Zoom Education Best Practices Checklist

The COVID-19 pandemic may have moved your classroom instruction online. But virtual and hybrid classrooms can also be effective classrooms.

Zoom allows teachers and students to collaborate, so everyone gets the most from remote learning. And that means accommodating all students, regardless of disability or learning style.

With Zoom education, as with all classroom learning, educators must follow laws and standards for accessibility, like:

Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) — Federal law mandating free appropriate public education (FAPE) for children up to 18 who have disabilities. IDEA applies to states that accept federal education funding.

Rehabilitation Act — Federal law whose Section 504 focuses on the rights of people with disabilities. Section 508 addresses the use of technology, including that used in virtual education.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) — Federal law prohibiting public entities from discriminating based on disability. This law applies to public schools and universities and some private and religious institutions. Schools must accept students with disabilities and provide them with accommodations.

Common Core State Standards — K-12 guidelines that call for assisting those with disabilities, so they can engage in the educational process. School curriculum also may be subject to other state guidelines. It's good to know that typically, the free version of Zoom is limited to 40 minutes for 3+ participants. But currently, K-12 students and teachers get unlimited meeting minutes.

But beyond that, it's an important way to provide effective remote learning for all.

Have you visited Zoom.us to sign up?

Getting started with Zoom

☐ Reach out to students, parents and administrators to discuss required accommodations.

☐ Prepare any features or tools to meet your learners' needs. Your deaf and hard of hearing students will need live captioning, video captioning and transcripts. Try Rev Zoom Live Captions for free.

☐ Conduct a dry run on Zoom with colleagues, friends or family members. Get familiar with running a classroom session.

☐ Set permissions for Zoom features like screen sharing and chatting to meet your and your school's guidelines.

Presenting your class

☐ Lead a quick review of virtual classroom etiquette and expectations on the first day.

☐ Admit only those who are in your class into your Zoom meeting, and using a password is recommended. Take advantage of the waiting room, and lock the class once it starts.

☐ Record your lesson so you can share your video later, to allow students to learn and review on their own time. Adding captions to the recording is beneficial for most students.

☐ Set a virtual background if you don't want students to see your home! You can select one of the pre-loaded backgrounds or upload your own

Enhancing learning

☐ Use Zoom features that encourage student engagement, from sharing your screen to allowing breakout sessions.

☐ Caption presentations This will help you meet accessibility guidelines for the deaf and hard of hearing and others with learning disabilities. It also may improve student performance.

☐ Use Zoom's Whiteboard tool - this allows you to draw in a Zoom virtual whiteboard! This is an excellent feature for math.

☐ Use the Zoom chat feature to engage students in discussion. Be sure to check the chat often, and pause during a lecture to ask questions to your students and encourage students to chat, ask questions & give input.

☐ Provide transcripts of your presentations or lectures — to supplement in-class instruction.

Need help meeting accessibility guidelines and laws? Want to make the most of Zoom education? Rev offers options like:

- Real-time captioning for Zoom sessions

- Automated transcription services and human transcription services for Zoom recordings

- Captioning of recorded Zoom meetings

Need financial help for distance learning tools to assist your students with disabilities? Federal funding is available through IDEA or the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act.