



TEXAS
JUVENILE JUSTICE
DEPARTMENT

Special Education, 504, and English as a Second Language (ESL) Updates

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Our Goal for These Students:

***MEET THE NEEDS OF
STUDENTS
ELIGIBLE FOR SPECIAL
EDUCATION, 504, AND
ENGLISH LANGUAGE
LEARNER SERVICES***

TEA NEW Guidance 7-7-2020

Planning
guidebook
(PPT)

Guides LEAs
through the process
of designing their
district and school
re-opening strategy

Posted
(Guide-
book)

ESL, ELL, & LPAC Procedures – General

- Priority LPAC duties at the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year: Identification of potential English learners within the first four calendar weeks of the students' enrollment & Completion of the extended timeline for determining English learner reclassification through the first 30 calendar days of the 2020-2021 school year.
- <https://tea.texas.gov/sites/default/files/covid/SY-20-21-English-Learner-Guidance.pdf>

ESL & ELL

- Can a student be placed in a bilingual education or ESL program while English learner identification is pending? Yes. Generally, TAC 89.1220 (j) allows for identified English learners who are awaiting parental approval to be temporarily placed in a bilingual education or ESL program
- The English learner identification assessment (preLAS/LAS Links) cannot be administered virtually.

Posted March 20, 2020

Do Local Education Agencies (LEAs) have flexibility regarding the provision of a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) to students receiving special education services in times of emergencies such as the COVID-19 pandemic? **No. Neither state nor federal law provide flexibility to LEAs in times of emergency regarding their obligation to provide FAPE to students receiving special education services.**

https://tea.texas.gov/sites/default/files/covid/covid_19_special_ed_qa_updated_may_7.pdf

LEA & school staff will want to prioritize decisions & actions based on:

Health and safety first

Communication with staff and families

Consider requirements of IDEA and state law

Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) and the Provision of Services

2. What if a student's triennial evaluation date is not met due COVID 19?

- Posted March 24, 2020 LEAs should proceed with completing reevaluations within timelines.
- Missed triennial evaluations should be completed as soon as possible.
- If there are deviations from legally established timelines, LEAs should document in the student's folder all reasonable efforts made to follow timelines.

Meet April 30th, 2020 deadline for LEAs to comply w/the requirements of SB 139?

The deadline for LEAs to assure their compliance with Senate Bill 139 as described in the February 13th, 2020 TAA “Senate Bill 139, Notice to Families” has been extended to October 1, 2020 that the LEA provided the notice to the parent of every child, required by TEC sec. 29.023, by logging in to the Legal Framework and checking the appropriate assurances.

Families of students with disabilities are not responding to ISDs?

- Posted April 23, 2020 LEAs should carefully document all communication with families including unsuccessful attempts on the part of the LEA to reach the family. LEAs should attempt to reach families using multiple communication channels if necessary, and in the method, and language most accessible to the individual family.

Are required timelines for manifestation determinations waived because of COVID?

- Posted April 2, 2020 **No.** All required timelines for manifestation determinations are still in effect.

ARD Meetings

https://tea.texas.gov/sites/default/files/covid/covid-19_ard_committee_meeting_guidance_april_2.pdf

ARD Amendments for Temporary Changes due to COVID-19

- Amendments do not require an end date (cease when students are able to return to campus)
- An amendment made by agreement does not require an ARD meeting but requires communication & **a written document** to amend or modify the IEP that the parent & district agree to.
- The ‘amendment by agreement’ process may **not** be used in place of an annual ARD meeting.

Temporary Changes to IEP Details

- LEAs who are applying temporary changes to locations, schedules, etc. should inform parents of the temporary nature and proceed with reasonable efforts in providing FAPE until permanent actions are determined.
- Consider and discuss need for compensatory education ARD committee will address after return to a campus

COVID-19 FAQ: Section 504 Updated

April 2, 2020

- Students who receive special education are dually protected under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the IDEA
- FAPE may include regular or special education and related services provided through distance instruction, virtually or telephonically
- Section 504 committee must make decisions about whether and to what extent compensatory services are needed

COVID-19 FAQ: Section 504 Updated

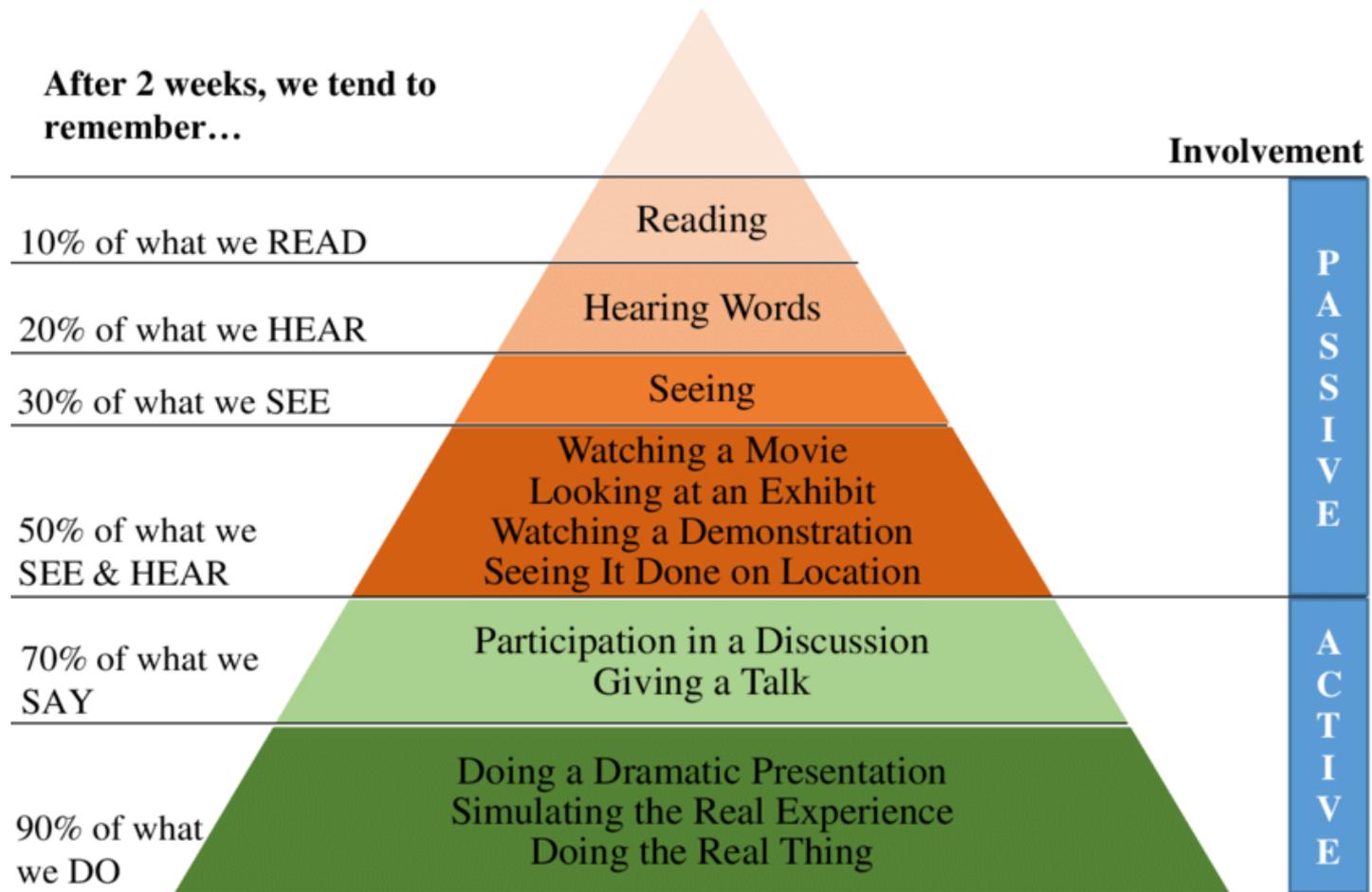
April 2, 2020

- Digital platforms, online options for data tracking, and documentation.
- Low-tech strategies that can provide for an exchange of curriculum-based resources, instructional packets, projects, and written assignments.

Adapting Educational Processes

- Resources to support Remote Learning
- Texas Home Learning. Org
 - Core subjects
 - All grades
 - Online free
 - Additional resources with licenses for all available

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xQbQ6iP7eck>



Suggestions for Online Instruction

- Consider robust discussions and collaborative work via chats and virtual meetings, video and audio clips, and hands-on exercises completed either together or individually.
- Assessments built in
- Adapt for accommodations
- Support or reteach when there is an error
- Scaffolding – building skills
- Track progress

Considerations for Online Access

- Remote Synchronous Instruction – Two-way, real-time/live, virtual instruction between teachers and students.
- Remote Asynchronous Instruction – Instruction that does not require having the instructor and student engaged at the same time. Students learn from instruction that is not necessarily being delivered in-person or in real time.
- https://tea.texas.gov/sites/default/files/covid/sy_2020-21_attendance_and_enrollment_faq_remote_only.pdf

Progress Monitoring

- ❖ Successful completion of objectives in IEP
- ❖ Successful completion of program
- ❖ Positive Gain on IOWA Test
- ❖ Changed behaviors
- ❖ Wanting to achieve
- ❖ STAYING OUT OF TROUBLE
 - ❖ GOING BACK AND STAYING THERE

What is needed to support these Students?

- *Collaboration with sending school*
- *Documentation provided and received*
- *Tracking Progress*
- *ARD, 504, and LPAC Meetings*

Stay Current with Federal and State Law

Rules & Regulations: (Federal 34 CFR 300-399 & Commissioner's Rules:

[http://framework.esc18.net/Documents/Side by Side.pdf](http://framework.esc18.net/Documents/Side%20by%20Side.pdf)

Federal Office of Special Education

<http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osep>

Services online, must be accessible to all learners:

Learn more about OCR: www.ed.gov/OCR

Parent Resources & Instr. Supports

- <https://tea.texas.gov/texas-schools/health-safety-discipline/covid/parent-resources-for-stude>
- <https://tea.texas.gov/texas-schools/health-safety-discipline/covid/instructional-supports-for-students-with-disabilitiesnts-in-special-education>

Questions? Contact Info

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Attendance and Enrollment FAQ: Section Topics

Click on the links below to go directly to that section of the FAQ.

- [Definitions](#)
- [Attendance Methods](#)
- [State Funding](#)
- [Attendance](#)
- [Enrollment](#)
- [PEIMS Attendance Reporting](#)
- [Calendars and Waivers](#)

Definitions

Remote Synchronous Instruction – Two-way, real-time/live, virtual instruction between teachers and students when students are not on campus. In this method, the required amount of instructional time is scheduled each day, and funding is generated when attendance is recorded daily at a locally selected snapshot time. Synchronous instruction is provided through a computer or other electronic device or over the phone. The instructional method must address the required curriculum, per TEC, §28.002.

Remote Asynchronous Instruction – Instruction that does not require having the instructor and student engaged at the same time. In this method, students learn from instruction that is not necessarily being delivered in-person or in real time. This type of instruction may include various forms of digital and online learning, such as prerecorded video lessons or game-based learning tasks that students complete on their own, and pre-assigned work and formative assessments made available to students on paper. The instructional method must address the required curriculum, per TEC, §28.002.

Attendance Methods

Remote Synchronous Instruction

This method replicates the current on-campus method of taking daily attendance in a remote synchronous instructional setting. In a remote synchronous teaching and learning method, students who are logged in at the teacher's documented official attendance time are marked remote synchronous present for that day, and students who are not logged in at the teacher's documented official attendance time are marked absent. An LEA will post on its website and submit to TEA a signed attestation that outlines what the LEA will provide in order to serve students through the remote synchronous instruction method. The attestation must include a summary of training and support for teachers and LEA staff, instructional framework, the platform and technology the district will utilize, grading and progress monitoring, and student access.

How Is Remote Synchronous Attendance Measured?

