BOCES

Distance Learning Program

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Help Desk
1-888-427-9173

Saratoga Springs High School
Distance Learning / Video Conferencing
User Training Handbook

For updates and schedule information visit your DL and VC websites:

http://dl.neric.org
http://vc.neric.org

Rev. 7/17/06

Table of contents

> **When you are finished with your presentation, videoconference or DL session, in order to conserve your video projector bulb, please go to "UTILITIES" and turn your "SYSTEM OFF"**

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Legend:
- ● = Regional Distance Learning Program
- ● = Capital Region BOCES
- ● = Franklin-Essex-Hamilton BOCES
- ● = Hamilton-Fulton-Montgomery BOCES
- ● = Washington-Saratoga-Warren-Hamilton-Essex BOCES
- ○ = Planned Additional Regional DL Sites

Site labels:
Malone (Franklin Academy), St Regis Falls, Keene, Moriah, Newcomb, Tupper Lake, Indian Lake, Town of Webb, Johnsburg, Granville, Glens Falls, Ft Edward, WSWHE Myers Center, Schuylerville, Saratoga Springs, Mechanicville, Waterford-Halfmoon, Cohoes, Albany CTE, NERIC, Berne-Knox-Westerlo, Ravena-Coeymans-Selkirk, Mohonasen, Schalmont, Warrensburg, Hadley-Luzerne, Corinth, Wells, South Glens Falls, Broadalbin-Perth, HFM CTE, Galway, Scotia-Glenville, Duanesburg, Schoharie CTE, Schoharie HS, Middleburgh, Cobleskill-Richmondville, Mayfield, Gloversville, Fonda-Fultonville, St. Johnsville, Fort Plain, Sharon Springs, New York Mills, Remsen, Utica, Sauquoit, Brookfield, Waterville, Harpursville, Chenango Valley, Binghamton, Maine-Endwell, Altmar-Parish-Williamstown, Holland Patent, Oriskany, OHM BOCES, Westmoreland, OCM-CNYRIC, Onondaga Community College, OCM, McEvoy Center, Cincinnatus, Moravia, Newark Valley, Owego-Apalachin, Union-Endicott, Sandy Creek, Paul V Moore, Phoenix, Jordan-Elbridge, Oswego BOCES, Cato-Meridian, Weedsport, Auburn City, Cayuga-Onondaga BOCES, Union Springs, Southern Cayuga

Rev. February 13, 2006

DL Classroom Site Location Map

Multichannel Distance Learning
Statewide NAVS (Network ATM Video Service)

For more information visit the
BOCES Distance Learning Program website

http://dl.neric.org

● = Available Distance Learning Interconnections to Other Regions

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Troubleshooting Tips

9/2/05

INDICATION	POSSIBLE CAUSE(S)	CORRECTIVE ACTION
There are color bars on the projection screen or monitor where your remote class or videoconference should be	The remote participants may not have their equipment turned on yet. You may have the wrong session type selected. If you have a "Quad Split" option, you may have selected "Full Screen Display" for a non-participating site.	Contact your remote participants by phone or fax. Go to "Utilities" - "Return to Session Page" and select the proper session type. Select "QUAD" on the "DISPLAY" bar to the right of the image on the touch screen.
Audio echo	Audio send and/or receive levels excessively increased to compensate for an individual who is soft spoken and/or leaning back away from the mic.	Select "UTILITIES" - "VOLUME CONTROL" Check "SITE" volumes, "TO FIBER" volume, "ROOM" and overall "VOLUME"
Audio Problems	Your "TO FIBER" volume may be too low. You may be in "AUDIO PRIVACY" "ACTIVE" The other site may need to make volume adjustments at their equipment.	Select "UTILITIES" - "VOLUME CONTROL" and make adjustments as needed Select "UTILITIES" and deactivate the "PRIVACY" button. Ask that the teacher or aide or presenter at the other site check their audio levels
No VIDEO on the projection screen in one quadrant. **No VIDEO at all on the projection screen (Black)**	Possible problem at remote site Your projector bulb may have burned out.	Contact the DL helpdesk and or the remote site. Contact the DL helpdesk.
Play VCR does not play	Power not ON. No tape in VCR. VCR not in PLAY mode.	Turn power ON for Play VCR. Check to see tape is fully and properly inserted Press PLAY button on touchpanel; check to see tape is moving.
VCR does not RECORD	Power not ON. No tape in VCR. VCR control not activated	Turn power ON for Record VCR. Check to see that a tape has been inserted in the Record VCR. Press a site to record; check to see tape is moving.
DVD player does not play.	If your disk is not a commercial DVD disk, your material may not be properly encoded in a format that the DVD player can read.	If you know your DVD material was encoded in a format that will play on a pc media player, try playing it through the pc on the podium.

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Distance Learning Program Reservation Form
2006-2007 School Year
At least 48 hours notice prior to your event is always appreciated!

Name: _____ Today's Date: _____

School/Organization: _____

Address: _____

_____

E-mail address: _____

Fax number: _____

Program title: _____

Date program begins: _____

Date program ends: _____

Time program begins: _____

Time program ends: _____

The following schools are included in this program session:

Host site: _____

Receive sites: _____
_____
_____

I have confirmed the use of these classrooms for the above dates and times with the appropriate building administrator.   Yes ☐   No ☐

Comments:
_____
_____
_____

Fax completed form to Eileen Drescher at (518) 862-5305 or e-mail information to edresche@gw.neric.org

For Official Use Only:
Job request number _____ Initials _____ Date entered _____

Distance Learning / Videoconferencing Classroom

Touch Panel Controls

Model TPS 4500 (B)

