



Dear STHS Students,

Most of your teachers will utilize some form of video conferencing as a part of remote learning. Platforms like Zoom, Teams, and Google Meet/Hangout will make it possible for you all to interact with your classmates and teachers just like you do at 4500 Memorial Drive. To make our transition to remote learning a positive one, we have put together a list of best practices for participating in video conferences. We anticipate that each of you will conduct yourselves just as you would at school and continue to exemplify the pillars of goodness, discipline, and knowledge.

### **Always make sure to:**

#### **Be on time (or early)**

- Just like with in person class, you'll miss some of the most important information if you're late! Being early allows you a chance to get settled and...

#### **Check your tech**

- Test out your microphone volume and make sure you're clearly visible in the camera.

#### **Mute yourself when not speaking**

- Even though you may not be speaking and think you're being quiet, most microphones can pick up minor background noises, like coughs, sneezes, or typing. These sounds can easily distract other students.

#### **Be courteous and follow the normal rules for discussions – think before you type**

- Just like with in-person discussions, stay on task, turn off other tech than makes noise (phone, etc.). Wait for openings in the conversation to participate; use side chat functions if possible to indicate that you have something to share. Your teacher may give you even more specific procedures, so be sure to follow those.

#### **Stay focused on the discussion**

- 100% of your focus should be on the discussion. You wouldn't have a side conversation, start texting, play a video game, etc. while participating in a discussion in class, so you shouldn't do it online either.

#### **Look your best**

- We're not talking about Mass dress, but make sure you look appropriate for being in public (because that's where you are on a video conference, even if you're at the dining room table). Light, solid color shirts look the best on screen (they're less distracting), and a collared shirt will make you feel more ready for school!

#### **Find your angles and your light**

- Sit at eye level to the lens (you can use books to elevate your laptop) and frame yourself so you're visible from your midsection up. Make sure there's enough light to make the video clear and avoid shadows on your face if possible. We've all had to video conference with the top of someone's head or look up a nostril – don't be that guy!

#### **Look into the camera**

- It's tempting to look at the video feed, but this makes it look like you're looking down or to the side. To make conversations feel more natural, look into the camera – this will make it feel like you're making eye contact. This will take practice.

**Above all, please remember that any and all interactions and behavior you take online for your classes is just like being at school, and any poor choices will have consequences. You are not anonymous and what you say, write, and do is visible to your teachers.** All of your teachers are excited to get back into the classroom with you all next week. Video conferences are just one new thing we're all learning during this transition, so be patient with yourself, your teachers, and your peers if things aren't perfect on the first try. Don't hesitate to let your teacher know if you have questions or if something isn't working correctly.

Sincerely,  
STHS Faculty

4500 Memorial Drive • Houston, Texas 77007-7332 • Phone 713-864-6348 • Fax 713-864-5750  
[www.sths.org](http://www.sths.org)