Teachers will take and post attendance as if the student were physically present in the on-campus classroom. In this type of environment, the LEA would need to provide students a minimum number of daily instructional minutes for students to earn full-day funding, as follows:

- *Pre-K through 2nd grade* – ADA for Foundation School Program (FSP) funding purposes is not available in a remote synchronous method.
- *3rd through 5th grade* – 180 instructional minutes (not necessarily consecutive)
- *6th through 12th grade* – 240 instructional minutes (not necessarily consecutive)

Just as with traditional on-campus attendance, official attendance will be taken at a certain time determined by the LEA's policy. For remote synchronous instruction, time spent for in-class breakfast and recess has been excluded from the calculation of daily instructional minutes listed above and should not be included in the instructional minutes. If the student is not participating remotely, the student would be marked absent under this option and would generate zero funding for the day.

The daily instructional minutes need not be consecutive. A program would meet the remote synchronous method requirements if the daily instructional minute minimums above are met, even if part of the day includes asynchronous activities. For example, a high school program that scheduled synchronous instruction for 120 minutes in the morning, then released students to work independently for several hours before a second scheduled synchronous session totaling 120 minutes in the afternoon would meet the daily instructional minute requirement detailed above.

Time students spend participating in work-based learning opportunities can continue to be included in the daily instructional minute calculation. Work-based learning opportunities could include internships, externships, apprenticeships, and mentorships.

This method also allows students who are taking career and technical education (CTE) courses to continue teacher-led instruction and would generate CTE funding. Special education students who are coded mainstream can receive their regular instruction and special education services through this remote synchronous instruction method, as well, unless their individualized education programs (IEPs) reflect that the services must be provided on campus.

Local education agencies (LEAs) are required to maintain daily schedules that document the amount of instruction a student or group of students is scheduled to receive on a given day. The schedule should detail the amount and type of instruction being provided and should also include the official attendance time the LEA has chosen for the purpose of taking attendance for funding purposes. Additionally, the LEA is required to attest to what an LEA will provide in order to serve students in remote synchronous instruction.

Remote Asynchronous Instruction

This method allows LEAs the flexibility to earn daily attendance through an approved plan for providing high-quality instructional practices with daily engagement measures. LEAs can earn ADA through primarily asynchronous instructional methods OR through a combination of asynchronous and synchronous instruction together. The LEA's approved instructional plan determines the daily

engagement, instructional materials, progress monitoring, and teacher supports the students receive in order to earn daily attendance.

For students who typically attend school on campus but may periodically generate daily attendance via a remote asynchronous instructional method, they should be coded full-day or half-day based on their on-campus schedule. For students who generate daily attendance via remote asynchronous instructional methods throughout the year:

- All students in grades kindergarten through 5th grade will be coded for full-day attendance.
- Prekindergarten students will be coded as half-day students.
- Middle school and high school students can be coded as half-day or full-day students, depending on their daily class schedules.

How Is Remote Asynchronous Attendance Measured?

Measurement frequency is daily. Under an approved learning plan, students earn daily attendance through daily engagement measure(s). The approved engagement methods are listed below:

- Daily progress in the Learning Management System (LMS), as defined in the approved learning plan; or
- Daily progress via teacher-student interactions, as defined in the approved learning plan; or
- Completion/Turn-in of assignments from student to teacher (potentially via email, on-line, or mail).

Student engagement with the LMS or other instructional avenues and/or any daily contact by the teacher with a student focused on supporting or monitoring student academic progress, as defined by the approved asynchronous instructional plan, will establish daily attendance. A student will be considered absent if the student does not have documented engagement with the LMS and/or daily contact with the teacher, and/or documentation of completion/turn in of daily assignments. A teacher or campus representative will input the student's daily attendance into the Student Information System (SIS) for the asynchronous method, based on the student's daily engagement with the LMS or other instructional avenue and/or the daily contact with the teacher, by marking the student remote asynchronous present or absent on that day.

If the LEA has an approved remote asynchronous plan with students participating in both synchronous and asynchronous classes, the student's attendance recorded by the teacher in the synchronous class can count for official attendance for funding purposes. A student who misses the synchronous class can still be counted remote asynchronous present for the day by engaging with the teacher or progressing in the LMS during that same day.

Remote Course Completion (Existing full-time TXVSN)

Full-time virtual campuses are currently funded under the remote course completion method. Students must have completed the Texas Virtual School Network (TXVSN) education program and demonstrated academic proficiency with passing grades equivalent to 70% or above on a 100-point scale.

How Is Remote Course Completion Attendance Measured?

As with the regular, on-campus attendance calculation, the equivalent of 2 hours of course completion is worth half-day attendance, and 4 hours count towards full-day attendance. For single semester courses, completion-based attendance is calculated for each semester, meaning a student can generate between $\frac{1}{4}$ of an ADA (completion of 2 hours of courses for one semester) to a full ADA for completing 4 hours in each semester.

Students in elementary grades (for example, 4th grade) would either receive full attendance if the grade-level coursework is completed and the student is promoted to the next grade level or zero attendance if the course is not successfully completed.

NEW
7/7/2020

On-Campus Instruction

When schools are open and operating normally, students are scheduled to attend school on campus each day. Student schedules determine whether they will generate full- or half-day funding, and students generate funding when attendance is recorded for students who are physically present at school at a locally selected snapshot time. Traditional on-campus instruction will continue to be funded as it was before the COVID-19 pandemic.

Subject to certain exceptions listed below, **on-campus instruction must be offered for all grades served by the campus every day for every student** whose parents want them to access on-campus instruction for each day a campus is providing instruction given its instructional calendar. Exceptions, as more fully described in this FAQ below, include:

- A full-time virtual campus operating under the TXVSN.
- Any day a campus is ordered closed by an entity authorized to issue an order under state law.
- Any day a LEA closes a campus as a result of a confirmed COVID-19 case on campus, subject to the limits described in this FAQ below.
- As part of a **start-of-school transition period**, during the **first three weeks of the school year**, LEAs can, if they choose to do so locally, limit access to on-campus instruction to facilitate a **safe, effective** return to on-campus instruction. Students who cannot participate in remote learning at home because of lack of broadband internet access or devices must still have access to on-campus instruction during this time.

State Funding

UPDATED
7/7/2020

1. Will there be an ADA hold harmless for the 2020-2021 school year? *Updated July 7, 2020*

Yes, TEA is implementing an ADA grace period under the limited circumstances described below. TEA recognizes the challenges associated with implementing remote instruction in the new school year in light of COVID-19. Therefore, TEA will institute the ADA grace period for the first two six-week attendance reporting periods as follows: if an LEA's ADA counts during those first two six-week reporting periods are more than one percent less than the LEA's ADA counts during the first two six-week reporting periods for the 2019–2020 school year, the first two six-week attendance reporting periods for 2020–2021 will be excluded from the calculation of ADA for FSP funding purposes. TEA will then take the ADA as calculated beginning with the third six-weeks through the end of the school year, and then adjust the resulting ADA to account for historical differences in rates of attendance from the last four

six-week periods and the first two six-week periods. This adjustment should mitigate any negative financial impact that the exclusion of the first two six-weeks periods would otherwise have had on an LEA. The historical ratio used will be from the 2018-2019 school year.

Open-enrollment charter schools that are operating for the first time in 2020–2021 will be ineligible for the ADA grace period. In addition, open-enrollment charter schools will continue to submit current year attendance per normal processes. If these processes result in cash flow issues for a charter school, then the charter school should contact the State Funding Division prior to submission of the six-weeks attendance data.

In addition, please note that for state funding purposes, the aggregate attendance rate for eligible students at the LEA for the 2020–2021 school year will be capped at the level of the aggregate attendance rate for eligible students at the LEA from the 2018–2019 school year. LEAs that were not in operation during the 2018–2019 school year will have their aggregate attendance rate capped at the aggregate attendance rate for the LEA for the 2019–2020 school year. LEAs that were not in operation in either the 2018–2019 or 2019–2020 school years will have their aggregate attendance rate capped at the state average attendance rate from the 2018–2019 school year.

This cap could result in a reduction of ADA generated via the two remote instructional methods allowed under the commissioner’s waiver. ADA generated via any on-campus instruction that occurs, individually, is not subject to the applicable cap variation.

2. When comparing ADA to the prior year, how do you accommodate a growing LEA? What if a LEA is projecting additional students but the attendance rate is lower? [Posted June 30, 2020](#)

The comparison will be based on actual ADA, not projections. If actual ADA is down from the prior year, an adjustment will be made, even if initial projections showed an increase in student membership.

3. Given the unpredictability of ADA because of the COVID-19 virus, will TEA exclude certain indicators from the 2021–2022 FIRST ratings (normally released August 2022) given that those ratings rely on data from the 2020–2021 school year? [Posted June 23, 2020](#)

Yes, there are certain indicators that are impacted by the uncertainty of ADA and the adjustments being made to FSP funds that will be excluded from the 2021–2022 FIRST ratings. The indicators being excluded are listed below:

- Indicator #10 - Did the school district average less than a 10 percent variance (90%-110%) when comparing budgeted revenues to actual revenues for the last 3 fiscal years? (All LEAs)
- Indicator #15 - Was the school district's actual ADA within the allotted range of the district's biennial pupil projection(s) submitted to TEA? If the district did not submit pupil projections to TEA, did it certify TEA's projections? (school districts)
- Indicator #16 - Was the charter school's actual average daily attendance (ADA) within 10 percent of the charter school's annual estimated ADA? (open-enrollment charter schools)

4. How will CTE classes be funded if asynchronous instruction is long term? *Posted June 30, 2020*

CTE classes earn full funding through both remote methods so long as instruction is provided.

5. What about SPED funding? *Posted June 30, 2020*

Funding for students receiving special education will continue to flow so long as LEAs are serving students as required by their IEPs.

6. If we provide synchronous instruction for PK - 2nd grade students, would we not receive funding for this in the fall? *Posted June 30, 2020*

Synchronous instruction can be provided as part of a LEA's asynchronous learning plan. The LEA will define progress in its asynchronous plan and confirm all other asynchronous requirements in the plan as well. It is assumed that there will be many instances of synchronous remote instruction provided to students who are participating through the remote asynchronous instruction method. These synchronous experiences wouldn't need to meet the daily instructional minute minimums for a remote synchronous instruction method but would need to meet the definition of progress in the LEA's approved asynchronous plan.

7. Why is synchronous instruction for PK – 2 prohibited? *Posted June 30, 2020*

As noted in the question above, synchronous instruction is not prohibited for PK-2, just the synchronous method for recording attendance. The synchronous method for attendance requires a minimum of 180 minutes be completed per day through a synchronous virtual method (e.g., a Zoom call), which after extensive stakeholder engagement with educators and district leaders, was determined to be neither developmentally appropriate nor good instructional practice as a 5-day-a-week practice for PK-2 students. Using Asynchronous Remote for these students would allow districts, for example, to provide synchronous instruction for these students in shorter time increments in areas such as foundational literacy practices mixed with asynchronous learning activities that build in opportunities for student practice, interactions, exercise, and play-based activities.

8. What if my district will not be able to serve prekindergarten students in a full-day program during the 2020-2021 school year? *NEW July 7, 2020*

Districts that will reopen for school year 2020-2021 with a shortened instructional day that does not meet the full-day requirement (75,600 minutes/year) may need to request an exemption from full-day prekindergarten. Districts can access the process for the [Full-day Prekindergarten Waiver](#) on the State Waivers page of the TEA website.

When completing the Full-day Prekindergarten Waiver application for reopening with a modified daily schedule, districts should choose the exemption condition that states: *Implementation would result in fewer eligible children being enrolled in prekindergarten.*

9. Can we use remote instruction for students who are absent for ANY reason, (even something other than COVID-19 absences) and receive funding? *Posted June 30, 2020*

Yes, one of the two methods of remote instruction is an acceptable way to provide instruction to students for 20-21 school year and continue to receive funding for those students. Documented attendance/engagement must occur on the day of the absence.