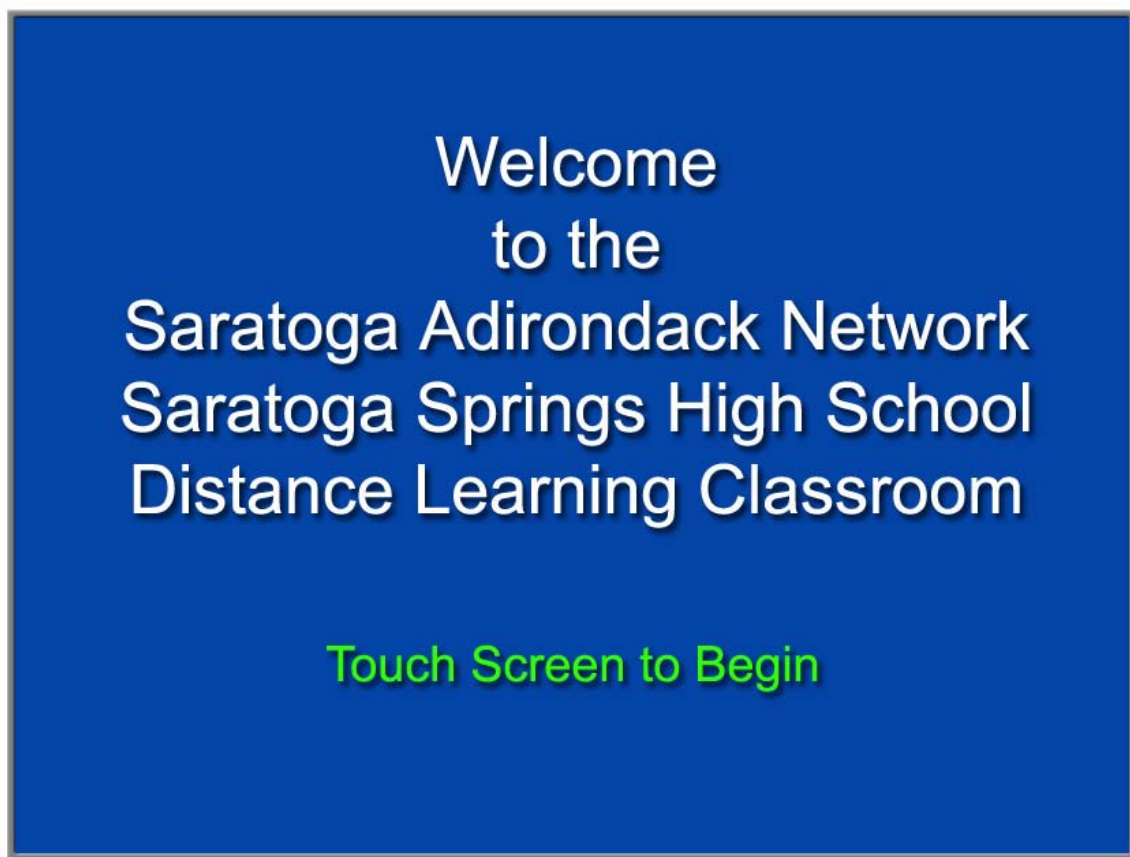BOCES
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Welcome Screen

The Welcome Screen is the first screen that you will see.

If your touch panel screen is black it is most likely in sleep mode.

Touch the face of the panel and this screen should appear.

Welcome
to the
Saratoga Adirondack Network
Saratoga Springs High School
Distance Learning Classroom

Touch Screen to Begin

Touch the screen again to proceed.

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Session Type

The session screen allows you to configure the room for a local presentation or a distance learning network session.
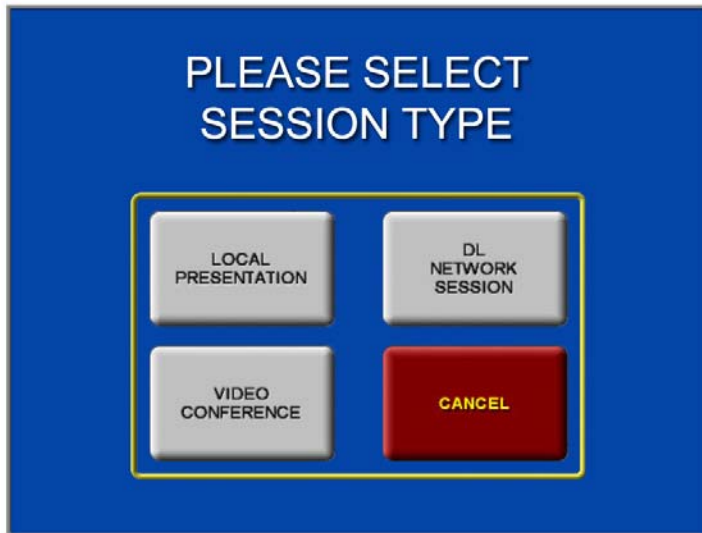
Local Presentation: This session type does not involve any transmitting or receiving over the Distance Learning dedicated fiber optic ATM network.

DL Network Session: This session type involves classes or conferences arranged through and prescheduled by the Distance Learning support staff. Connections are made through the dedicated fiber optic Distance Learning ATM Network.

Video Conference: The video conferencing equipment in the DL room is not currently integrated with the "Video Conference" session configuration.

To use the DL room for IP Video Conferencing where you make your own point-to-point connection via IP: Select "Local Presentation" and connect the Polycom unit's Video and Audio outputs to the "Aux Inputs" of the podium equipment rack. Connect the Polycom unit's Video and Audio inputs to the "Aux Outputs" of the podium equipment rack. See your: ***Videoconferencing Support Services Support manual and User Guide.***

For an ISDN connection or Multi-Point Video Conferencing (three or more participants): You must request a Video Conference Bridge session. See http://vc.neric.org or call the ***Help Desk, 1-888-427-9173***

If you are unsure of the session type to use please contact the ***Help Desk***.

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System Initializing

The system will take between 30 seconds and one minute to initialize, depending on the type of session you have selected.

