



Synchronous Learning Checklist for Staff - Working Document

The following information and Checklist support the expectation that all Niagara Catholic staff engage in synchronous learning with students through Board-approved virtual learning platforms. The word “synchronous” is defined in the Merriam-Webster Dictionary as “happening, existing, or arising at precisely the same time; recurring or operating at exactly the same periods.” During this time of distance education, the delivery of synchronous learning ranges from a number of real-time, interactive platforms available for staff ranging from Google Meet/Hangout and Virtual Classroom in the Niagara Catholic Virtual Learning Environment, e-mails, phone calls, audio and video conferencing, all of which are interactive, in real-time.

Resources are available to support teachers and staff with regards to safe and professional use of electronic communication and social media through the Ontario College of Teachers [Video Conferencing Guidelines](#) and [Use of Electronic Communication and Social Media Professional Advisory](#), the Ontario English Catholic Teachers’ Association [Appropriate and Professional Use of Electronic Communication, Social Media, and Online Educational Services](#) and the professional advisories in the Covenant for Responsible Ministry for Chaplaincy Leaders, the College of Social Workers and the College of Early Childhood Educators. The Niagara Catholic [Code of Conduct Policy \(#302.6.2\)](#), [Electronic Communications Systems \(Students\) Administrative Operational Procedures \(#301.5\)](#), [Electronic Communications Systems \(Employees\) Policy \(#201.12\)](#), [Privacy Policy \(#600.6\)](#) and other applicable Board policies and administrative operational procedures apply during distance learning. *Administrative Operational Procedures for Working Outside of All School/Office Sites* and *Top 5 Tips for Avoiding a Privacy Breach When Working From Home* support staff working from home (*DM 241: COVID-19 Staff Information*).

BEFORE a synchronous learning session...

- Consider inviting colleagues as collaborative contributors to the online learning session.
- Provide notice to students and parents/guardians in advance of the online learning session.
- Remind students and parents/guardians that recording the session is not permitted.
- Find a quiet, confidential and well-lit space to work and avoid pointing the camera into your personal living space.
- Ensure that your microphone and camera are on and working. A headset or earphones with a microphone may improve overall audio quality.
- Close all unnecessary windows or programs on your computer/device before sharing your screen to avoid showing sensitive emails or other information.
- Ensure that documents or resources shared during the session are made available to students.
- Create an appropriate title for the session.
- NOTE:** If you are using Google Meet, use the link in Google Classroom or the link generated by <https://meet.google.com>.

DURING a synchronous learning session...

- Begin the session with a Prayer.
- Outline the expectations for positive student behaviour, and provide an overview of the lesson or activity.
- Remind students that the Board *Code of Conduct* policy applies to all schools and the online virtual Catholic classroom.
- Report any concerns about inappropriate student conduct to your school Principal/Vice-Principal. The *Safe and Accepting Schools Incident Reporting Form* is available to complete and submit to the Principal.
- If using the camera, look directly at the camera.
- Pause during the online session to allow for students to ask questions or to check and respond to comments in the chat box.
- Provide instructions to students about how you will respond to their questions and concerns after the session.

AFTER a synchronous learning session...

- The teacher or staff member must be the last participant to exit and close the session. Ensure that all students have left the session before closing the link.