NEW
7/7/2020

10. How can we be funded under asynchronous instruction for students who do not have Internet access at home? *Posted June 30, 2020*

Remote instruction for students without internet access at home will need to be provided via an approved asynchronous instruction plan. In order to be approved, the plan will need to include an instructional schedule which ensures the student is engaging with approximately the same amount of academic content as in a regular, on-campus school day, materials which are designed for an asynchronous learning environment (which could include paper packets as an alternative to online work), mechanisms for student progress monitoring (which could include regularly turning in, grading, and providing feedback on paper packets), and implementation support for educators and families. The plan will also need to include a daily measure of student engagement with a teacher to ensure the student is making adequate progress with work for the day, which could include daily teacher and student interactions over the phone focused on discussion of the student's academic work and progress as an alternative to online engagement methods.

Attendance

- 1. Under the remote synchronous instruction method, can my LEA use a more flexible minute requirement for providing instruction to students? Instead of providing 180 minutes of instruction daily to students in grades 3-5, may we break up the minute requirement across multiple days? For example, can the school engage a group of 3rd grade students for 150 minutes on Monday and then add the remaining 30 minutes to Tuesday thereby lengthening Tuesday's instruction to 210 minutes? *Posted June 23, 2020***

No. Under the remote synchronous instruction method, the minute requirements associated with the student grade level must be provided each day for an LEA to earn full-day ADA for those students. Minutes can be broken up throughout the day; however, the overall minute requirement must be earned in the same day credited.

- 2. What if our LEA is unable to provide all daily instructional minutes required under the remote synchronous instruction method for all grade levels? Can we generate half-day funding if we provide instruction but do not meet the full-day minute requirements outlined in the guidance? *Posted June 23, 2020***

Yes, half-day funding is possible under the remote synchronous instruction method. To determine the instructional requirements for half-day funding, divide the minute requirements in half, based on the grade level you are considering for half-day instruction. The LEA could also consider offering remote asynchronous instruction as an alternative in order to receive full-day funding.

- 3. Do in-class breakfast and recess count as part of the overall daily minute requirements in the remote synchronous instruction method? *Posted June 23, 2020***

No. The grade-based minute requirements exclude in-class breakfast and recess. LEAs are still encouraged to provide time for these activities in the students' daily schedules; however, the time will not count as instructional time toward earning full-day ADA for purposes of attendance and funding.

- 4. How does my LEA report attendance under the remote asynchronous instruction method? *Posted June 23, 2020***

LEAs that choose to serve students through a remote asynchronous instruction method must submit a learning plan to TEA that includes details on how student engagement will be tracked daily. Students who are engaged on a given day will be marked remote asynchronous present and generate funding on that day. Students who are not engaged would be marked absent for the day and the attendance cannot be changed based on the student completing an assignment or participating in some other asynchronous engagement at a later date. Approved engagement methods are listed below:

- Daily progress in the Learning Management System (LMS), as defined in the approved learning plan; or
- Daily progress via teacher-student interactions, as defined in the approved learning plan; or
- Completion/Turn-in of assignments from student to teacher (potentially via email, on-line, or mail).

5. Under the remote asynchronous instruction method, can individual campuses within an LEA have different monitoring/engagement tracking systems if the LEA would like to use different systems at the primary and secondary levels? *Posted June 23, 2020*

Yes. Plans can vary by campus. However, an LEA must submit only one plan for the whole school system (and that plan can incorporate differentiation by grade or campus).

6. If my school re-opens in the fall and provides on-campus instruction but large numbers of students remain at home, what should my approach to documentation and instructional support be? *Posted June 25, 2020*

The LEA has the option to choose one of the remote methods described above to ensure that students who remain at home continue to receive a high-quality education. If the LEA chooses the remote asynchronous instruction method, it must receive approval of its instructional plan from TEA. If the LEA chooses the remote synchronous instruction method, it must submit a signed attestation to TEA. Please be aware that, in order for an LEA to receive funding for remote instruction, the LEA's grading policies for remote instruction must be consistent with the LEA's grading policies for on campus assignments.

7. How will students who are receiving virtual instruction be included in the accountability system? *UPDATED July 7, 2020*

Many districts are thinking of organizing teachers to deliver remote instruction to full-time remote students via a district-wide "virtual school," regardless of the student's home school. For accountability purposes, students who elect to participate in a district-provided remote learning option will be coded to the physical campus that they would have been assigned to.

For students who have transferred into a school district, such students must be assigned to a physical campus for accountability purposes, and the campus assignment process must comply with the requirements of TEC, Chapter 25, Subchapter B.

8. Has TEA guidance regarding grading for remote instruction changed for the 2020–2021 school year? *Posted June 23, 2020*

While LEAs have the authority to determine local grading policies annually, in order for LEAs to receive funding for remote instruction, grading policies that apply to student work done in

UPDATED
7/7/2020

either remote synchronous or remote asynchronous instructional methods in the 2020–2021 school year must be consistent with the LEA’s grading policies for on-campus assignments.

9. Can my LEA opt to move students from a letter grading system to a pass/fail basis because they are participating in remote asynchronous learning? *Posted June 23, 2020*

No, in order for an LEA to receive funding for remote instruction, the LEA’s grading policies for remote instruction must be consistent with the LEA’s grading policies for on-campus assignments.

10. How will LEAs take attendance for students who are receiving instruction at home? *Posted June 23, 2020*

The instructional method chosen will dictate how attendance is taken.

If the remote synchronous instructional method is utilized, then the LEA will use an official attendance time documented in the teacher’s daily schedule, and the teacher will take attendance virtually to mark students as remote synchronous present or absent.

If the remote asynchronous instructional method is utilized, students would be marked remote asynchronous present or absent based on whether the student was engaged through one of the approved asynchronous engagement methods on that day.

11. What is the process for submitting and approving remote asynchronous instruction plans? *Posted June 30, 2020*

In order to receive contingent approval to record attendance via the asynchronous instruction method, LEAs must submit a letter of intent via a Qualtrics survey that will be opened on July 15th. As soon as the letter of intent is received by TEA, the LEA will have contingent approval to record attendance for students using the remote asynchronous instruction method. The district will be fully funded for attendance recorded via the remote asynchronous instructional method throughout the contingent approval period. Contingent approval will remain in place through a grace period, which ends at the end of the LEA’s third six-week attendance reporting period (for the purposes of PEIMS attendance reporting).

In order to continue to be funded for remote asynchronous instruction beyond the grace period, the LEA must submit a plan that meets of the requirements as verified by a TEA approval process. TEA will publish a plan template, requirements for plan approval, exemplar plan responses, and training for how to develop and submit plans beginning July 2, 2020.

The application window to submit plans will open on July 20, 2020, and plans can be submitted on a rolling basis.

TEA will review and either confirm final approval for plans that meet all requirements or share feedback on plans that do not meet all plan requirements within 45 days of submission. If the plan does not receive final approval, the LEA will have 30 days to respond to feedback and resubmit plans, and TEA will have an additional 30 days to review and provide final approval or disapproval. If the LEA’s plan does not receive final approval by the end of the grace period, the LEA will no longer be able to record attendance using the remote asynchronous instruction method.

12. What is the deadline for submitting the letter of intent and the plan for remote asynchronous instruction? *Posted June 30, 2020*

LEAs must submit a letter of intent prior to the first day of remote asynchronous instruction in order to receive contingent approval for providing the remote asynchronous instruction method. In order to receive contingent approval prior to the beginning of the school year, the letter of intent must be received by TEA prior to the first day of instruction.

TEA will accept and review asynchronous instruction plans on a rolling basis beginning on July 20, 2020. In order to ensure the timeline necessary for review, revision, and resubmission of plans that do not initially meet plan requirements prior to the end of the grace period, LEAs should submit plans by October 1, 2020.

13. Will at-home parent-led instruction count towards our instructional minute requirements as part of either remote instruction method? *Posted June 30, 2020*

No, at-home, parent-led instructional time will not count towards meeting daily attendance or engagement requirements under either remote instruction method. Teachers must be the primary provider of instruction in any remote setting.

14. What happens if my LEA's remote asynchronous instruction plan is disapproved by the agency? Will my LEA's funding be negatively impacted? *Posted June 23, 2020*

Your LEA's FSP funding will not be negatively impacted for initially disapproved plans, as long as your plan is ultimately approved and implemented with fidelity beginning with your LEA's 4th six-week attendance reporting period. This means that there is a "grace period" for attendance generated through the remote asynchronous instructional method through the end of the 3rd six-week attendance reporting period. If your plan is not initially approved, the LEA will receive feedback on the plan and have 30 days to resubmit the revised plan to the agency. TEA will review revised plans within 15-30 days of submission and will then communicate a final decision about plan approval.

Any remote asynchronous attendance taken during the contingent approval grade period will be fully funded. Beyond the grace period, funding is only provided for remote asynchronous attendance for LEAs with approved plans.

15. Under the remote asynchronous instructional method, if a student fails to complete Monday's measure of engagement on Monday but completes the assignment later in the week, can the student's attendance coding be changed to remote asynchronous present for Monday? *Posted June 23, 2020*

No. In the remote asynchronous instructional method, student engagement is measured daily, and attendance is assigned based on the student's completion of that day's engagement measure. Students who do not complete the daily measure of engagement are to be counted absent for that day, and that absence cannot be changed to remote asynchronous present if the student completes the engagement measure on a later date. In the example above, the student would be counted absent on Monday.

16. Under the remote asynchronous instructional method, if a student decides to complete the entire week's worth of work on Monday, can the student's attendance be coded to show perfect attendance for the week? *Posted June 23, 2020*

No. In the remote asynchronous instructional method, student engagement is measured daily, and attendance is assigned based on the student's completion of that day's engagement measure. Students who do not complete the daily measure of engagement are to be counted absent for that day, and that absence cannot be changed to remote asynchronous present if the student completes the engagement measure on a later date. In the example above, the student would be counted absent Tuesday-Friday.

17. Does an LEA need to submit anything to TEA to provide remote synchronous instruction? *Posted June 23, 2020*

Yes, LEAs are required to submit a signed attestation that outlines the LEA's plans for providing instruction to students through the remote synchronous instruction method. The attestation must be submitted to TEA before the LEA begins serving students remotely, and the signed attestation must be posted on the LEA's website.

18. What plans or attestations does a district need to submit? *Posted July 2, 2020*

The type of plan or attestation to be submitted will depend on the instructional experience offered, as described as follows:

- If your district plans remote (for student who choose remote 100% of the time, for students who become remote briefly because of COVID, or as part of an intentional hybrid schedule) for grades K-2, then you must submit an asynchronous plan for approval. Any asynchronous plan could (and should) include some synchronous instruction, but it would not have a minimum daily minute requirement.
- If your district plans remote (for student who choose remote 100% of the time, for students who become remote briefly because of COVID, or as part of an intentional hybrid schedule) for grades 3-12, and you will not meet the 180-minute and 240-minute thresholds each day, then you must submit an asynchronous plan for approval in order to be able to mark a student as "Present-Asynchronous" for any given day
- If your district plans remote (for student who choose remote 100% of the time, for students who become remote briefly because of COVID, or as part of an intentional hybrid schedule) for grades 3-12, and you will meet the 180-minute and 240-minute thresholds any day to claim students as "Present-Synchronous", then you must submit an attestation that you are capable of delivering that level of synchronous remote instruction

19. Does the board need to meet to approve the synchronous instruction attestation/ asynchronous plan or can board members just sign the documents individually? *NEW July 7, 2020*

NEW
7/7/2020

Board action is only valid if authorized in a public meeting through a vote of the board. However, the board can vote in advance of the final attestation/plan submission to authorize the superintendent to submit the attestation/plan once the attestation/plan is finalized by the superintendent.

20. Do the required minutes under the remote synchronous instruction method need to be fulfilled with continuous, teacher-led instruction? [Posted June 23, 2020](#)

No, the required minutes do not need to be provided as one continuous block of teacher-led instruction. Students should have age-appropriate opportunities for breaks during the instructional day, and blocks of instructional time should consist of teacher-guided, but student driven, learning time. The instructional time could include students applying the lesson taught by the teacher through various avenues as if the student was in a classroom setting. An example of this would be the teacher leading a lesson in Zoom for 20 minutes and then the students logging into an online learning application to work on an activity with the teacher actively monitoring progress and providing real-time feedback to the students.