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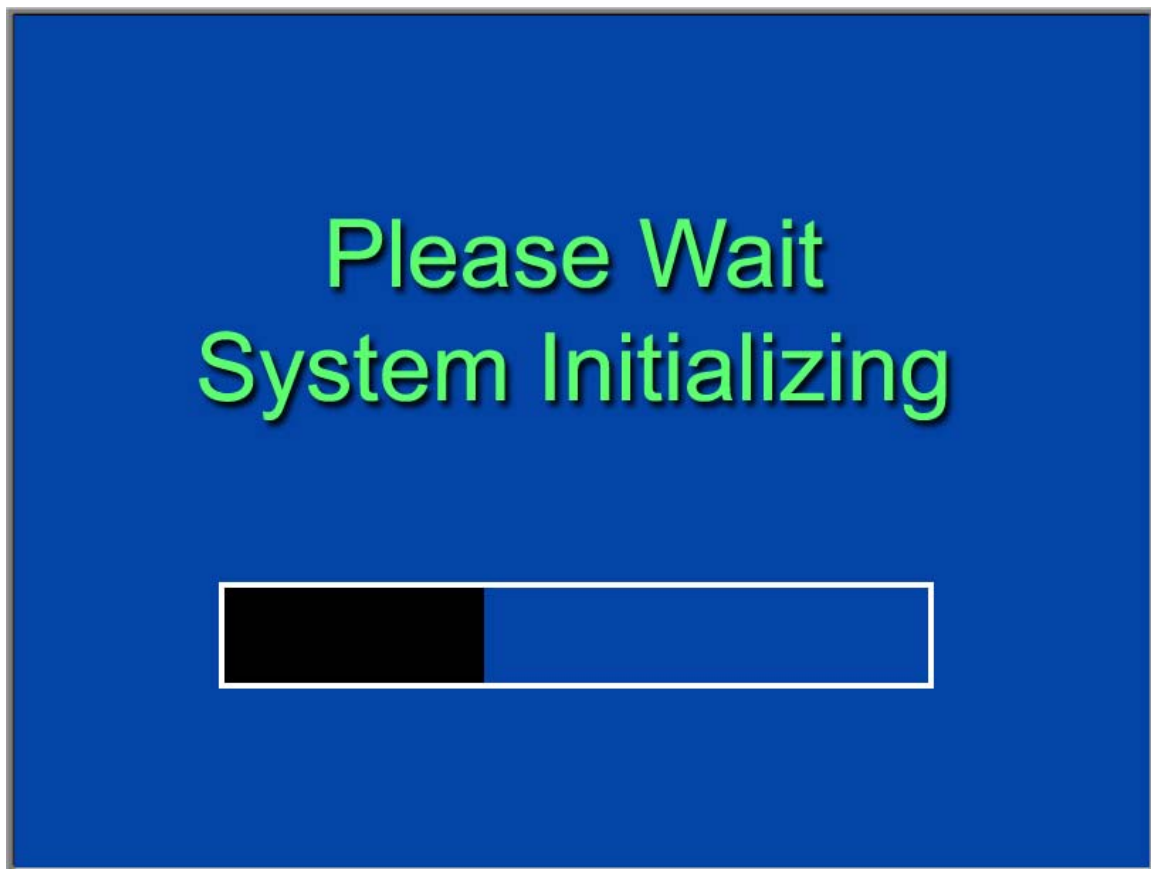
Local Presentation Room Set-up

The Room-Set-up screen (shown below) is used only for local presentations and Videoconferencing with the Polycom unit attached to the Auxiliary Inputs.
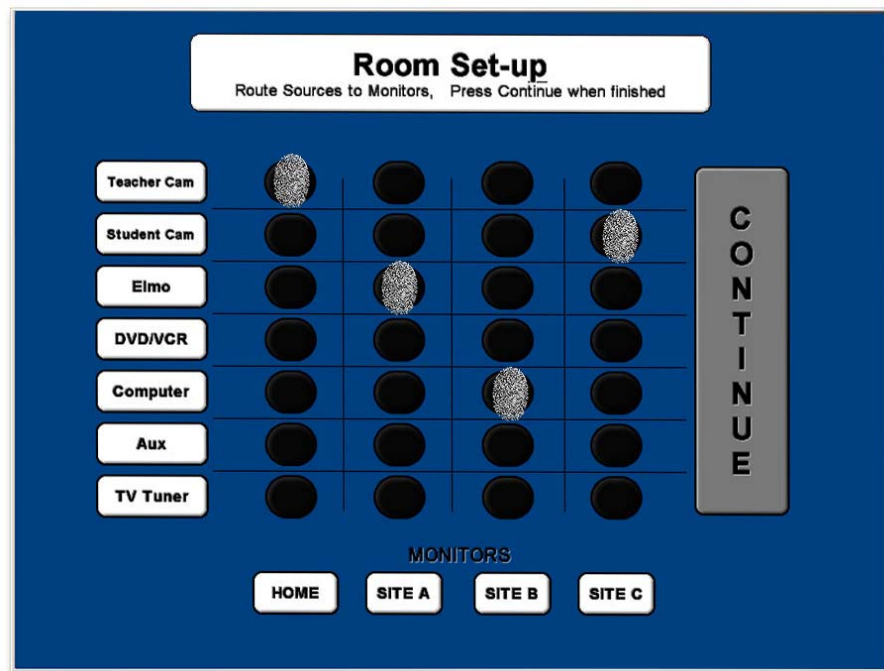
Select a source (from the options on the left) for each monitor.

In the example above, the "Teacher Cam" is routed to the "Home" monitor, the "Elmo" is routed to "Site A", the "Computer" is routed to "Site B", and the "Student Cam" is routed to "Site C".

Press "Continue" when you have made all your routing selections.\

To return to this screen:

Select "Utilities" – "Return to Session Page" – Select "Local Presentation" again.

Teacher Camera Controls

The Teacher Camera Control screen (shown below) appears as the default screen in all session types.
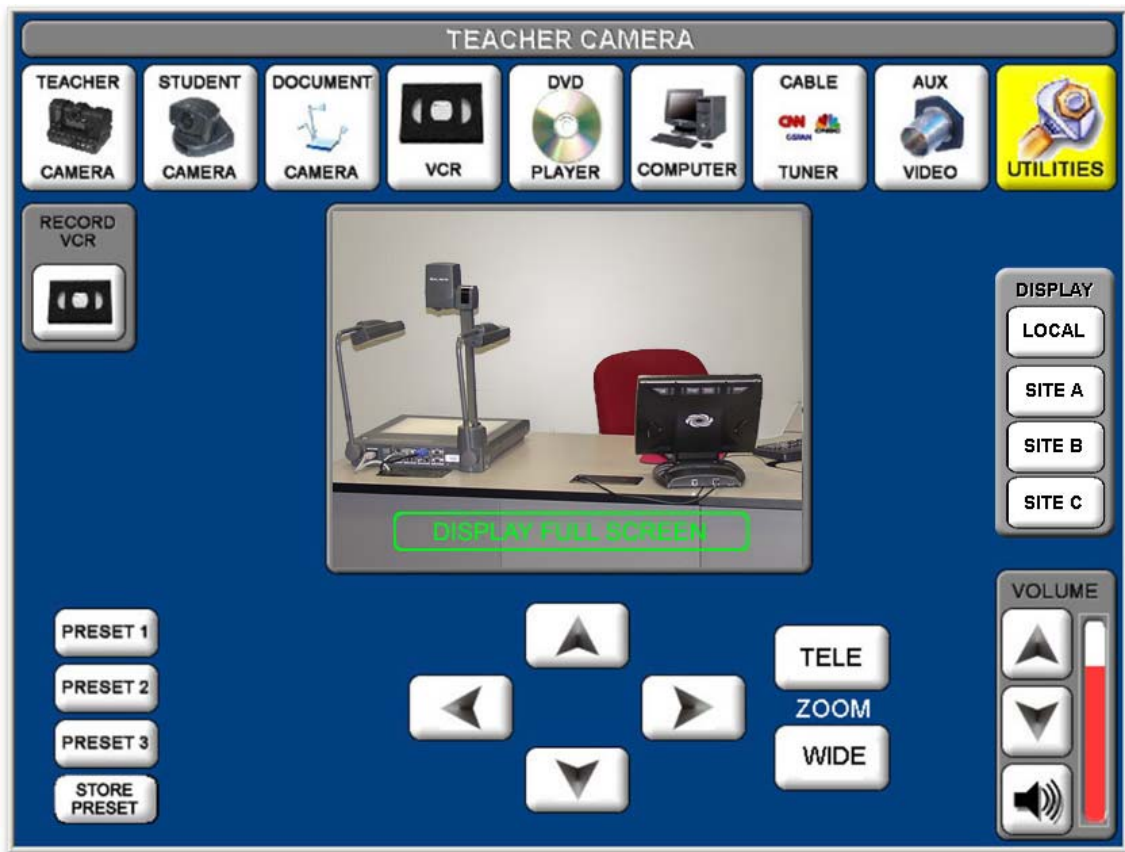On most screens the video shown in the center box of the touch screen represents the transmitted video.

