



Virtual Instruction and Learning Guidelines – May 14, 2020

The Zoom meetings continue...everyone looks a little more tired and talks a little bit less in meetings these days. Your diligence in keeping things moving is admirable.

[How Principals and District Leaders Are Trying to Boost Lagging Teacher Morale during COVID-19 - Education Week](#)

Q & A

What comments or narratives are appropriate for report cards for students who receive a grade of “insufficient evidence” or “2” in a VIL environment?

There was a great deal of discussion when the term “insufficient evidence” was adopted. “IE” is intended to cover a wide range of circumstances beyond a student’s control and mitigate academic penalties resulting from the inequities we know are part of a sudden move to VIL. We need to respect the fact that parents are experiencing high levels of stress about how well they have handled teaching their children.

The report card is limited in what it can or should communicate. Narratives or comments are particularly challenging in VIL. We need to consider what will be communicated by comments written on a report card and how those comments will be received.

For example, a student receives the following comment to further explain a grade of “IE”: “Johnny failed to participate in Zoom class meetings,” or, in softer language, “Johnny was not able to join classroom Zoom meetings.” The unintended consequences of this comment go both ways. The teacher is feeling the need to justify the grade but making a judgment about the cause. The parent is feeling judged because he or she failed to support the child. **In this situation, less is better. The “IE” is defined in the modified grading key, and any further clarification can be done outside the context of a report card.**

Therefore, **it is recommended that teachers have conferences with parents and students that they have concerns about rather than using the report card as a means of further clarifying a grade of “IE” or a proficiency mark of “2”.** Notes of any conferences should be retained by the teacher or principal for reference in planning for next year.

It would be appropriate for teachers to complete their virtual instruction a day or two ahead of the last scheduled day of classes to make those contacts.

What impact will a full grading period of VIL have on decisions regarding retention of students?

Any student who was in danger of being retained should have been identified and communication with parents initiated before school moved to VIL. No student should be considered for retention based solely on his or her progress during VIL.

We are struggling to keep families engaged in VIL until our last calendared instructional day. How can we engage them without continuing traditional assignment and assessment practices?

When we think about what the last week of school looks like when students are in our buildings, we might consider trying to replicate that virtually.

“Cleaning Days”

Provide directions for students to make sure they return materials in good order and proceed with plans to collect them over the last few days of school.

“Field Day”

Challenge families to create a Family Field Day and share the experience through pictures, videos, stories, and any other medium they desire. Encourage creativity and collaboration. Think of how grateful families would be to have one “assignment” they all work on together.

“Career Day”

Invite students to call family members and interview them about their careers. They design the questions based on what they want to know. This is all student directed.

“High Interest Day”

Have them decide on a way to share something they are interested in - no more guidance than that.

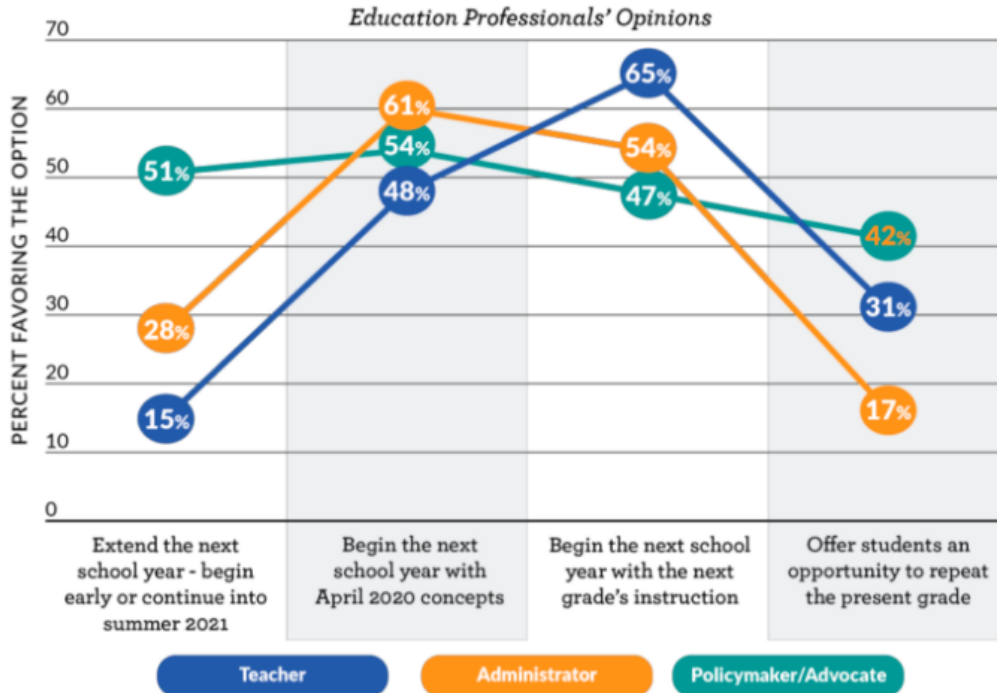
If you have other ideas, please share them for the next edition of the VIL Guidelines.

Have there been any changes to the Safe Environment Compliance Report requirements?

Suzanne Nickolai recently sent the most recent Safe Environment Compliance Report forms and directions for submission. Look for her email dated May 13, 2020.

Options to Catch Up from Learning Loss

To what extent do you favor the following options that school districts may offer assuming it is safe to return to the classroom?



Administrators were least in favor of extending next school year or having students repeat a grade.

Source: <https://www.educationdive.com/news/survey-teachers-favor-moving-on-to-next-years-content-in-the-fall/577024/>