21. Will the 90/10 minimum student attendance for class credit rule be in effect for the 2020–2021 school year? [Posted June 23, 2020](#)

Yes. The minimum attendance for class credit rule of TEC, §25.092, will be in effect for the 2020–2021 school year, and TEA will not be issuing waivers for LEAs to exempt themselves from the rule. Students are required to attend at least 90% of their classes (with some exceptions) to receive credit and be promoted. Remote attendance will count in the same manner as on-campus attendance in satisfying this requirement.

22. Will truancy laws be in effect during the 2020–2021 school year for students receiving remote instruction due to COVID-19 related closure or health concerns? [Posted June 23, 2020](#)

Truancy laws will apply to students who fail to attend school, but remote attendance satisfies attendance requirements.

23. What are the requirements to earn full-day funding for general ed homebound and PRS CEHI students and how should attendance be reported? [Posted June 23, 2020](#)

When in-home instruction cannot be provided due to COVID-19, students who had been receiving instruction at home should be served through the LEA's remote synchronous or asynchronous instructional methods. While students are served through one of these methods, attendance should be reported in accordance with the rules for each method described in this document. Pregnancy related services (PRS) students who receive Compensatory Education Home Instruction (CEHI) services through a remote synchronous or asynchronous method can continue to earn CTE contact hours, as long as CTE instruction continues while remote instruction is provided.

24. How should we take attendance for our special education students when COVID-19 prevents teachers from providing in-person instruction? [Posted June 23, 2020](#)

Attendance taking for special education students should track as closely as possible to the requirements for non-special education students.

25. Do we need a new attendance taking policy? [Posted June 30, 2020](#)

Yes, the LEA will need to update or amend its attendance policy to include the remote instruction methods for taking attendance. In addition, the LEA is required to submit a signed affidavit to the TEA if it is utilizing remote synchronous instruction method. If the LEA is utilizing the remote asynchronous method, then the LEA is required to submit and obtain

approval from the agency on its instructional plan. If the LEA is utilizing both remote methods, then the LEA must complete both the affidavit and the instructional plan.

26. If a student who is originally scheduled to receive instruction through the synchronous instructional method is not present at the designated official attendance time, could the student still be marked present for the day by engaging through the remote asynchronous method? *Posted June 30, 2020*

A student who is scheduled to receive instruction through the LEA's remote synchronous method but is not present at the official attendance time can still be marked present if the student is engaged through the LEA's remote asynchronous method that same day. In this scenario, the teacher should mark the student absent when attendance is taken at the official attendance time and the absence could later be changed to remote asynchronous present with documented engagement through one of the approved remote asynchronous engagement methods that occurred the same day. However, the LEA's approved asynchronous plan would need to include the relevant grade/subject as being eligible for asynchronous instruction, and that synchronous instruction would be provided concurrently.

27. If students make academic progress at night, are we able to adjust the attendance for that day if they were initially marked absent? *Posted June 30, 2020*

If the asynchronous method is utilized then as long as the student is providing daily engagement through completion of daily assignments, making daily progress in the LMS, or has made daily contact with the teacher regarding the student's progress then the student would be considered remote asynchronous present. For synchronous remote instruction, attendance must be taken as designated in your attendance policy, and it would not be appropriate to adjust after the fact unless the student made progress that day via the asynchronous method as part of the approved asynchronous plan for that grade/subject.

28. Can I require my parents to commit to remote or on campus instruction? *UPDATED July 7, 2020*

UPDATED
7/7/2020

LEAs may ask their parents to commit to either on campus or remote instruction for their students no earlier than two weeks before the start of the school year. LEAs may survey parents prior to that period, but parents cannot be bound to the choice prior to two weeks before the start of the school year. In the event a parent chooses remote instruction for their child, an LEA may, if the LEA believes it is in the student's educational interest, choose to limit the student's return to an on-campus setting to occur only at the end of a grading period (e.g. 6-week or 9-week). **However, LEAs cannot require a student to remain in remote instruction for more than a single grading period.** Note: students who begin receiving remote instruction as a result of staying at home to isolate from COVID-19 exposure should be permitted to return to campus at the end of their isolation period, as opposed to the end of a grading period.

UPDATED
7/7/2020

29. Can LEAs require a student to come on campus to complete assignments for certain electives while the student is being served through one of the remote instruction methods? *UPDATED July 7, 2020*

Some elective courses may have coursework that can only reasonably be completed in person, even if some components of the course could be taught virtually (e.g., welding). These courses must be made available to students who are otherwise learning virtually,

although the LEA can require a student to come to campus to complete a required assignment or project for an elective course if the course requires assignments that cannot be reasonably completed remotely. Some courses may require a student to obtain equipment from campus in order to complete coursework virtually. For an illustrative list of courses that might require on-campus experiences or for students to obtain equipment from campus, see [this link for CTE courses](#) and this [link for non CTE courses](#).

LEAs must communicate which courses have on-campus requirements and notify parents and students before the start of the course that failure to complete the required on-campus assignments could cause the student to not be awarded course credit. This notification to ensures students have an option to select courses that can be completed remotely if desired. In this case, it is appropriate to encourage students whose parents wish for them to remain fully remote to choose different electives that can be satisfied in a fully remote setting. Failure to appear on campus to complete on-campus assignments could also result in absences that could subject the student to the 90/10 minimum attendance for class credit requirement.

Schools should consider organizing on-campus curricular requirements in groupings specific to students who are remote, so they come to campus separately and on a schedule that allows for travel from home. These students would need to be screened for COVID-19 and follow any other school requirements and practices consistent with practices for other students.

UPDATED
7/7/2020

30. Can LEAs prevent a student from attending an on-campus lesson that is required for course credit if the student has chosen a remote instructional method? *UPDATED July 7, 2020*

If an LEA offers virtual instruction, they must offer all **core** (foundation) courses in an entirely virtual format and must ensure that a student is able to meet all statutory requirements, including the requirement that 40% of instructional time includes laboratory and field investigations for full course credit. For these required courses, LEAs are not obligated to allow a student to optionally participate in on-campus components of the course if they are able to meet all course requirements virtually. For example, an LEA must offer a fully virtual version of biology for students who are learning virtually. The LEA must ensure all labs can be conducted virtually or that students are provided with certain supplies and/or equipment to conduct the labs at home. If a student's parent wanted him to participate in on-campus biology labs while taking the rest of the course virtually, an LEA *may* allow the student to do that but is *not obligated to do so if the same labs can be conducted virtually*. Please note: TXVSN catalog courses are likely available to support fully remote instruction for these courses.

If an LEA partners with an institute of higher education (IHE) to offer a **dual credit** foundation course, it may not be possible to offer the course in an entirely virtual format. LEAs should consult with their IHE partners to determine whether or not a course may be offered virtually. For **electives**, as noted above, LEAs cannot prevent students from participating in on-campus activities required for courses, even if the student has elected to receive most of their instruction through one of the remote instructional methods. However, as noted above, LEAs

are encouraged to organize these on-campus course activities in ways that reduce on-campus visits by students who otherwise have chosen remote instruction.

NEW
7/7/2020

31. Can LEAs prohibit students who have chosen to receive all their instruction through a remote instruction method from participating in extracurricular activities? *NEW July 7, 2020*

LEAs may develop a local policy that would exclude students who are learning remotely from all extracurricular activities if they choose to do so. The policy can apply to all remote students or solely to non-resident remote students (who transfer in from outside of the LEA's geographic boundaries). If the LEA decides to allow non-resident remote students to participate in extracurricular activities, the residency requirements for UIL activities still apply. Any exclusion policy must be applied equally to all students and equally to all extracurricular activities.

32. Will students who were enrolled in private school, including a home school, the prior year in Texas be eligible for funding through the remote synchronous or asynchronous instructional methods? *Posted July 2, 2020*

No. Consistent with the laws governing the Texas Virtual School Network, school systems may not submit for funding educational delivery through either a remote synchronous or asynchronous method for students who attended a private school, including being homeschooled, in Texas the prior year, unless the public school campus the student would otherwise attend is closed to on-campus instruction because of a COVID-19 case on campus or a closure order. This limitation does not apply to: (a) students who transition from early education programs, where no entitlement to enroll in the public school existed, to public school; (b) students who transfer in from outside the state; or (c) students whose prior year private school does not offer the appropriate grade level (e.g., a private school ends at 6th grade so students moving on to 7th grade would no longer be able to attend the private school). Students who attended a private school, including being homeschooled, in Texas the prior year will be eligible to earn funding under the traditional on-campus method. LEAs are not required to provide remote instruction to these students and can require the students to attend through the on-campus method. The agency is exploring additional, possible exceptions to the funding limitations described in this answer.

NEW
7/7/2020

33. Can my LEA decide to only offer remote instruction for a campus, or for all of my campuses? *NEW July 7, 2020*

No. Campuses cannot be solely remote (excluding full-time TXVSN campuses), except during COVID-19 closures (as described below) or during the start-of-school transition (as described below). On-campus instruction *must* be offered for all students who want to attend on campus in order to be eligible to receive funding for remote instruction.

NEW
7/7/2020

34. Can districts develop a hybrid instructional model that intentionally blends on campus, remote asynchronous, and remote synchronous experiences? *NEW July 7, 2020*

Yes. LEAs must deliver schooling that is fully on-campus. They may also deliver schooling that is fully remote, or a hybrid model that is designed to have some on-campus attendance days and some remote attendance days, as long as all families have access to a daily on-campus

instructional option (as fully described in a question below). When delivering instruction remotely, a district can choose to offer any grade/subject synchronously, asynchronously, or a mix of both.

Assuming the options are available from the school, students can generate attendance that varies by day, on campus, or remote (synchronous or asynchronous). For intentionally designed hybrid experiences, this will vary by design. But for some students, it will vary because they want to change their instructional setting as circumstances change over the course of the year.

NEW
7/7/2020

35. How do we record attendance if we are delivering a mix of synchronous and asynchronous remote instruction on the same day for a student? *NEW July 7, 2020*

When generating remote attendance, whether a given day is remote synchronous or remote asynchronous will depend both on what the district offers (from the submitted attestation and/or plan) and the nature of the daily remote experience for students, as follows:

- If the students receiving remote instruction on a given day are in grades 3-12 and receive at least 180 minutes of synchronous (grades 3-5) or 240 minutes of synchronous (grades 6-12) instruction during off-campus days and are in attendance at the designated synchronous attendance time, then they generate funds through the synchronous method (and would be marked as Present-Synchronous).
- If the students receiving remote instruction on a given day are in grades 3-12 and do not meet minute/attendance time thresholds above, then they can generate funds through the asynchronous method, assuming they meet the daily asynchronous progress requirements as defined in the asynchronous instruction plan (and would be marked Present-Asynchronous).
- If the students receiving remote instruction on a given day are in grades PK-2, then they can only generate funds through the asynchronous method, even if their instruction does include synchronous delivery, assuming they meet the daily asynchronous progress requirements as defined in the asynchronous instruction plan (and would be marked Present-Asynchronous).

NEW
7/7/2020

36. My LEA wants to offer a hybrid on campus and remote instructional model (on and off campus on varying days/weeks) for different groups of students in several grades. Can I require students to participate in this hybrid model? *NEW July 7, 2020*

LEAs cannot offer *only* an intermittent on-campus attendance option for any given grade. Students may choose to opt in to receive hybrid instruction, but, **in order for the LEA to be eligible to receive funding for remote instruction for any student for any day, the LEA must offer sufficient on-campus instruction in every grade so that every parent has an on-campus attendance option every day for their student in the LEA**, excluding COVID-19 closures (described below). A campus (or portion of a campus) may establish hybrid instruction as long as another nearby campus (or portion of the same campus) in the LEA is available to provide on-campus only instruction to students whose parents request such instruction.

Note: in the event an LEA does not offer a daily on-campus instructional experience at a given campus and as a result some students would not attend on campus at their typical campus, LEAs must continue meeting the individual needs of all affected students.