Touching the green area in the center box that reads "DISPLAY FULL SCREEN" will fill the touch screen with the video representation of your transmitted signal. To return the screen to normal control function, touch the full video image anywhere on the screen.

The buttons across the top of the screen are similar to a tool bar and appear on most screens selected.

Touch the button for the equipment you want to control or the function you want to perform.

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Teacher Camera Controls continued

Pan/Tilt Controls
Touch the triangles [▲] that point up, down, right, and left, to pan and tilt the Teacher Camera to any desired position.

Zoom Controls
Touch **"TELE" or "WIDE"** to adjust the camera view.

Volume Control
Allows you to increase or decrease the overall volume of the received audio in your room.
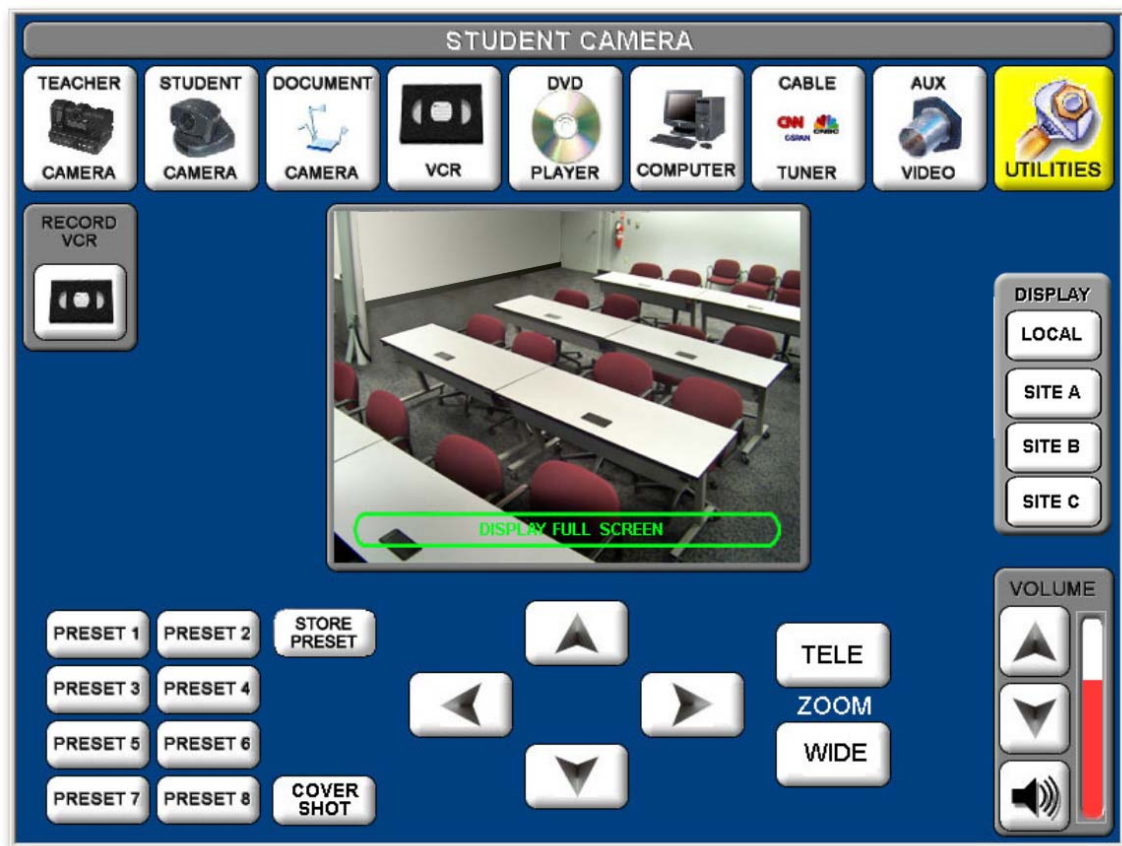
Preset Controls
Will quickly move the camera to pre-established settings. (See notes below on storing presets.)

Tool Bar Buttons
All other buttons will take you to screens indicated by the text.

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Student Camera Controls

Pan / Tilt / Zoom Controls
Operate these controls the same as you would for the Teacher Camera.

Preset Controls
Operate the Preset Controls the same as you would for the Teacher Camera.

Cover Shot
Is a special Preset that should be adjusted to a camera position that is just wide enough to allow all of the students to be seen in one shot.
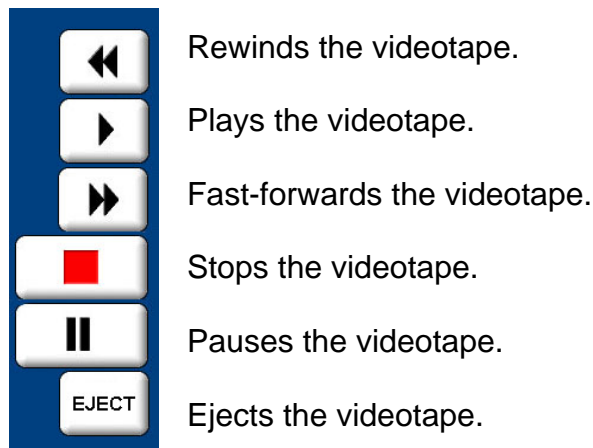
Store Preset
Is *only* used when establishing or changing a preset. It will erase previously established presets.

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Play VCR Control

The Play VCR is a combination DVD/VCR and is the top unit of the two located in the teacher podium.

Video Tape Controls

Rewinds the videotape.

Plays the videotape.

Fast-forwards the videotape.

Stops the videotape.

