courier, overnight mail or other means to be determined by the needs of the host site teacher.

XIII. VISITATIONS

To maintain an optimum educational atmosphere in the distance learning environment, the following policy must be adhered to:

   A.   Each visit, whether at a host or remote site, must receive prior approval of the distance learning instructor(s) and the site administrator(s) affected by the visit, whether at the teacher's own host site or at the remote site.

   B.   Each building visitor must report to the designated administrator's office upon arrival to the building and prior to the distance learning visitation.

HFM BOCES / Saratoga-Adirondack Network
Draft Distance Learning Course Schedule, Fall 2006

Time	Bread/Perth	Corinth	Fonda-Fulton-ville	Fort Ed-ward	Fort Plain	Galway	Glens Falls	Glovers-ville	Gran-ville	Hadley-Lzrne	HFM BOCES	Indian Lake	Johns-burg	Keene	May-field	Mechanic-ville	Myers Ed Ctr.	New-comb	Saratoga Springs	Schuyler-ville	So. Glens Falls	St Johns-ville	Warrens-burg	Water-Half-moon	Wells	Regional System
7:00																										
8:00	Music Th. (Host); Spanish V (Host)		Intro to Law (Host); Speed-writing (Host); AP Psych. (Rec.)		Holo-caust (Rec.); Speed writ. (Rec.)	Irish Lit & Cult. (Rec.); Business Law (Rec.); Human Dvlp. (Rec.)	BC Calc. (Rec.)	Stats ACC (Rec.); AP Euro Hist.	Stats ACC (Host); Span. V	AP World Hist.; Span. V (Rec.)			Irish Lit – Host	Bus. Law 2 (Rec.)	Holo-caust (Host); Span V (Host)	AP Art History (Receive)		Intro to Law (Rec.); Calc. UHS (Host)	Market. (Rec. – 8:08am)	AP World History (Receive); AP Art History (Host); French IV (Host)	Mark-eting (Host); AP Art History (Rec.); Music Appr. (Rec.)	Intro to Law (Receive); Speed-writing (Receive); AP U.S. History (Receive)	Statistics ACC (Receive); Business Law (Host); Human Develop. (Host)	Intro to Law (Rec.)		BC Calc; AP Hist. (Host); AP Euro. Hist.
9:00	Spanish V (Host)	SAT Prep (Host)	Speed-writing (Host); AP	Speed writ. (Rec.)	Speed writ. (Rec.)	Business Law (Rec.)	SAT Prep (Rec.)	AP Euro Hist.	Span. V (Rec.)	Span. V (Rec.)			SAT Prep (Rec.)	Music Appr. (Host)	Span V (Host); AP U.S. Hist.			Calc. UHS (Host)		AP Art History (Host); French IV (Host)	AP Art History (Rec.); Music Appr. (Rec.)	Speed-writing (Receive); AP U.S. History	Business Law (Host)		Calc. UHS (Rec.)	AP Euro. Hist.
10:00		Prep (Host)	Psych. (Rec.); AP Psych. (Rec.)			Human Dvlp. (Rec.); Equine Studies (Rec.)??	AP Prep (Rec.); AP Eng. (Host)	AP Psych. (Host); AP Psych. (Host)	Mari-ne Sci (Host)			Marin. Sci. (Rec.)	AP; Calc./Equin Stud.	Music Appr. (Host); Music Th. (Host)	AP U.S. Hist.; Marin. Sci. (Rec.)					Equine Studies (Host)	Music Appr. (Rec.); Music Theory (Rec.)	AP U.S. History; Marine Science (Receive)	Human Develop. (Host)			
11:00	Anthr. (Rec. 11:00)					Anthro-pology (Rec.)		French V (Host)				Pre-Calc. (Rec.)		Pre-Calc. (H.?) (Host)	AP Java (Rec.)			Physics (Host)			Anthro-pology (Host)	AP	Account. (Host – 11:30)			AP Java Prog. (Host)
12:00	Health (Host); Film Stud. (Rec.)		Health (Rec. – 12:25)			AP Am. History (Rec.)		French V (Host); Music – Lives (Host)		Health (Rec. – 12:25)		Physics (Rec.)		Physics (Rec.)	AP Psych (Host)			Physics (Host)	History Through Film (Receive – 12:53-2:15pm)		Marine Science (Rec.)	AP Psych (Receive)	AP Am. History (Host)			AP Psych. (Rec.)
1:00	Film Stud. (Rec.)	History Thru Film (Host – 12:53-2:15pm)			Film Stud. (Host); Latin I (Rec. – 1:55)	Sign Lang. (Rec.); Calc. SUNY (Host)	AP Calc. (Host); Calc. uhs (Rec.)	French IV (Host)	Calc. uhs (Rec.)	Film Studies (Rec.); Latin I (Rec. – 1:55)		Math & Fin. (Rec.)		Bus. Law 2 (Rec.)	AP Math & Fin. (Host)	Business Law (Host)				Latin II (Receive – 1:12); Latin I (Receive – 1:55)	Latin I (Host); Latin II	AP Calculus (Receive)	AP Calculus (Receive)			Sign Lang. (Host)
2:00		(Host – 12:53-2:15pm)			Latin I (Rec. – 1:55)					Latin I (Rec. – 1:55)										Latin I (Receive – 1:55)	Latin I (Host – 1:55)					
3:00																										

6/14/06

Instructional Planning Committee, Scheduling Timeline

September, Fourth Week

- IPC Meeting
- Review network start-up
- Make plans for Fall student get-together

October, First Week

- Hold Fall student get-together

(Counselor at home schools survey staff for next year's course offerings, get course descriptions to DL coordinator in time for printing before December meeting.)

December, First Week

- IPC Meeting
- Review spring semester schedule
- Determine beginning of spring semester
- Make plans for Spring student get-together
- Distribute course description booklets for next school year

January, Last Week / February, First Week

- Spring Semester Begins

February, Second Week

- Hold Spring student get-together

(Counselors at home schools have numbers ready for March meeting.)

March

- IPC Meeting
- Using numbers generated during school scheduling process, create tentative course schedule for next year

May

- IPC Meeting
- Confirm schedule and numbers
- Set up dates for next year's meetings
- Make plans for staff training

June – August

- New staff distance learning training

August

Counselors at sending/receiving schools:
- *confirm numbers and exchange class lists*
- *make arrangements for sending textbooks/other course materials*

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STUDENT AGREEMENT FORM

The Saratoga-Adirondack Network represents an opportunity for students to take advantage of the latest technology and instructional techniques and to receive programs 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 read the information below and carefully 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 Saratoga-Adirondack 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, including those rules specifically developed for the Saratoga-Adirondack Network. In particular:
   a. Inappropriate language or gestures will not be tolerated.
   b. 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, at times, classroom activities will be videotaped.

F.   I will only attend conflicting local school assemblies when I am directly involved in presenting the assembly program. In addition, my distance learning class takes precedent over conflicting extracurricular / co-curricular activities. I further understand that, if I must miss a class, 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

_____
Revised 7/06   Signature of Parent(s)   Date