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**Berkeley Unified School District Media Rules**  
During COVID-19 and Distance Learning  
2020-21 School Year

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BUSD will continue to work with the press seeking to cover the school district and distance learning during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Zoom and other online communications tools are key for connecting students and teachers during distance learning. Teachers continue to develop new ways to adapt instruction while building and maintaining relationships with and among students. The District's top priority at all times, including during the COVID-19 pandemic is to protect the health and safety of our students and staff. Part of protecting student safety and well-being is ensuring student and family rights to privacy, especially as students engage in distance learning from their homes.

In addition, the City of Berkeley has issued strict health orders that everyone within Berkeley, including District staff and students, as well as anyone seeking to access a District site, must abide by.

**BUSD Media Rules**

Because of Shelter-in-Place Orders and COVID-19, we are keeping all non-essential staff OFF CAMPUS. Media entrance to BUSD property will only be permitted with prior written permission from the District's Public Information Office. If permission is granted to enter a BUSD property, separate written permission is needed to go INSIDE a building.

COVID-19 protocols are posted at each campus and facility. Anyone entering a BUSD campus or facility, whether inside or outside, will be required to follow all COVID-19 risk mitigation protocols during the entire time they are on District property, including face coverings and social distancing. Health screening may be required to enter a school campus or District property or facility. The media should check with the Public Information Office to understand all COVID-19 protocols.

Reporters and/or photographers may visit the Ed Hub, or an outdoor food or materials distribution site, for video and interviews with prior written permission from our Public Information Office so that site staff know that the media will be there, as they may need to adapt their protocols for media presence.

As always, if parents are not present to approve a student interview, students may not be interviewed unless parents consent to the interview by signing a Media Release form.

A press release from BUSD inviting media to an event on campus is considered prior written permission.

### **Video Conference Protocols**

If a teacher, student, or anyone else is on Zoom (or another online platform) with their class, that class has the same protections as a live in-person class. No one would walk into a classroom and start taking video of the students and teacher without first obtaining written permission from the Public Information Office, and the same holds true for the world of virtual instruction. In fact, because Zoom shows students at home, it is incumbent upon anyone who is hoping to capture class activities on screen to get permission of not only the person who is allowing you to be there (in their home) for the Zoom class, but also the teacher, and every parent or guardian whose student is in the distance learning class, since you are showing their child at their home. (This is true regardless of whether you are seeking audio and/or video recordings and photographs.)

Audio: You may only record audio of a student talking (whether in person or via Zoom or other online platforms) with written permission of that student's parent/guardian. BUSD's Public Information Office will work with you to get a media release from the student's parent or caregiver.

Video: If you are allowed into the home of a student, and their parent or guardian allows you to shoot video of the student participating in their class, that is fine as long as you do not show any faces of the other students (either by way of the angle you are shooting or because you are shooting the screen out of focus).

Please remember that Zoom includes the names of the people who are on the call. Those names should always be obscured, even when you have full permission to show the Zoom.

Even if you are shooting the video or photos of a Zoom in a way that you cannot see the faces or names of any participants, you must alert the teacher to the fact that you are there (ideally in advance) and explain the scope of what you will be recording. The teacher may refer you to the Public Information Office to determine if media releases are required. Please also remember that although you may be physically in one person's home with permission, you are also virtually in the homes of many others at the same time.

Please note that BUSD reserves the right to request copies of any written permission and will be requesting such copies for any unobscured video recordings.

Thank you for understanding and abiding by these rules. They are designed to protect our students, their families, our teachers and other staff.