Pauses the videotape.
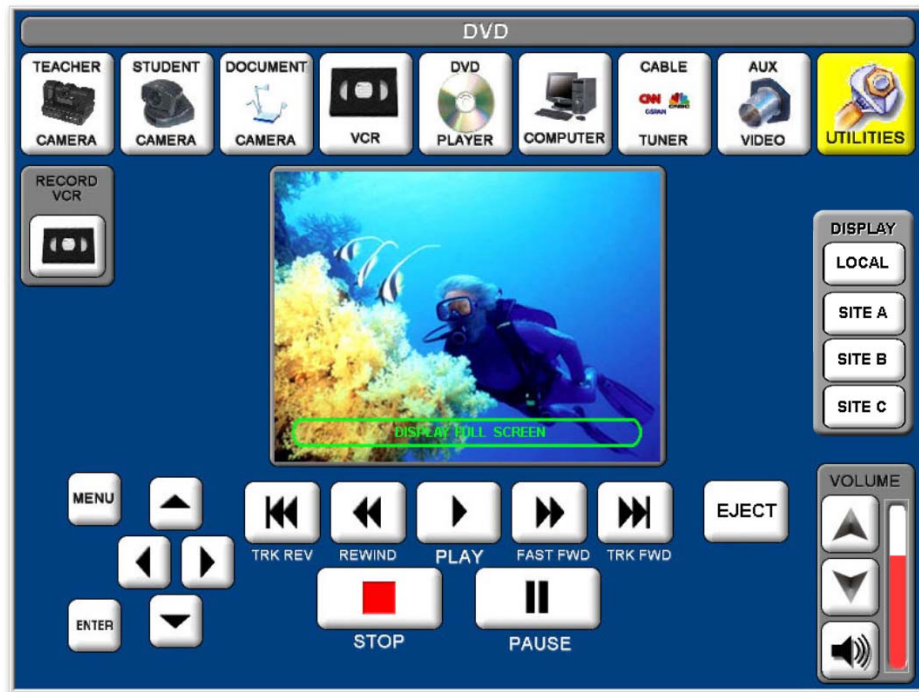
Ejects the videotape.

VCR Room Volume Control
The Up and Down triangle buttons control the level of volume that you hear in your own classroom.

Cable Tuner
Accesses the screen to control cable TV connected to the classroom equipment (where applicable - see page 20).

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DVD Control

The DVD is the combination DVD/VCR located uppermost in the teacher podium.

DVD Controls
The DVD controls are similar to the VCR controls. There are additional buttons for shuttling the track back (TRK REV) or forward (TRK FWD).

MENU Controls
There are controls at the bottom left of the screen that will allow you to access the DVD MENU.

Press MENU, then using the up, down, right and left buttons you can navigate the on-screen menu.
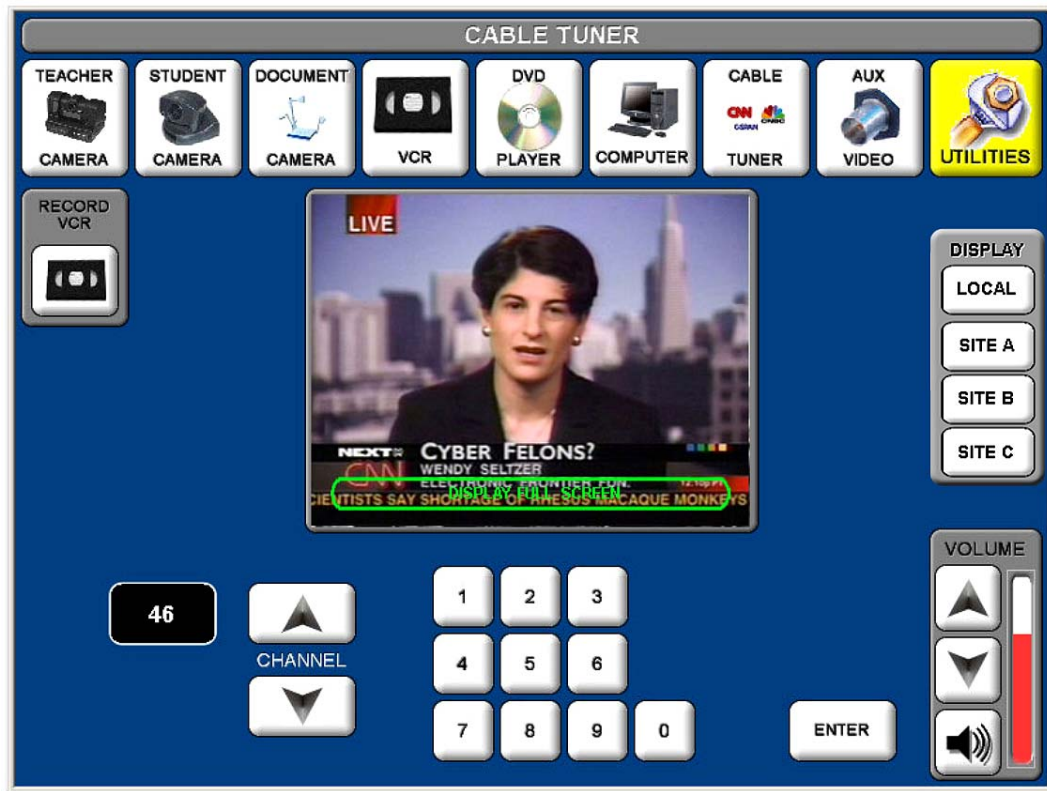
Press ENTER to select the MENU item you highlight.

VCR Room Volume Control
The Up and Down triangle buttons control the level of volume that you hear in your own classroom.
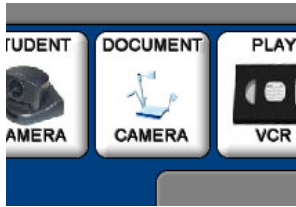
Optional Tuner Controls

Tuner Controls

Controls are similar to remote controls for most TVs and VCRs.

The channel number is displayed in the oval to the left of the channel up/down control.

Document Camera (ELMO) Controls

From the upper row of buttons on the touch screen select Document Camera.

The power switch on the ELMO must be on.

Zoom, Focus and Lamp adjustments can be made either on the touch screen or directly on the document camera control pad.

Use the lower light for transparencies.

Using the upper light may give your document image more contrast and make it easier to read.

See important note on fonts and image size beginning on page 30.

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Computer and Auxiliary Controls

Computer – Aux Video

If you are using a computer connected to your system or an auxiliary source input into the rack (such as a video conferencing unit, camcorder or an additional VCR or DVD player), you will be able to control the volume from those sources by selecting "Computer" or "Aux Video".

