



Luther Families,

Wow, 8<sup>th</sup> grade is finally here, and your teachers have been working very hard to make it a great experience! While learning and teaching during a pandemic is certainly unusual, and the way in which school will occur is far from how anybody could have ever imagined it a year ago, some things do remain the same.

Please know, as a teaching community, we have been working to meet the challenges of the Distance Learning model. While many learning/teaching aspects are new and unique to a Covid-19-world, there are many things that will stay consistent, which will help give our students structure and support during this critical time of their adolescent development.

The 8th grade teaching team has used its Class Guidelines to provide structure and stability for our students. We have modified some aspects of the current guidelines to meet anticipated needs of Distance Learning in order to give one, consistent set of expectations so students have a better chance at overall success.

That being said, we understand that each family may be weathering this storm of uncertain times differently. As a community, we should strive to support one another. That is why communication is key. If there are extenuating circumstances that are challenging your family, we are more than willing to try to work with you and your student to offer support and accommodations as needed. Remember, we are on the same team, so please share any questions or concerns so that we can help work towards a solution.

In addition to your teachers, there are also people whom you can reach out to for assistance. For example, our awesome counselors are available for emotional, social, and academic support. Also, our administrative team can offer guidance. At the BUSD level, food services, technology services, and student services can offer a helping hand, too. If your student, or your family needs assistance, please reach out so we can help.

We look forward to getting to know each and every one of you as the school year progresses. Best wishes, Yellowjackets!

**CONTINUED ON  
NEXT PAGE**



# **Eighth Grade Guidelines for the Virtual Classroom**

## **Welcome**

Welcome to the Eighth Grade! As you complete this last year of middle school, we hope you set high goals for yourself so your teachers can best prepare you for the challenges of high school. These guidelines are set up to ensure your success in the following classes: English, Social Science, and Science.

## **Materials**

- \*\*\*If learners do not have a computer or internet access, Burbank Unified School District (BUSD) will be distributing Chromebooks and Hot Spots. Please contact LBMS if you need either of these.
- Learners who lose, misuse, or damage classroom materials may be held financially responsible and may face disciplinary action.
- Required and suggested materials are as follows for the virtual classroom:
  - **Note: Please contact your teacher if you do not have access to the suggested materials.**

### **Required:**

- school email address and access
- chromebook\*\*\*
- class textbooks
- class-provided workbooks/packets

### **Suggested:**

- highlighters: pink, yellow, green, blue
- colored pencils
- blue or black pens, and red correcting pen
- #2 pencils with erasers
- lined paper

## **Assignments and Homework**

The purpose of class work and homework is to help learners develop their reading, writing, thinking, and problem solving skills. All work should be complete, on time, and done to the best of each learner's ability. Assignments in Google Classroom will have due dates that must be met.

- Students should expect to have homework on a regular basis.
- Try to get in the habit of doing Periods 1, 2, 3 homework on Mondays and Wednesdays, and do Periods 4,5,6 homework on Tuesdays and Thursday.
- Remember, Friday is an independent working day. You will have six 40-minute assignments to complete. Please take advantage of office hours if you need help."\*\*\*\*You can also contact your teachers throughout the day by email.\*\*\*\*
- Plagiarism and academic dishonesty will receive severe consequences. **Learners are expected to adhere to the BUSD Academic Honesty Policy**
- Turning in blank or inappropriately modified assignments is unacceptable and will be counted as late or receive no credit.
- Learners will often have classwork to complete within live-virtual instruction and interaction. Homework will be an extension of classwork or additional assignments.
- Work must be turned in to Google Classroom or with a school-provided email address.

## **Late Work**

Consistently turning in late work will negatively affect a learner's grade.

- Unexcused late work may not be accepted or may not receive full credit.
  - \*\*\*Follow each teachers' policy regarding late work to avoid grade penalties.
- Projects and major assignments are expected to be turned in **by** the due dates. Failure to do so may result in a significant deduction.
- Notify the teacher BEFORE due date if there are issues turning it in on time. Arrangements will be made accordingly. Communication is key

## **Attendance and Make-Up Work in the Virtual Classroom:**

Regular attendance is critical to the learning process. Excessive absences will adversely affect learning and grades. Learners are expected to attend live-virtual instruction as if it is an in-person class.

- Attendance will be taken in each live-virtual class. Students will be marked absent if they do not attend. Note: this is different from Spring Semester 2020's policy
- Learners will be able to obtain extra help and feedback during times of live-virtual interaction after each period. During live-virtual interaction, students may ask questions and get clarification on assignments.
- Learners are responsible for taking the initiative to obtain make-up work. Assignments will be explained and/or posted on Google Classroom and learners must make it clear they are making up work from an excused absence. Email your teacher using your school email account if you have questions.
- A one-day absence does not excuse a learner from the week's class work, homework, or quizzes. Long term projects/essays are due by the assigned due date, regardless of absences.
- **Functional Absences:** if a learner is logged in yet consistently unresponsive to teacher's comments and questions or unable to perform basic course activities, such as speaking on the microphone and appearing on camera, then it will be considered a functional absence. Functional absences will lower the citizenship grade, and may require a meeting with administration and parents.