NEW
7/7/2020

37. **If one of my campuses (or my entire LEA) closes because of a confirmed positive case of COVID-19, can my LEA decide to simply switch over to 100% remote instruction for the rest of the school year for that campus (or for my entire LEA)?** *NEW July 7, 2020*

No. For any day an LEA closes a campus as a result of a confirmed COVID-19 case on campus, remote instruction will be funded. However, to allow sufficient time to resolve the public health concerns while minimizing academic disruption, campuses may only remain closed to on-campus instruction for up to five consecutive days (including the original closure) day, while drawing funding for all students participating in remote instruction. A closure period does not end until the campus has reopened for on-campus instruction for at least one instructional day.

NEW
7/7/2020

38. **If one of my teachers or principals believes that a student would be better served via one of the remote instructional methods instead of via on-campus instruction, can my LEA require that student to stay home to receive remote instruction?** *NEW July 7, 2020*

No. Unless a student is lab-confirmed to have COVID-19, is symptomatic for COVID-19, or is determined to be a close contact to an individual lab-confirmed to have COVID-19, the student must be allowed to receive on-campus instruction, if that instructional setting is desired by the parent. Except as may occur during the start-of-year transition period described below, students receive remote instruction solely at the discretion of their parents or legal guardians. As noted elsewhere in this FAQ, in the event a parent chooses remote instruction for their child, an LEA may, if the LEA believes it is in the student's educational interest, choose to limit the student's return to an on-campus setting to occur only at the end of a grading period (e.g. 6-week or 9-week). However, LEAs cannot require a student to remain in remote instruction for the entirety of a semester. Parents are not required to make this commitment more than two weeks prior to the beginning of any grading period.

NEW
7/7/2020

39. **Can I establish a phased return to on-campus instruction to ensure my public health procedures are fully up and running?** *NEW July 7, 2020*

As part of a start-of-year transition period, for up to the first three weeks of your instructional calendar, you may limit the number of students who otherwise access on campus instruction. This could be done by capacity limit by classroom across all grades, a limited number of grades starting by day, or some similar means, and could include being fully remote during this period. However, during this transition window, you are still required to allow all students to access on campus instruction who come from households without internet access or appropriate remote learning devices. All parents who want on campus instruction must be provided that on campus attendance for their students at the immediate conclusion of the transition period (as opposed to the end of the first grading period, when parents otherwise choose remote instruction). The mechanism to limit access during this period should be clearly communicated to families in advance.

Enrollment

1. **For parents who wish to enroll or reenroll their homeschooled students, must they come from an accredited program?** *Posted June 30, 2020*

Students who meet age and residency requirements must be enrolled, and LEAs should follow their local policies to determine grade level placement for all new enrollees. Homeschooled

students who were not enrolled in a Texas public school during the 2019–2020 school year may not generate funding if the students will only be attending school through a remote synchronous or asynchronous method. Please see the question above in the Attendance section above for additional information.

2. When is a student considered to be enrolled in my LEA for purposes of determining the daily enrollment count? *Posted June 30, 2020*

Students who are on campus receiving instruction are considered enrolled when they are physically present for the first time during the official attendance period. Except for students who attended a private school, including being homeschooled, in Texas the prior year, students who are receiving remote synchronous or asynchronous instruction are considered enrolled on the first day the student participates through one of the engagement methods listed in this document.

PEIMS Attendance Reporting

1. How will my LEA report days present and absent for the remote synchronous and remote asynchronous instruction methods? *Posted June 30, 2020*

New PEIMS data elements will be created to report Remote Synchronous (RS) Eligible Days Present and Remote Asynchronous (RA) Eligible Days Present. The LEA will need to track the instructional method in which the student is participating each school day. Days Present will need to be identified as days present in the RS method or days present in the RA method. Absences will not need to be distinguished between instructional methods.

There are no changes to the way on-campus Days Present and Days Absent will be reported.

- The teacher will identify the student as present on-campus, remote synchronous present, or remote asynchronous present or identify the student as absent. For both on-campus present and remote synchronous present, the student must be in attendance at the official attendance time, either in the class or online remotely to be counted present. To be counted as remote asynchronous present, the student does not have to be present at a designated official attendance time but must be engaged in one of the following ways during that day:
- Shown daily progress in the Learning Management System (LMS), as defined in the approved learning plan; or
- Daily progress via teacher-student interactions, as defined in the approved learning plan; or
- Completed/Turned-in assignments to the teacher (potentially via email, on-line, or mail).

The following table provides an example of how the attendance could be identified for a hypothetical student:

8/17/2020	Present
8/18/2020	Present
8/19/2020	Present
8/20/2020	Present
8/21/2020	Absent
And so on until 11/2/2020	
11/2/2020	RS Present
11/3/2020	RS Present
11/4/2020	Absent
11/5/2020	RS Present
11/6/2020	RS Present
And so on until 2/15/2021	
2/15/2021	Present
2/16/2021	Present
2/17/2021	Absent
2/18/2021	Present
And so on until 3/1/2021	
3/1/2021	RA Present
3/2/2021	Absent
3/3/2021	RA Present
3/4/2021	RA Present
3/5/2021	Absent

RS = Remote Synchronous RA= Remote Asynchronous

2. Will there be new data elements to report days present for ineligible students receiving remote instruction? *Posted June 23, 2020*

There will not be new data elements to report days present for ineligible students. Days Present for ineligible students will still be reported through the Ineligible Days Present data element.

3. Will my LEA be allowed to report perfect attendance for students on any of the remote instruction methods? *Posted June 23, 2020*

LEAs should report the appropriate days present and absent depending on the requirements listed throughout this document.

4. Will my LEA be able to report special program instructional settings (i.e. bilingual/ESL, special education, CTE, etc.) via the remote methods? *Posted June 23, 2020*

Yes, as long as those services are provided to students. LEAs will need to make decisions locally to account for the individual needs of special education students. New PEIMS data elements will be created to report remote synchronous and remote asynchronous days present in the special program areas (for example: **RS** Total Elig Bilingual/ESL Days Present, **RA** Total Elig Bilingual/ESL Days Present, **RS** Total Elig Residential Facility Days Present, **RA** Total Elig Residential Facility Days Present, **RS** Total Elig Preg Rel Svs Days Present **RA** Total Elig Preg Rel Svs Days Present).

5. How should I code OFSDP students who are served through the remote synchronous or asynchronous instructional methods? *Posted June 30, 2020*

ADA eligibility codes for Optional Flexible School Day Program (OFSDP) students must be changed to a regular ADA eligibility code (ADA 1-6) when instruction is no longer provided on campus and their instruction changes to one of the remote methods. Once the coding is changed, these students will generate funding based on daily attendance, as detailed in this document, instead of accumulating daily minutes. Once a student resumes on-campus instruction, their ADA eligibility code can be changed back to the OFSDP code, and they will resume accumulating daily minutes to generate funding.

6. When there are students from the same physical school receiving remote synchronous and asynchronous instruction, should the students in each of the instructional methods be reported on different tracks? *Posted June 23, 2020*

There is no reporting reason to separate students receiving instruction through different methods onto separate tracks. Students educated via the remote synchronous instruction method can be placed on the same calendar track as students being educated through the remote asynchronous instruction method.

7. Will the Summer PEIMS due date be changed (pushed back) for LEAs who choose to run an intersessional calendar, even though they may not be designated as a year-round LEA? *Posted June 23, 2020*

TEA will consider intersessional calendars the same as year-round calendars. LEAs registered with TEA with year-round tracks ending later than June 17, 2021, may delay PEIMS Summer resubmission until two weeks following completion of the latest year-round track or August 12, 2021, whichever comes first. However, the initial data delivery for submission 3 must still be made by June 17, 2021, for all LEAs. This initial submission of data will not necessarily include data through the end of the school year. In no case will any resubmission be processed after August 12, 2021. Data corrections made after August 12, 2021, will be processed by the State Funding Division.

8. Will crisis coding be required? *Posted June 30, 2020*

At this time, there are no crisis codes defined for the 2020-2021 school year.

9. For PEIMS purposes, will only one attendance type per day be reported? *Posted June 30, 2020*

Eligible Days Present will be reported by instructional method. Days present indicates the total number of days the student was present and eligible for Foundation School Program based on attendance taken during the official attendance period.

Calendars and Waivers

1. If my LEA experiences a COVID-19 closure during the school year and we continue to educate our students through the remote instructional methods, will I continue to earn minutes toward my 75,600 operational minute requirement while we are closed? *Posted June 25, 2020*

If your LEA continues to educate students by providing daily instructional minutes at the level necessary to earn full-day funding through one of the remote methods, you may claim the number of operational minutes that you would have claimed had school been operating normally.

2. Should I submit low attendance waivers if I experienced low attendance due to parent decisions to not send their children to school? [Posted June 25, 2020](#)

Not necessarily. LEAs should make every effort to support student instructional needs through the remote methods of instruction detailed in this document. LEAs should plan for students who are not on campus due to COVID-19 to receive instruction through a remote instruction method. The use of a remote instruction method for such students would result in engaged students being counted as remote synchronous present or remote asynchronous present, and those engaged students would not negatively affect LEAs' attendance rates. Low attendance waivers are generally only granted if enrolled students are absent due to health/safety/weather issues, and TEA currently has no plans to grant low attendance waivers for COVID-19 reasons unless:

- An LEA's school calendar continues to meet the 75,600 operational minute requirement without including the granted low attendance waiver minutes in the operational minutes calculation; and
- The LEA can provide a suitable reason as to why it could not educate students through one of the remote instruction methods on the day(s) for which the LEAs is requesting a waiver.

3. Will TEA be granting missed school day waivers if my schools are closed for on-campus instruction due to COVID-19? [Posted June 25, 2020](#)

The agency has no plans to issue missed school day waivers due to COVID-19 during the 2020–2021 school year to LEAs that do not offer remote instruction when campuses are closed. LEAs should plan for school closures during the upcoming school year and either build extra minutes into their calendar or be prepared to educate students through a remote instruction method during periods that on-campus instruction cannot be provided. LEAs that do not provide instruction to students through a remote instruction method when campuses are closed due to COVID-19 may need to add additional instructional days to their calendar to meet the 75,600 operational minute requirement.

4. How do I report my operational minute calendar when my LEA could potentially be educating students through both on-campus and remote instruction methods? [Posted July 2, 2020](#)

LEAs should already have a board-approved calendar in place for on-campus instruction that meets at least the 75,600 operational minute requirement. On-campus students and remote students can be reported on this calendar track and LEAs must ensure that days present are properly reported using the new PEIMS data elements that have been created to document how students are receiving instruction each day. All other calendar tracks (pre-kindergarten, alternative education, etc.) must also meet the minimum minute requirements of those tracks.

NEW
7/7/2020

5. Can an LEA claim the operational minutes that a campus operates for the students who receive remote instruction to meet the 75,600-minute requirement? *NEW July 7, 2020*

Because campuses are required to be open for on-campus instruction, LEAs will be accumulating daily operational minutes towards the minutes requirement even while some students are participating remotely. Campus daily operational minutes will be submitted as part of the LEA's summer PEIMS submission through the calendar track reporting process. All students who would normally be reported on a 75,600-minute calendar track can continue to be reported on this track even if they are provided instruction through a remote method during the week. The instructional minute requirements that are mandated as part of the synchronous learning model and detailed in the LEA's asynchronous learning plan are meant to ensure that student instructional needs are met during remote instruction and do not have an impact on the operational minute reporting requirement.

TEA



**Guidebook for
Back to School
Planning**



Disclaimer

The situation surrounding COVID-19 is dynamic and rapidly evolving on a daily basis. This document is not and is not intended to: (i) constitute medical or safety advice, nor be a substitute for the same; nor (ii) be seen as a formal endorsement or recommendation of a particular response. As such you are advised to make your own assessment as to the appropriate course of action to take, using this document as guidance. Please carefully consider local laws and guidance in your area, particularly the most recent advice issued by your local (and national) health authorities, before making any decision.