NOTE: If you excessively increase the volume levels, it may cause echo or other audio disturbances. (See page 24 for detailed information on volume control.)

If you adjust the output volume controls that are on the individual pieces of equipment (computer, camcorder, DVD, etc.), it will affect both the room volume and the transmitted audio level.

All other adjustments for the computer or auxiliary equipment should be made on the individual equipment.

Record VCR Controls

The Record VCR is the bottom of the two VCR units located in the teacher podium.

Site Recording Controls
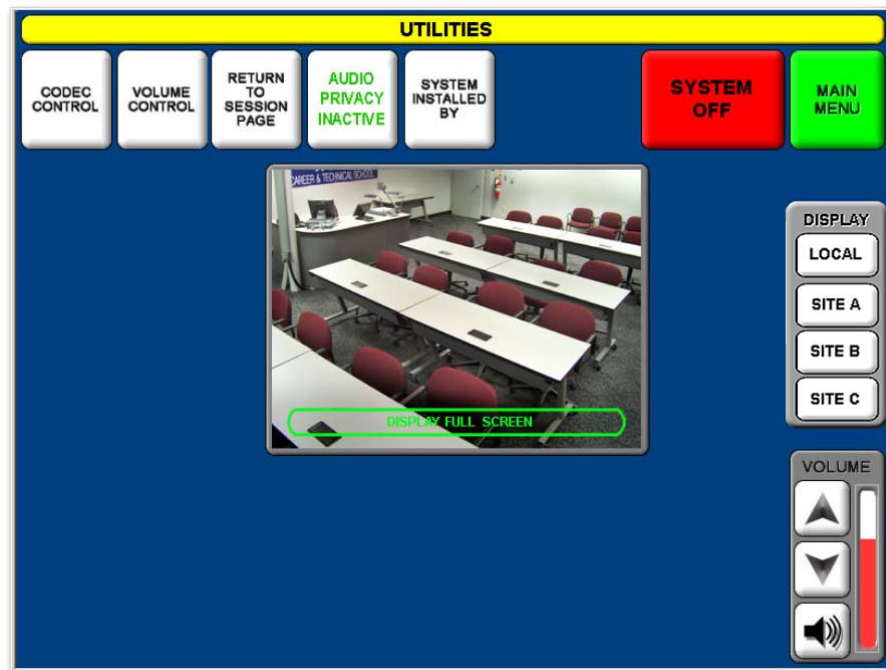Touch **Local**, **Site A**, **Site B**, or **Site C** to record the video from that particular site.

Recording will continue, even if you leave this screen, until you return to the Record VCR control screen and press *Stop* or your tape reaches the end.

Note: While you record only one video source at a time, you record *all audio from all sites in the cluster* onto the tape.

Utilities

CODEC CONTROL
The codec control is not connected at this time.

Volume Control
Will take you to the volume control screen where you can adjust *individual site volumes.* See Important Note on page 25.

Audio Privacy
Touching **"AUDIO PRIVACY"** will (depending on its position) either activate or deactivate all microphones in your room. You will still be able to hear remote sites, but they will not hear you. When activated, **"AUDIO PRIVACY ACTIVATED"** will flash on the touch panel screen.

IMPORTANT NOTE REGARDING TURNING YOUR "SYSTEM OFF"

The video projector bulb is very expensive ($400 - $600) and it has a limited number of life hours.

When you are completely done with your session (no matter what type session it is,) please select "UTILITIES" and then "SYSTEM OFF."

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Volume Control Screen
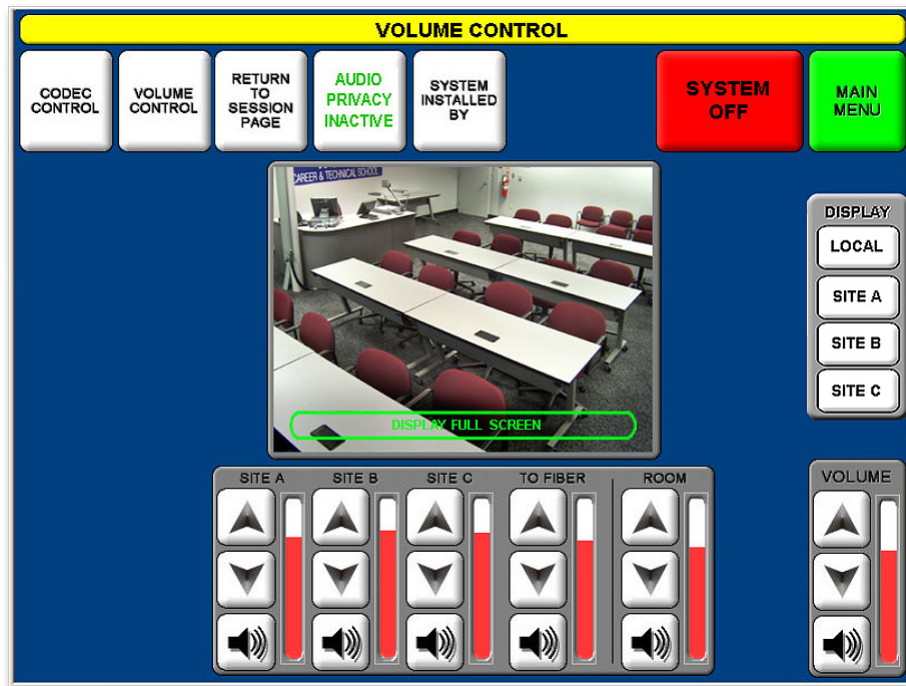
SITE VOLUMES

The incoming volume of each individual remote site can be adjusted with the controls under the appropriate label, **SITE A**, **SITE B**, or **SITE C.** Adjustments are made with the [▲] up and down triangles.

TO FIBER

Allows you to increase the audio level that you transmit to other sites.

ROOM

Allows you to adjust the volume going to your room speakers amplifier.

IMPORTANT NOTE REGARDING AUDIO ECHO

A common cause of echo *is the excessive increase in site audio levels in an attempt to compensate for an individual who is speaking very softly and/or leaning back from his/her microphone.* ***It is important*** *is to have the individual speak in a normal tone of voice and sit closer to the microphone.*

If the individual is at a remote site that has individual microphone controls, you can request that the remote site increase only that microphone level. Please note that any adjustments you make to your volumes in your session may not work well in subsequent sessions.

