

## Distance Learning Video Conferencing “Getting Started Guide”

### 1. New to video conferencing? Here's how you can get started!

- 1 **Contact** Shelley or Sharon if you are interested in a video field trip. They need to be notified to make sure the technical and logistics of the program will run effectively.
- **Find a field trip.** You can search the **Field Trip Databases** and search directories (as outlined below).
- **Secure funding for the field trip.** Make sure you know how the field trip will be paid for. Consider the following: content provider costs, line fees and transportation costs if your students will be traveling to a different location in order to participate in the field trip.
- **Contact the remote site/content provider** to set lesson objectives, provide technical information about your codec and schedule a test call if you haven't connected to them before. Exchange phone numbers in case of a problem when connecting.
- **Schedule the distance learning equipment** with Shelley Rossitto.
- **Familiarize yourself with the equipment.** Meet with the technician who will be helping you during the video conference if one is available. If you have an opportunity before the video conference takes place, demonstrate the technology to your students. Have the students practice using the equipment before the actual day of the conference.
- **Consider how the room is set up**, camera locations, furniture, etc.
- **Prepare your students for the field trip.** Talk to your students about the video and audio during the connection.
  - ✓ The video may be a little jerky or pixels may appear.
  - ✓ There will be a slight delay in the audio so it's important to pause before speaking so you don't talk over the other site.
  - ✓ Room or ceiling microphones are very sensitive. The other site may be able to hear you whisper to a classmate.
  - ✓ Have students prepare questions on index cards ahead of time if possible. This helps keep the students focused and eliminates duplicate questions. Teachers should be ready to facilitate the activity with their students.
  - ✓ Share expectations of the connection time events and behavior.
  - ✓ Do any preparation activities suggested/required by the field trip site. If your materials are being used on camera, design them with a large font, print in landscape mode and use pastel paper.
  - ✓ Students will need to articulate and speak a little louder than normal. Their comments should be directed to the participants on the other end and

sometimes the class. They can't be shy or their comments will not be heard.

✓ Think about sending a roster of the students to other school or field trip site to act as reference – even a seating chart. If you are connecting to a school perhaps students can create a powerpoint slide about themselves to be sent as a whole presentation.

✓ Use your teacher personal website to support content

- **Connect with remote site at least 15 minutes prior** to the start time. You may not record the field trip unless permission is granted by content provider. Copyright laws should be followed.
- **Stay focused on your objectives** and have fun!
- Offer some warm up time for students to just practice talking to others. This will be new to them and a little playtime should be scheduled in.
- **Do the post activities** if provided.

## **2. Instructional**

- 2 Plan ahead with the organization you are connecting with
- 3 Work on maximizing interaction between students and expert. This medium is bringing the students to a place they wouldn't ordinarily have access to. We want to avoid it being a "movie."
- 4 Evaluate the experience to determine its effectiveness. Most of the websites ask for feedback and that is important for others thinking of using this medium or site. (*Sharon – we will have to create – I have some forms to put online*)
- 5 Plant seeds at the beginning or before the VC so students begin to think about questions and ideas.
- 6 Have a good wrap up activity with the other school or video field trip site.