

As educators look to reconnect with students or provide online learning, I have received many questions recently about videoconferencing. I recorded [this video](#) that you may share with your staff members to the extent you find it beneficial.

Below are some of the best practices that I discuss in the video:

1. Educators should gain approval from the administration before participating in videoconferencing and should only use district-approved videoconferencing platforms.
2. Ensure that any use falls within district licensing agreements with videoconferencing providers.
3. Obtain approval from parents/guardians ahead of time and inform them when the conferencing will occur. We do not want families to exceed data plan limits or for educators to unintentionally invade the privacy of family living spaces.
4. If educators are using video, ensure that cameras are oriented so that there is a wall immediately behind the educator. Some platforms allow the use of a neutral virtual background effect which permits users to see the participant but not the actual background. That would be another wise option for the educator to use.
5. Encourage educators to have students mute their video and possibly their audio as well. If there is a need for video to be used, please have students or parents orient the camera so there is a wall behind the student or utilize virtual background technology discussed in the previous comment.
6. There generally would not be a need to record sessions. If educators or districts decide to record video sessions, ensure the content is password protected and that only educators with a legitimate educational interest have access to the video recording.
7. Educators should always ensure that all students have exited the video conferencing session prior to educators exiting.

SAI hopes that the video and these recommended best practices benefit Iowa educators as they connect with students. Thank you for all your efforts, and we hope you all stay healthy.

Matt Carver
Legal Services Director
School Administrators of Iowa