If you have any trouble adjusting volume please contact the ***DL Help Desk****.*

Shure Wireless Microphone System For BOCES DL

Sure UT Presenter with WL 185 microphone

Transmitter

1. Power on/off switch (to conserve battery, turn off when not in use)
2. Power on/off light
3. Low battery indicator
4. Mute Switch
5. Input Attenuation (option; switch to decrease input sensitivity by 20db)

Microphone/Transmitter Connection
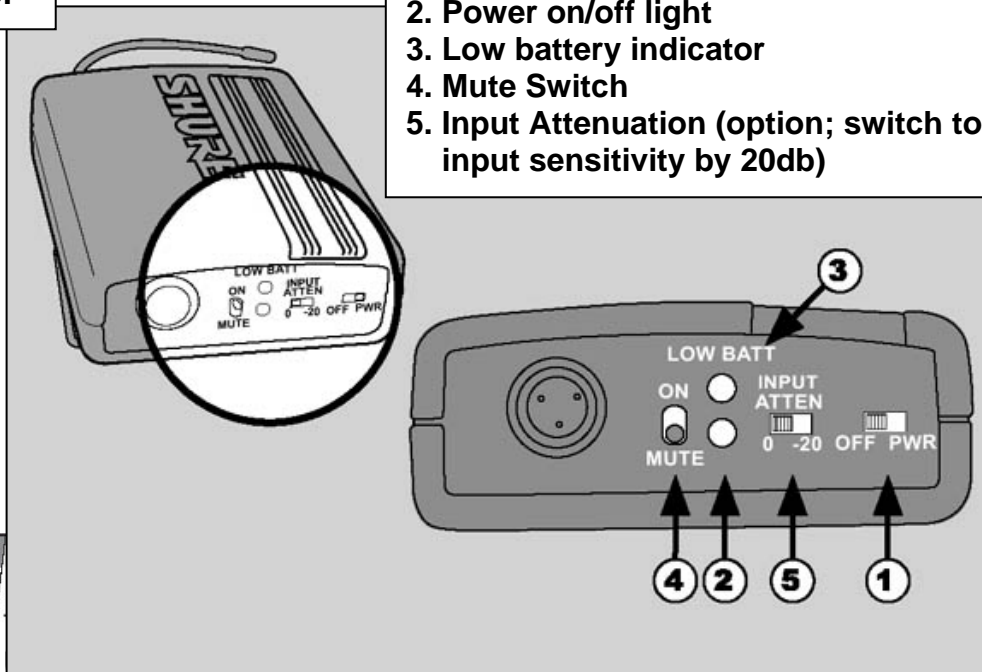
Proper Antennae Position shown below on left.

OK

NO

Battery Replacement

9V

WL84
WL85

Windscreen and Tie Clip slip down over microphone

Effective Presentation
In The Distance Learning Classroom

With excerpts from a Myers Group Training Workshop
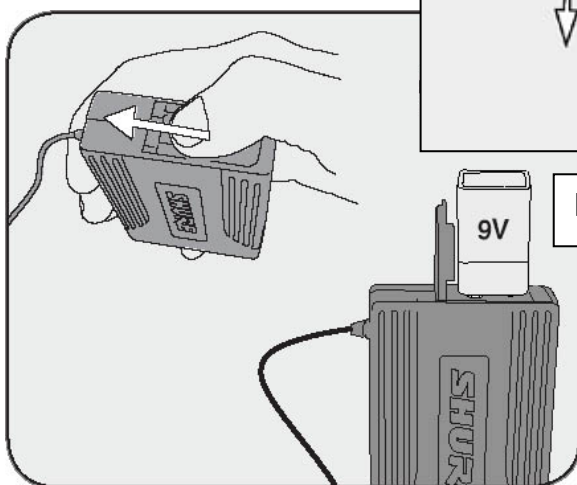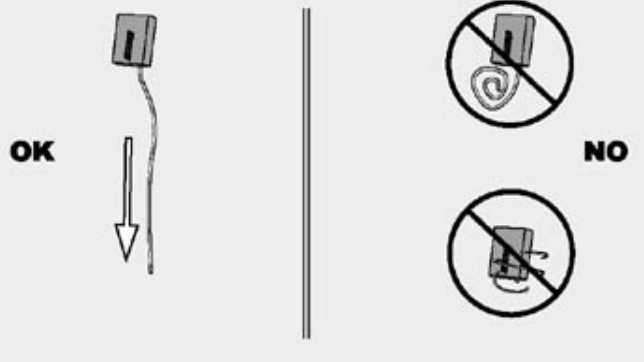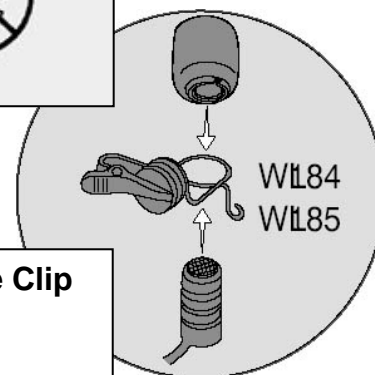
As relatively new tools in secondary education, distance learning technologies have introduced new issues and considerations into the classroom. For instance, teachers may rarely see a majority of their students in person. Instead, these students may be across town, in another community or in another part of the state. The teacher and students at the other (remote) site relate to each other regularly only with television cameras and monitors. The chalkboard is replaced by a variety of multimedia instructional tools that may include an Elmo (document camera), VCR and computer to transmit text, graphics and other images as well as sound to the other sites.

This is not to say that this electronic environment and traditional face-to-face classrooms have little in common, but rather to recognize that the dissimilarities merit close attention by both teachers and students in order to use the technology effectively. In fact many of the suggestions and techniques presented here apply as readily to traditional classroom instruction as to distance learning. The need for careful planning, structure, and interactivity, however, is underscored significantly in the distance learning classroom.

Presentation Techniques
Recognizing that every experienced teacher has a delivery style and habits that have proved to be successful, the topics discussed in this section are designed to promote a new awareness and prompt some modifications to practices, delivery styles, and techniques so that students at other sites, who do not have the luxury of being in the same room as the teacher, are not thereby unnecessarily disadvantaged.

Active Participation
Remote students may need more encouragement than students in your own room to participate in discussions. They may require special attention to compensate for the inherent passiveness produced by staring at the monitor. The solution may be as simple as soliciting their interaction more often, especially in the early stages of a course. Encourage students to identify themselves when they speak (e.g. "This is Jill in Middleburgh, and I think…"). This is particularly important when there is more than one remote site, when the classes are large or when there are large gaps between speaking instances.

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Balanced Attention

In an attempt to address remote-site needs, instructors have been known to overcompensate and overlook students sitting in front of them. This tendency occurs more often early in a class or in the first few sessions of a course. More common is the complaint that the teacher tended to favor the host site and pay little attention to the remote students. This may have much to do with perception and eye contact.