Outline



Guidebook overview and purpose



Leadership and planning considerations



Recommended action steps

The situation surrounding COVID-19 is dynamic and rapidly evolving on a daily basis. This document is not and is not intended to: (i) constitute medical or safety advice, nor be a substitute for the same; nor (ii) be seen as a formal endorsement or recommendation of a particular response. As such you are advised to make your own assessment as to the appropriate course of action to take, using this document as guidance. Please carefully consider local laws and guidance in your area, particularly the most recent advice issued by your local (and national) health authorities, before making any decision.

Guidebook overview

Purpose of this guidebook

This guidebook **aims to**:

- Assist LEAs in taking a data-driven approach to assessing their local context and engaging with stakeholders to identify the back-to-school scenario aligned to community needs and requirements of the state
- Assist LEAs in selecting/designing an informed model(s) for their context, and the subsequent development of detailed academic and operational plans for SY20-21
- Emphasize specific requirements and considerations by functional area relevant to planning

This guidebook **is not**:

- A set of requirements or mandates for LEAs
- Legal/medical advice or consultation
- An inclusive list of all actions or considerations an LEA may take in response to the COVID-19 crisis or its back-to-school planning

Outline



Guidebook overview and purpose



Leadership and planning considerations



Recommended action steps

The situation surrounding COVID-19 is dynamic and rapidly evolving, on a daily basis. This document is not and is not intended to: (i) constitute medical or safety advice, nor be a substitute for the same; nor (ii) be seen as a formal endorsement or recommendation of a particular response. As such you are advised to make your own assessment as to the appropriate course of action to take, using this document as guidance. Please carefully consider local laws and guidance in your area, particularly the most recent advice issued by your local (and national) health authorities, before making any decision.

Leadership and planning

An initial action in planning for school re-opening is to assemble a **dedicated task force**. This group of leaders will act as the primary unit to:

- Engage various stakeholders
- Methodically evaluate their current circumstances and needs of their community
- Set up the structures for the school system in the fall
- Establish key communication channels

In some LEAs, the existing leadership team may form the basis of this task force; in others, school leaders, educators, family members and community stakeholders may also be involved

Action items:

1. Assemble a
“School Reopening” Task
Force at the LEA level

2. Create overarching
roadmap for school re-
opening

3. Monitor progress on
roadmap development and
implementation

Leadership and planning

1. Assemble a “School Reopening” Task Force at the LEA level

2. Create overarching roadmap for school re-opening

3. Monitor progress on roadmap development and implementation

- Consider appropriate composition of your LEA’s task force
 - LEAs are encouraged to include civic and community leaders, parent representatives and other relevant stakeholders as task force members / participants
- Designate a point person on the School Re-opening Task Force for each aspect of school reopening (i.e. academics, communications, health and safety, facilities / operations, local health agency point person etc.)
 - It is important that this group understand state guidance related to public health, on-campus instructional requirements, and funding methods.
- Designate a Task Force Coordinator to serve as the project manager so that efforts are coordinated across functional leads and neither duplicative nor contradictory

Leadership and planning

1. Assemble a
“School Reopening” Task
Force at the LEA level

2. Create overarching
roadmap for school re-
opening

3. Monitor progress on
roadmap development and
implementation

- Determine guiding principles, working norms, decision-making frameworks, and meeting cadence
 - *See following page for sample guiding principles for a strong start to SY20-21*
- Define and establish metrics for staff and student outcomes as well as school performance
 - This includes linking any monitoring mechanisms to the progress monitoring measures that are included in your required reading, math, and College, Career and Military Readiness (CCMR) goals under HB3
- Develop a timeline for communication with various stakeholders
 - Create communication plan/templates; provide support to schools for implementation.
- Determine which policies may require adjustments for continued remote learning or long-term closures during SY20-21 (e.g., waivers, enrollments, transfers, grading, attendance, hiring, etc.)
- Develop protocols for schools to transition between in-person, hybrid, and fully remote scenarios depending on current state and local public health circumstances.

Sample guiding principles for consideration

Sample priorities – *LEAs should develop locally-appropriate guiding principles*

- **Protect the health** of all students and staff and incorporate public health guidance
- **Incorporate feedback and ideas** from stakeholders including students, families, educators, and staff
- **Identify and meet the needs of students**, especially those most in need of additional support (e.g., younger learners, at-risk students, special education students, English learners, those without technology access, and those in key transition years, among others)
- Implement **high-quality curriculum** and instructional delivery mechanisms that can transition between on-campus, hybrid and remote instruction for all students
- Provide **mental health and wellness supports** for students and teachers, whether they are on-campus or remote
- **Build for long-term, sustainable change** in how we “do school.” Seek transformative changes that could persist beyond the current crisis.
- **Assume the need for iteration and improvement** during the course of the school year.

Leadership and planning

1. Assemble a
“School Reopening” Task
Force at the LEA level

2. Create overarching
roadmap for school re-
opening

3. Monitor progress on
roadmap development and
implementation

- **Set a timeline and milestones for back-to-school re-opening plan development**
 - Consider finalizing plan four to six weeks before schools open to allow time to solicit feedback and communicate plan to stakeholders
 - Lock in the design of the district and schools two to three weeks before the start of school
- **Regularly collect feedback and revise plan for back-to-school as necessary based on community feedback, local and national health guidance, and other factors such as staffing, budget, etc.**
 - Develop metrics and track progress
 - Reflect after 6 weeks on the transition to back-to-school and make adjustments based on stakeholder feedback and learnings

Outline



Guidebook overview and purpose



Leadership and planning considerations



Recommended action steps

The situation surrounding COVID-19 is dynamic and rapidly evolving, on a daily basis. This document is not and is not intended to: (i) constitute medical or safety advice, nor be a substitute for the same; nor (ii) be seen as a formal endorsement or recommendation of a particular response. As such you are advised to make your own assessment as to the appropriate course of action to take, using this document as guidance. Please carefully consider local laws and guidance in your area, particularly the most recent advice issued by your local (and national) health authorities, before making any decision.

Recommended action steps

- Once a School Reopening Task Force is assembled and initial planning considerations are addressed, LEAs can move into more detailed design and action planning
- The **action steps** outlined on the following pages suggest an order of operations recommended by TEA to support a planning process that:
 - Accounts for state requirements, stakeholder preferences and school system constraints
 - Drives the development of school models that are responsive, flexible and enable rigorous instruction for all students regardless of setting
 - Addresses the wide range of operational considerations that differ for SY20-21
 - Accounts for the need to iterate and continuously improve over SY20-21

Recommended action steps

- 1 Understand student learning needs, especially special populations, and family preferences
- 2 Consider organizational capacity and operational constraints
- 3 Design for instructional quality, coherence and continuity
- 4 Determine and develop the set of school models that meet the community needs
- 5 Address district-wide core operational considerations
- 6 Develop a plan to review, iterate, and continuously improve during SY20-21

1

Understand student learning needs, especially students with special needs

Student academic needs

Overview

Gather and assess school performance data

- Use available assessment data to identify specific schools that struggled more than others with maintaining student learning

Gather and assess student performance

- Use available assessment data to identify specific grade level, subject areas, and student groups that are in most need of additional academic support
- Deeply analyze data related to special populations to identify trends and needs



Considerations

- What percentage of students fall into high-needs categories? (e.g. – special education, EL, At-Risk, below grade-level etc.)
- How do performance or progress metrics vary across schools/grades/student groups?
- Which schools, grade levels or student groups seemed to be best served by different modes of remote instruction (synchronous, asynchronous)?
- Which students can benefit most from on-campus instruction?
- Which student groups need the most academic support and how can you provide it?

1

Understand family preferences

Family preferences for future learning

Overview

Understand how families experienced Spring 2020

- Survey families to understand their experience with spring 2020 learning

Understand family preferences for school for SY20-21

- Over the remaining weeks survey families to better understand their schooling needs and preferences for SY20-21



Considerations

- What were the differences in experiences of different student groups? How
- How do future preferences differ by student group, campus, or feeder pattern?
- How does campus safety and hygiene affect family preferences for on-campus instruction?
- Which families prefer or require on-campus instruction?
- Do families prefer synchronous or asynchronous remote instruction?



Resources

[TEA Survey Resource](#)

Recommended action steps

1 Understand student learning needs, especially special populations, and family preferences

2 Consider organizational capacity and operational constraints

3 Design for instructional quality, coherence and continuity

4 Determine and develop the set of school models that meet the community needs

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6 Develop a plan to review, iterate, and continuously improve during SY20-21

2

Consider organizational capacity and operational constraints

Health and safety guidance and constraints

Overview

- **Read and understand available public health guidance and assess community health data**
 - LEAs should establish regular communication with local public health entities to assess status of COVID-19 in the local community
 - LEAs should review state, local and federal health guidance



Considerations

- **Develop a plan for on-campus activities and instruction**
 - Determine district policies and procedures to Prevent, Respond to, and Mitigate COVID-19 spread, consistent with public health guidance.
 - Post plan on district website
 - Develop communications to share policies with district stakeholders, including parents, teachers and staff, as well as other local entities.
 - Work closely with local public health entities to ensure that they are prepared to collaborate in the event Response activities are needed.



Resources

Public Health Operational Guidebooks coming soon

2

Consider organizational capacity and operational constraints

Technology access

Overview

- **Assess data on device access/deployment and connectivity for families**
 - Identify where gaps may have existed this spring, and implications for student learning in a hybrid or fully remote model in SY20-21
 - Conduct an inventory of technology and devices; plan for device inventory, repair, and maintenance
 - Develop plan for device distribution for fall and the rest of SY20-21
 - Assess IT support system and gaps

Considerations

- What percent of your families required support for access to device(s) or connectivity in the spring?
- How did your LEA provide IT services to students and educators who needed support?
- What additional technology needs does your LEA foresee if remote learning is required in SY20-21?
- How has assistive technology for students with disabilities been considered in planning?
- Are there investments that your LEA would need to make to support a more successful remote learning experience for students?

More details found in Action Step 6: Technology



Resources

[TEA Survey Resource](#)

[TEA Reflection Tool](#)

2

Consider organizational capacity and operational constraints

Talent

Overview

Understand your talent and staffing pool circumstances

- Analyze your staff capacity using the 2x2 on the next slide

Identify staffing and staff deployment solutions

- Identify additional staff who can, if need be, be trained and deploying in support of instruction or intervention
- Identify educator training needs



Considerations

- Leverage data collected via the educator survey and reflection resources to understand staffing constraints and opportunities (*See next slide*)
 - Examine your staffing constraints to determine who is able to teach on-campus. Consider how many educators can / want to work on-campus, how many educators prefer to continue as remote instructors, and how many educators may be unable to teach on-campus due to health concerns
 - Assess which educators may be better suited to teach in each modality (e.g., on-campus, remote and within remote instruction asynchronous or synchronous), such as who was most effective teaching remote and who better serves students on-campus



Resources

- [TEA Survey Resource](#)

