

NEW MEXICO HIGHER EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM
GOVERNOR



KATE M. O'NEILL, ED.D
CABINET SECRETARY

TO: New Mexico State Authorized Private Post-Secondary Schools
FROM: Dr. Kate O'Neill, Cabinet Secretary of NMHED
DATE: March 13, 2020
SUBJECT: Guidance for Educational Adjustments Due to COVID-19

The New Mexico Higher Education Department (NMHED) is aware of the health concerns schools are facing because of the spread of COVID-19 (coronavirus). The Department's assessment of the situation indicates that State Authorized private post-secondary educational institutions may need to cease face-to face instruction to protect the well-being of students, staff and faculty.

This guidance document provides immediate approval for distance education within New Mexico through **April 30, 2020**. We will provide instructions to request approval for continued distance education beyond that date if it becomes necessary.

If your school does not have the ability to offer distance learning options to students and deems it necessary to postpone scheduled classes, you must **notify NMHED of your plans** as soon as possible. Please send a copy of your notification to students and any other pertinent information, such as programs and number of students affected, to NMHED at private.schools@state.nm.us

- I. Parameters of Immediate Approval
 - a. All State authorized private post-secondary educational institutions with physical presence in New Mexico may use any of the following distance education methods within New Mexico:
 - i. Web services such as Google Classroom;
 - ii. Collaborative platforms such as Microsoft Teams;
 - iii. Video conferencing such as Google Meet, Zoom or GoToMeeting;
 - iv. Audio conferencing;

- II. Compliance with approving Agencies
- a. New Mexico State Authorized private post-secondary educational institution that require approval by other agencies must ensure that they remain in compliance with the standards, regulations or rules of those approving agencies. These are:
- i. Accrediting Agencies
 - ii. US Department of Education
 - Private post-secondary educational institutions approved for Title IV funding, please see <https://ifap.ed.gov/electronic-announcements/030520Guidance4interruptionsrelated2CoronavirusCOVID19>
 - iii. Licensing boards
 - Private post-secondary educational institutions offering programs leading to licensure must ensure that the proposed method of distance education meets the standards of the licensing board.