## **Grading**

Grades are earned, not given.

- Grades will be based on a variety of assignments, projects, essays, labs, and tests.
- Learners are to follow all instructions and scoring rubrics to understand assessment expectations.
- Assignments are expected to be complete, on time, and done to the best of each learner's ability.
- If a learner has a question about a grade, they should approach the teacher at an appropriate time and in a respectful manner.
- Grades are posted regularly on the AERIES Parent and Student Portal on the BUSD website.

## **Citizenship**

Citizenship reflects a learner's commitment to Luther's core values of **Respect, Excellence, and Community**.

- Satisfactory citizens come to class every day, follow all class guidelines, and cooperate with and show respect to other learners and the teacher.
  - Outstanding citizens not only demonstrate the above behaviors, they also “stand out” as leaders among their peers who help to create a positive learning environment.
- Good citizenship is a requirement for participation in promotion and school activities.

## **Citizenship in the Virtual Classroom**

- Learners are expected to follow all instructions. Students will use the hand-raising tools, mute when needed, use the chat box for academic discussion and information only, and respect the voices of their classmates.
- Learners need to use appropriate behavior to maintain a successful classroom environment. Disruptive behavior may necessitate administrator involvement and/or a virtual parent meeting.
- Learners are expected to participate in live-virtual class. Other than the device students are using to attend live-virtual class, learners are not to use cellphones or other devices unless instructed by the teacher to do so.
- Learners are expected to dress appropriately for live-virtual class and use an appropriate background that is as free from distractions as possible.
- No part of the lessons or content, including student responses should be altered, copied, or shared unless instructed by the teacher. A violation of this trust could end with serious consequences.

## **Tardy Policy**

Tardies need to be avoided because it is disruptive. Communicate to teachers if there are connectivity issues.

- Have materials ready at the beginning of class to avoid being late to the class meeting.
- In accordance with Luther's tardy policy, FIVE tardies in one semester will result in a citizenship grade of Needs Improvement (N). SIX tardies in one semester will result in a citizenship grade of Unsatisfactory (U). Unsatisfactory citizenship can affect promotion.
- Learners must be logged into the live virtual class by the scheduled start time. Follow teachers directions regarding cameras being on and muting. Notify the teacher immediately if there are issues getting into class on time.

## **Break Policy**

- Learners should stay in the virtual classroom, just like we stay in class at school. If there is an urgent matter, send a message to the teacher to work out an arrangement. If a break is granted, students need to return in a timely manner, or it will be considered a tardy or a functional absence.

## **Cell Phones, Eating, and Grooming**

- Paying attention in class is important for learning. Students should be focused and attentive to the lesson. Avoid behaviors that interfere with your learning and distract others from learning. Any behavior interfering with virtual learning is not acceptable.
- Cell phones can be terribly distracting, and therefore should not be used during live-class instruction (unless suggested by the teacher). Eating should wait until breaks. Let's not groom ourselves in front of others.

## **Teacher-Parent Cooperation**

- More than ever, teacher-parent cooperation is crucial. Communication is key.
- Please have your child invite you into Google Classroom and monitor the Grade Portal for assignments and progress.
- Please check teachers' websites for announcements, homework, and information.
- Please check your learner's planner for assignments and homework.
- To encourage advocacy, learners should try to resolve issues with teachers prior to parent intervention; however, please email if you have questions and concerns, especially as we navigate the new world of virtual instruction and learning.
- Remember, we are all on the same team.

## **Parents and Google Classroom**

- Please check your child's assignments, progress, and due dates on a regular basis, especially at the beginning of the semester.
- Use the Aries Parent Portal (Link [HERE](#)) regularly to check your child's progress.
- Your child can't invite you into the Google Classroom, but they can invite you to receive summaries of assigned work. This is easiest. However, you can always ask one of the teachers, provide your email address(es), and they will invite you. Here is some information about Guardian Summaries (Link [HERE](#))

## Teachers' Email Addresses and Websites

Heidi VanKooten

[heidivankooten@burbankusd.org](mailto:heidivankooten@burbankusd.org)

[mrsvk.weebly.com](http://mrsvk.weebly.com)

Cari Knight

[cariknight@burbankusd.org](mailto:cariknight@burbankusd.org)

Susan Conway

[susanconway@burbankusd.org](mailto:susanconway@burbankusd.org)

[historywithmsconway.weebly.com](http://historywithmsconway.weebly.com)

Suzanne McHorney

[Suzannemchorney@burbankusd.org](mailto:Suzannemchorney@burbankusd.org)

[English702.weebly.com](http://English702.weebly.com)

Ara MovSeSSian

[aramovSeSSian@burbankusd.org](mailto:aramovSeSSian@burbankusd.org)

Cristy Brinton

[cristybrinton@burbankusd.org](mailto:cristybrinton@burbankusd.org)

John Okenka

[johnokenka@burbankusd.org](mailto:johnokenka@burbankusd.org)

Mariana Zacher

[marianazacher@burbankusd.org](mailto:marianazacher@burbankusd.org)