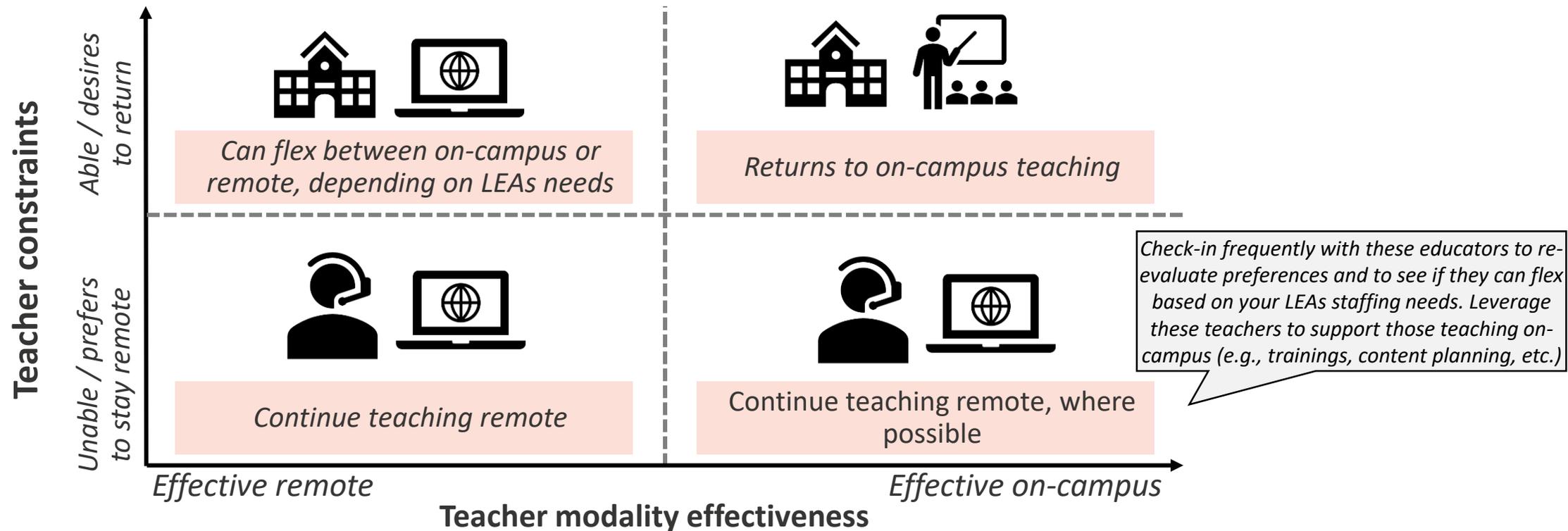
- [TEA Reflection Tool](#)

2

Consider organizational capacity and operational constraints

Talent

- Determine which of your educators fall into each quadrant, use the data to inform staff deployment and school model development



2

Consider organizational capacity and operational constraints

Space

Overview

Understand capacity constraints

- Review the footprint of existing school buildings to assess the impact of public health requirements or family preference on the allowable number of individuals (students, teachers, and staff) in each room
- Assess size and opportunity to use non-traditional spaces as classrooms when available (i.e. underutilized secondary buildings, churches, community centers)
- Identify specific space and building needs for students with disabilities or special needs
- Prepare for contingency plans in the event public health guidance changes



Considerations

- Key datapoints to collect:
 - How many buildings are available?
 - How much square footage is available?
 - How many classrooms do you have?
- Key questions to address as an LEA:
 - How might your LEA best utilize available space to meet the unique needs of your students and communities?
 - How might your LEA consider the needs of students with specific disabilities who require access to particular physical equipment/space?
 - What schedule / space adaptations might your LEA consider to improve the safety of students and staff in the fall (e.g., additional hand-washing stations, one-way hallways, etc.)?



Resources

[TEA Survey Resource](#)

[TEA Reflection Tool](#)

Recommended action steps

1 Understand student learning needs, especially special populations, and family preferences

2 Consider organizational capacity and operational constraints

3 Design for instructional quality, coherence and continuity

4 Determine and develop the set of school models that meet the community needs

5 Address district-wide core operational considerations

6 Develop a plan to review, iterate, and continuously improve during SY20-21

3 Design for instructional quality, coherence and continuity



Recommendation

- To ensure a consistent and high-quality learning experience, despite the challenging circumstances LEAs, should address three key issues:

1

High-quality instructional materials

TEA recommends that instructional materials be designed for instructional continuity (able to be used on-campus and remote)

2

Diagnostics and student progress monitoring

TEA recommends a consistent method of diagnosing student learning needs and monitoring student progress

3

Build educator capacity

TEA recommends you build educator capacity for delivering instruction in different modes

All designs should prioritize the needs of high need student populations

3 High quality instructional materials



Recommendation

1

High-quality instructional materials

TEA recommends that instructional materials be designed for instructional continuity (able to be used on-campus and remote)

Deploy high-quality instructional materials

- Evaluate all instructional materials to ensure they are providing TEKS-aligned grade level content
- Where possible, and especially in Math and English Language Arts, select instructional materials that can be delivered on-campus or remotely without a break in instructional continuity
- If instructional materials are not designed to be delivered both on-campus and remotely, then quickly develop adaptations that allow for instructional continuity
- Consider different tools and software that can supplement synchronous teacher-led instruction



Resources

www.texasresourcereview.org
www.texaslearning.org

3

High quality instructional materials, designing for students with special needs



Recommendation

1

High-quality instructional materials

TEA recommends that instructional materials be designed for instructional continuity (able to be used on-campus and remote)

Ensure design for all students

- Deliver accommodations as detailed in individual student IEPs or 504s, and or mandated language services for English learners, regardless of the method of instructional delivery (remote synchronous, remote asynchronous, in person, hybrid)
- Provide and connect students in special populations with the relevant resources to access material (e.g. screen magnifiers, adapted keyboards etc.)
- Ensure that staffing decisions appropriately account for supporting the needs of special populations regardless of the scenario that a school or LEA is facing
- Train relevant staff on supporting special needs students in this unique and challenging time

3 Diagnostics and student progress monitoring



Recommendation

2

Diagnostics and student progress monitoring

TEA recommends a consistent method of diagnosing student learning needs and monitoring student progress

Ongoing Student Progress Monitoring

- Use frequent formative assessments to gauge student progress and to adapt curriculum pace to support students
- Use student assessment results (exit tickets, quizzes etc.) to track student progress and adjust
- Consider using curriculum-aligned formative assessments developed by your LEA to correspond to scope and sequence
- As much as possible, ensure this progress monitoring occurs in your Learning Management System

3

Diagnostics and student progress monitoring, design for students with special needs



Recommendation

2

Diagnostics and student progress monitoring

TEA recommends a consistent method of diagnosing student learning needs and monitoring student progress

Ensure design for all students

- Ensure that any diagnostic or related assessment is accessible to all students, including those who may have a disability, such as a visual or auditory impairment, and provide access to any assistive devices needed.
- Monitor student progress in special populations versus the general population for signs of discrepancy in order to course correct by realigning resources
- Maintain strong communication with the families of students in special populations, continuing to gather feedback and to support them and their students

3 Building educator capacity



Recommendation

3

Build educator capacity

TEA recommends you build educator capacity for delivering instruction in different modes

Develop educators for the new environment

- Offer immediate and ongoing professional development focused on effective remote instruction, including synchronous, asynchronous, and blended delivery
- Offer professional development on supporting students' mental health and wellness needs upon either a return to school on-campus or remotely, **especially for students with special needs**
- Define the scope and sequence of professional development that provides initial, on-going, and embedded curriculum specific training
- Establish a Professional Learning Community (PLC) or Community of Practice group to provide teachers teaching in different settings with a forum for sharing leading practices and supporting each other

Recommended action steps

1 Understand student learning needs, especially special populations, and family preferences

2 Consider organizational capacity and operational constraints

3 Design for instructional quality, coherence and continuity

4 Determine and develop the set of school models that meet the community needs

5 Address district-wide core operational considerations

6 Develop a plan to review, iterate, and continuously improve during SY20-21

4

Determine and develop the right set of school models

- Once you have analyzed your student needs, organizational capacity, operational constraints, and developed a strong foundation for high quality instruction you will need to determine the set of school options that best meet the needs of your community.
- Those school options will fall into three categories:

On-campus

District develops option for students to participate on-campus instruction 100% of the time

Remote

District develops option for students to participate in remote learning 100% of the time

Hybrid

District develops option for students to participate in an intentionally-designed mix of on-campus and remote learning

4 Districts must provide a fully on-campus option



Requirement

- Districts must guarantee that daily on-campus instruction is available for every family and student who requests it.

On-campus

District develops option for students to participate on-campus instruction 100% of the time

4 Districts must provide additional options



Recommendation

- Once the district has fulfilled the requirement to provide daily on-campus instruction to every family and student who request it, the district can consider additional learning options.

Remote

District develops option for students to participate in remote learning 100% of the time

Hybrid

District develops option for students to participate in an intentionally-designed mix of on-campus and remote learning

4

To determine the right set of schools, review data from Action Step 1 and Action Step 2



Recommendation

- First, identify the students who could most benefit from on-campus instruction
 - *Students with special needs*
 - *Students in early grades (PK-2)*
 - *Students with significant learning losses (due to Spring 2020 experience) or learning gaps*
 - *Students without reliable access to technology*
 - *Students who reported struggling with remote/distance learning during spring 2020*
 - *Students in key transition years (6th and 9th grade)*
 - *Students whose family members hold jobs that cannot be worked remotely*
- Second, encourage all families, but especially those with students listed above, to enroll for daily on-campus instructional options
 - *Will specific, low student density schools/wings be necessary to support some of these students given family concerns?*

4

To determine the right set of schools, review data from Action Step 1 and Action Step 2



Recommendation

- Third, identify all students who intend to attend daily on-campus instruction
 - *As soon as possible, survey families on their preference for school model type, be sure to survey by campus*
 - *Two weeks before school begins, ask your parents to register for a specific school model type*
 - *Reminder: districts must make daily on-campus instruction available for every family that requests it. There can be no caps or limits on the number or percentage of students accessing daily on-campus instruction.*
 - *When requesting registration ensure the school model (on-campus, remote, hybrid) is clearly described so parents are fully aware of the option they are registering for*
- Fourth, consider staff availability for daily on-campus teaching
 - *See slide #20 for considerations*
- Fifth, consider how many students and staff can be safely accommodated on district campuses
 - *This will be dictated by evolving public health guidance from federal, state, and local health authorities*

4

Ensure your daily on-campus models are developed to be resilient and able

- On-campus models should be developed to ensure personalized learning plans that lead to accelerated student learning
- Resilient on-campus models ensure a mix of synchronous, asynchronous and small group instruction occurs
- Staff are deployed to their strengths, with some teachers specializing in lesson delivery, others as learning guides
- They are powered by high-powered digitally native instructional materials that can be deployed in multiple settings, aligned assessments, and student progress monitoring tools and Learning Management System
- They have extended days and extended years that allow for make-up days, if need be
- They are capable of quickly pivoting to remote learning, if circumstances require it

4

Overview of the dimensions of a resilient on-campus model



Student Population

- **All students** have the option to return to **on-campus learning**



Curriculum & Progress Monitoring

- **Digitally native** instructional materials
- Supplemented by **software designed for blended learning**
- Operationalized by a **Learning Management System**



Academic Delivery

- **Synchronous** instruction delivered by specialized teachers
- **Asynchronous** instruction facilitated by learning coaches
- Small groups and intervention supported by specialists



Schedule

- **Extended year**, affords make-up days
- **Extended day**
- Schools open from 6:30am-4:30pm
- Station rotation within class blocks
- Teachers rotate rooms



Staff Deployment

- **Teachers specialize** in synchronous instruction, asynchronous learning guides, or small group specialists
- Teacher strengths drive student progress



Space Utilization

- Creatively **utilize free spaces** (e.g., foyers, gyms, etc.) as classrooms
- Allows “classes” to be split between 2 rooms, reducing number of students in each space

Culture

- **Personalized learning plans** drive student engagement and interest
- Community will be fostered in student cohorts that are changed every quarter

4

Determine the remaining set of school options that you need to develop



Recommendation

Once districts have ensured that every family requesting daily on-campus instruction, you should turn your attention to considering and possibly developing alternative models:

Remote

District develops option for students to participate in remote learning 100% of the time

Hybrid

District develops option for students to participate in an intentionally-designed mix of on-campus and remote learning

4

Determine if and how you will provide a remote learning option



Recommendation

- Your survey data should help you determine what percentage of students will opt out of daily on-campus instruction and into full time remote learning or, if you offer it, hybrid learning
 - *Even if you have a small percentage of students that opt for remote learning TEA recommends that you develop a remote model to be deployed in the event local circumstances change*
- Your organizational capacity analysis should help you determine which teachers are able or desire to teach remotely
 - *Within this pool of educators you should seek to identify which teachers are more capable remote instructors and which are better deployed as small group or 1:1 support for students*

4

Determine if and how you will provide a remote learning option



Recommendation

The district must answer several first-order questions about the type of remote learning options provided:

1

Will you provide a remote option?

TEA recommends you develop a remote option for the families that request it. You can also enrollment out of boundary students in your remote school.

