Tips for Hosting a Virtual Event

Planning

- Determine:
    - The type of event you want to host (Q&A/Panel Discussion, Application Completion Drive, How-to Training)
    - Your topic
    - Your audience (students, parents, both, etc.)
    - What platform to use to host your event (Zoom, Google Hangouts, Microsoft Teams, Skype, Whereby, UberConference, ezTalks, GlobalMeet Collaboration, etc.)
    - How your audience will register for or join the event (Eventbrite, SurveyMonkey, Google Forms, etc. for registration)
    - How you will promote your event to your audience (social media, Remind texting, robocalls, newsletter, newspaper/radio station)
    - Who will be your host and potential guest speaker(s)

Scheduling

- Select a date for your event that works for your guest speaker(s).
- Check with your guest speaker(s) as to whether they have any handouts/resources they would like to share with your audience.
- Schedule a "dry run" to practice presenting and become familiar with the platform and technology.
    - This should be at least 2 weeks before the event.

Promoting

- Create visually appealing promotional material for your event.
    - Include the date, time, topic, speaker's information (name, title, organization, headshot on promotional material).
    - Set a schedule for promoting on your selected medium (social media [Twitter, Facebook, Instagram]; script for Remind texting, robocalls, radio station, and morning announcements; blurb for newsletter and newspaper).
- Provide your guest speaker(s) with information to promote as well.

Dry Run

- This should be at least 2 weeks before the event.
- Test your audio so that you are able to hear, and the system is picking up your microphone. Use a hardwired headset for best sound and recording.
- Familiarize yourself with the control panels.

- When your guest presenter logs in to the platform for practice, ensure you can hear each other and that the sound quality is good. Ideally, they will be practicing with the headset or microphone they will be using for the live event so you can ensure the sound is clear.
- Practice sharing your screen so that the guest speaker(s) can confirm they can see the presentation (if selected type of event).
- Practice changing control to your guest presenter to advance their own slides if you will be doing so during the live event.
- Practice your actual presentation so that you can time it and ensure the flow will fit within the allotted time. You can also note any confusing areas that don't flow well so you have time to fix them before the live event.
- While your guest speaker(s) is/are presenting, record any questions that come up that you can use to ask your guest speaker(s) in case you don't get enough questions submitted by the audience.
- Send a final list of questions to the guest speaker(s) via email after the dry run so they have time to prepare answers before the live event.
- Instruct your guest speaker(s) to log in for the live event a minimum of 15 minutes early.
- Exchange mobile phone numbers so you can text them with any problems during the live event outside of the control panel.

Day of Event

- Log into the platform at least 30 minutes before the live event is scheduled to begin.
- Test your audio so that you are able to hear, and the system is picking up your microphone. Use a hardwired headset for best sound and recording.
- Familiarize yourself with the control panels.
- When your guest presenter logs in to the platform for practice, ensure you can hear each other and that the sound quality is good.
- When it is time to start the event, hit "record" and put your PowerPoint into slideshow mode.
  - If you are on a computer with a double screen, confirm the primary screen displays the full slide. (If it isn't, you may have to go to the top of your control screen to switch the format.)
- If you will be turning over controls to your guest speaker(s) when it's their time to present, hit "change presenter" or select them in the "Participants" section to give them control or make them (co-)host. (This step varies by platform.)
- **Once your guest speaker begins speaking, mute yourself.**
- Keep an eye on your Questions/Chat box for any questions that are coming in from the audience. Typically, if there are any audio problems, audience members will let you know via this box as well. Some questions can be answered without the guest speaker(s) so you can take care of some of these as you go.
- When it's time for questions, select one the audience shared or from the list of questions you prepared before the event, if you have not received any from the audience.

- After the questions, take back control of the presentation, if you have not already done so.
- When you have 5 minutes or less left,
  - Thank the guest speaker(s) and the audience for participating.
  - Let them know about upcoming events and how to register for them.
  - End the event for all.
  - Once done with the event, it's nice to call your guest speaker(s) to thank them personally and praise them for their success.

After Event

- *Once the recording is converted, you now need to upload it to share.*
  - *Depending on the platform you are using, the recording will be saved on your computer or in the cloud. Find where the recording was stored and upload it to a platform that is easily accessible by those outside your school system.*
  - *Once it is uploaded, copy and share the link with your school's/district's communications team who can share it along with links to any handouts.*