Eye Contact

Look at the camera lens to communicate with your students at the remote sites. Doing this will give them a sense of personal contact and inclusion with your site. Adjusting the camera to show a close-up of yourself or of individual students is a good technique to foster a unified learning environment. **While in the majority of distance learning classrooms the monitors are positioned close the camera lens, it is not always the case. True eye contact with your remote sites comes when you look into the lens, not at the monitors.** This is not to say that you should be staring into the lens any more than you stare into the eyes of the students in your own classroom. It will help to keep in mind however, that an occasional look directly into the lens while you are framed in a close shot addressing a remote student, can very effectively make her or him feel that you are connected and concerned. This is especially true if you address them by name while looking into the lens.

Seating

The way the students are grouped at the host and remote sites will determine how close or wide the shots will need to be in order to **cover** them all. **It is very important to have the students sit closely together, without empty seats or rows between them.** Establishing seating assignments, using name cards with large readable lettering and creating a seating chart are all techniques that have proven helpful during the first few sessions. When addressing your students, especially at the remote sites, if you refer to them by name, it can help give them a stronger feeling of belonging to your class.

Presets

Spend a few minutes before the session begins programming important **camera position presets** on the touch screen. Common presets include one-person **close-ups** for you and students and **medium shots** that show two or three students at a time as well as a **cover-shot** that is **just wide enough** to see all the students at a site. Properly established student and teacher camera presets can be very helpful when you are learning to connect students' faces with names.

Know When Your Session Is About To End

The network sessions end abruptly, often switching to another configuration of schools in a session that follows immediately. The network clock can also be off by a few minutes. It can help your remote sites feel more connected if you can be aware of the approaching end of a class and bring it to a conclusion before they and you are abruptly disconnected.

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Fonts & Image Size

If you are producing notes that you want to display using the Elmo, it is best to use a large crisp font.

This font is Arial 26 point. Other fonts may work as well as…or better, but the most important thing to keep in mind is that the type should be large.

Landscape format

Limiting your page length and keeping your typed or handwritten notes in a **landscape format** (shown below, the proportions of the camera / monitor frame) can help you avoid the need to be constantly moving the page upward.

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It is strongly recommended that you avoid the use of fine point pens or pencils when using the Elmo.

Medium or Thick point markers such as **Vis-à-Vis** are much more camera friendly and readable by students in the middle and rear of the classroom. They also add color and visual interest to your presentations.

Felt markers bleed

Keep in mind that felt tip markers tend to bleed through the paper. Please use a template or blotter pad under your marker paper to keep the stage area of the Elmo clean.

Look at your screen from the back of the room

Students will have a much easier time understanding your notes and displays if your text and images are large and fill a landscape format.

Keep in mind that not all schools have the same size monitors or projection screens.

A normal size monitor, 30 inches or less, when viewed from the back of a classroom is much different than a 15 foot video projection screen.

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Room Aide / TA   Classroom responsibilities

The TA should be familiar with the Technical and Classroom Management requirements in this section. Refer to the appropriate sections in this manual for specific information and please do not hesitate in contacting the BOCES technical support staff.   **1-888-427-9173 for additional assistance or training**

Technical

- **Powering up the room**
  Check to see that the system is on and operating correctly. This includes checking the volume regularly during every class.
- **Camera Adjustments**
  Be certain that the student camera is focused and framed appropriately on the students. Students should be grouped together without any empty seats or rows between. The camera shot should be set so that it is no wider than necessary to cover all the students. While this may take getting use to, it is important.
- **Taping sessions**
  This is useful for students when they return following an absence. The aide should notify the teacher when taping the class.
- **Assisting students**
  Assist students if necessary, when they need to operate equipment such as the Elmo, the control panel, VCR, fax or the phone attached to the fax to contact the teacher at the host site.
- **Training Students**
  The class can function much more efficiently when the students are trained to operate the room equipment on their own. This is best done very early in the semester in coordination with the host teacher.

Classroom Management

Students should complete Student Contracts and be reminded that in the DL Classroom the rules and schedule of the host school apply.

- **Class Cancellations**
  Classes are canceled only for factors at the host sites, such as equipment failure or snow days, or for scheduled events.
  DL students should not miss a DL class to attend an assembly unless they are participating directly.
- **School Calendar**
  The aide should inform the host site teacher of his/her school's calendar, noting marking periods/dates that grades are due, conference days, vacation breaks, required school functions and any other activities that might prevent students from attending their DL class.

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- **Classroom Observation**
  The aide should sit in an appropriate position in the room for optimum visual management of the students. Some suggested locations are in the back or the front of the room.
- **Food in the DL classroom**
  Students are generally not permitted to eat in class.
- **Housekeeping**
  Students need to be reminded at the end of each class to pick up any papers or other debris that has dropped on the floor or is left on the desks.
- **Transporting/Transmitting Classroom Materials**
  The aide must be familiar with the courier systems used to transport materials between sites for each particular class. Depending on the needs of each class, frequently used systems for transporting materials between sites are the U.S. Mail, the BOCES courier system twice a week, the student suitcase exchange through the Schoharie Vo-Tec Center for schools using that facility, and e-mail. For very brief materials such as a five-minute quiz, the fax machine can be used. The aide should receive materials in advance so that the fax does not always become the last minute method of communication.
- **Completed Assignments**
  The aide makes sure assignments are returned to the host site the same day or, at the latest, the following day.
- **Attendance**
  The aide takes attendance each class session when he/she is supervising at a receive site. The aide then reports back to the host site teacher the attendance of the students.
- **Fax Machine**
  The aide needs to be thoroughly familiar with the fax machine at the local site so he/she can transmit faxes, make voice calls, and duplicate a limited number of copies on an emergency basis.
- **Make-Up in case of absence**
  When a student is absent on the day of an exam, quiz or when a project is due, the aide ensures that the assignment is done one day after his/her return following the absence.

_____

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Classroom Responsibilities Checklist
During Class Sessions

Prior to or at the beginning of each class:

Technical:

- System is operating correctly. Volume settings are at their appropriate levels.
- Student camera is focused and framed appropriately. **With students grouped appropriately together in a shot only as wide as necessary to cover all.**
- The session is being recorded (if necessary).

Classroom Management:

- Necessary materials are distributed to students and/or collected from the students and transmitted to the host site teacher.
- Attendance is taken and reported to the host site teacher.
- Students are situated properly and are prepared to begin class when the host site teacher is ready to begin.

At the conclusion of each class:

Technical:

- Stop recording the session (if necessary).

Classroom Management:

- Necessary materials are collected from the students and transmitted to the host site teacher.
- Students are reminded to pick up any papers or other debris they have dropped on the floor or left on the desks.

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