2

If so, will you provide a single district-wide remote school for all students in the district who indicate they will want fully remote instruction?

TEA recommends you consider a single remote option for the district, which allows you to focus talent and planning.

3

Or will you offer multiple fully remote options?

See the next slide for additional considerations.

4

Determine if and how you will provide a remote learning option

The district must answer several first order questions about the type of remote learning options provided:

3

If you offer multiple options, how will you determine those options?

One remote option at every campus?

Affords students familiarity with teachers from zoned school but requires significant demand for it at each campus.

One remote option for each feeder pattern?

May make sense if feeder patterns have aligned curriculum & programming that can be designed to span model types.

One remote option for each specialty school?

If your district has multiple specialty schools (ex. IB), consider remote options to maintain the specialty offering.

4

Determine if and how you will provide a hybrid learning option



Recommendation

- Hybrid models are intentionally designed to offer students a mix of on-campus and remote learning experiences.
 - *For example, a school that has groups of students on-campus at different times using AB schedules.*
- You will need to balance demand for hybrid models with your ability to staff and operationalize such models.
 - *Hybrid models have many dimensions and can be difficult to operationalize. Both staffing and curricular choices must be intentionally organized to ensure students can reach mastery in the hybrid setting.*

4

Determine if and how you will provide a hybrid learning option

If you decide to offer a hybrid school model there are several key decisions to be made about the structure of that model:

1

How to group students into different “tracks”?

TEA recommends you consider student academic need in developing the groups.

2

How many tracks and how to structure the rotations?

TEA recommends that at least one of the tracks must include a 5-day a week on-campus option

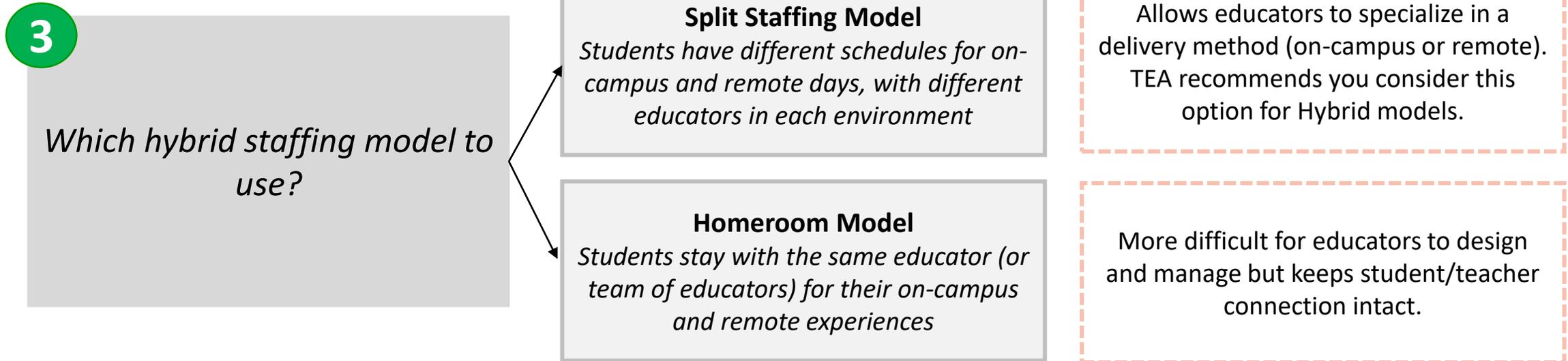
3

Which hybrid staffing model to use?

TEA recommends you consider using the “split staffing” model described on the next slide

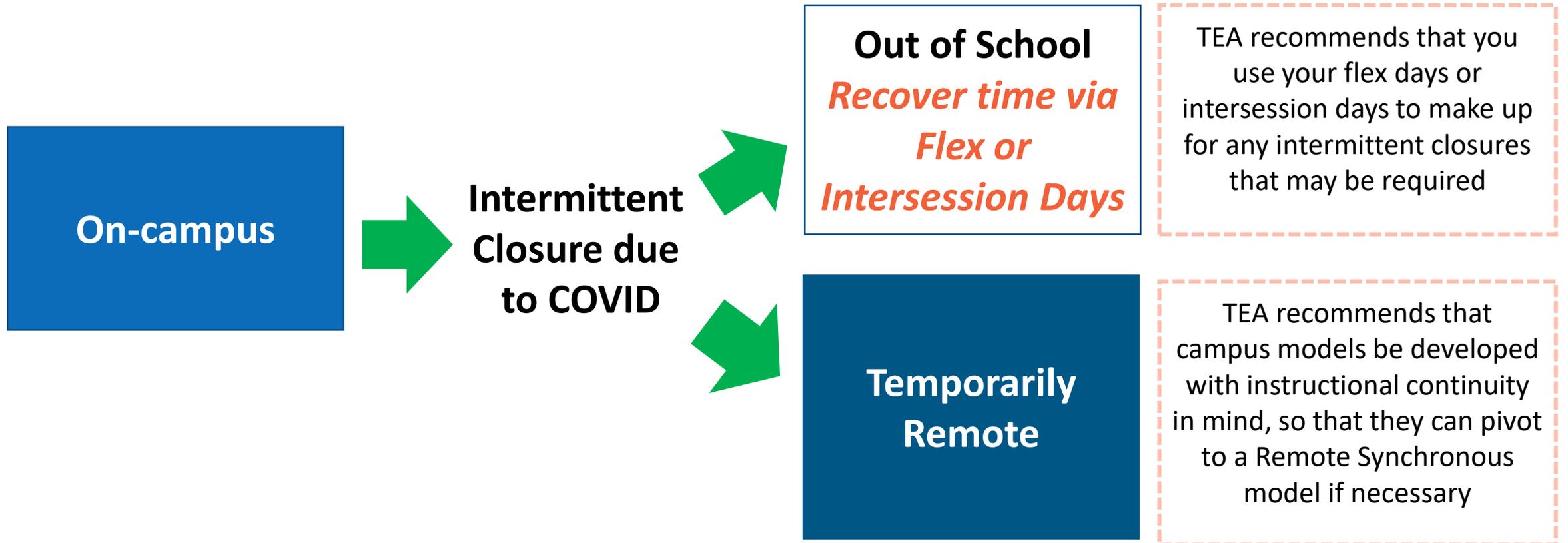
4 Determine how you will staff any hybrid model you offer

If you decide to offer a hybrid school model there are several key decisions to be made about the structure of that model:



4 Some campuses will experience intermittent closures

On-campus instruction may experience intermittent closures requiring remote learning option



4

Some students will move between models during the school year



Consideration

- Regardless of the set of school models and options that the district provides for SY20-21, there is likely to be student movement across models
- This is true even for districts that plan to deliver only daily on-campus schooling
 - *Every district should be prepared for instructional continuity in the event that 1) there is a COVID case on campus or 2) the local or statewide public health situation requires the intermittent or extended closure of schools*
- Understanding the range of student movements can be useful in developing necessary plans for curricular coherence, instructional continuity and other district-wide supports

4

Some students will move between models during the school year

Students may transition between learning modalities throughout the course of the year

Example student: Alex



- Alex started SY20-21 year on-campus
- During the semester, the school was closed due to a case of COVID-19 detected on-campus, and Alex began remote learning
- Alex's family decided to continue learning remote for the remainder of the semester, though his school reopened

Example student: Diana



- Diana began SY20-21 learning remotely due to family concerns with the local public health situation
- As the semester went on, the local public health situation improved and Diana's family decided to return to on-campus learning
- Diana completed the SY20-21 school year on-campus

4

School design should account for the various scenarios by building a strong foundation

- TEA recommends you strongly consider the ensuring that instructional materials, student progress monitoring, and educator development be consistent

On-campus

Remote

Hybrid

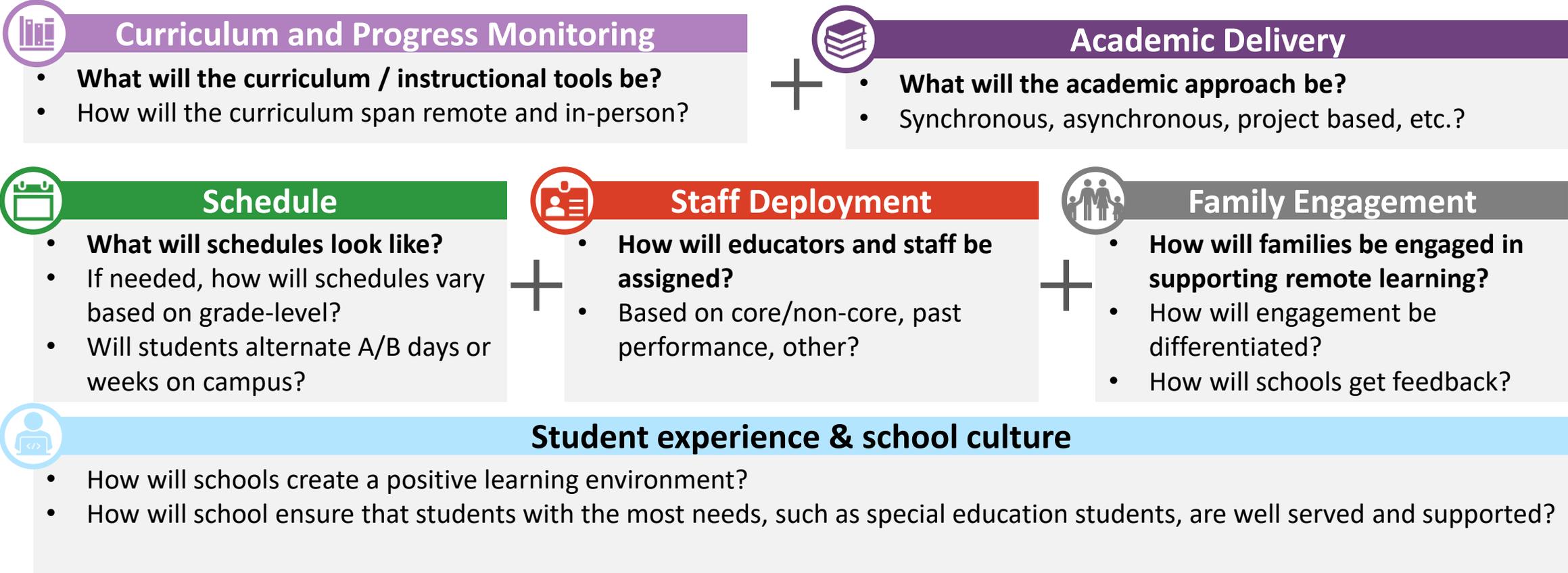
Coherence and usability of instructional materials across models

Consistent student progress monitoring across models

Support educator understanding and capacity to deliver across multiple options

4 After determining the mix of models provided, design the specific model

Every school model, whether on-campus, remote, or hybrid must address key design elements:



All designs should prioritize the needs of high need student populations

3

Sample school models

- On Thursday, July 16 TEA will release sample school models that include staffing models, schedules, and key aspects of curriculum and academic delivery. Sample school models will include:

1

Resilient Daily On-Campus Models

- Elementary School
- Middle School
- High School

These models are developed to be able to pivot to remote learning if circumstances require it

2

Remote Models

- Elementary School PK-2
- Elementary School 3-5
- Middle School, mostly synchronous
- High School, mostly synchronous
- High School, mostly asynchronous

These models are developed to be intentionally remote

3

Hybrid Models

- Elementary School Dual Track, including 5-day on campus
- Middle School Hybrid
- High School Hybrid

These models seeks to ensure as many students as possible attend on campus, even if it is on rotating days

Recommended action steps

1 Understand student learning needs, especially special populations, and family preferences

2 Consider organizational capacity and operational constraints

3 Design for instructional quality, coherence and continuity

4 Determine and develop the set of school models that meet the community needs

5 Address district-wide core operational considerations

6 Develop a plan to review, iterate, and continuously improve during SY20-21

5

Address district-wide core operational considerations

- In addition to the instructional quality, coherence and continuity recommendations provided in Section 3, there are a set of district-wide processes that districts must plan for:
 1. Special Education
 2. Calendar
 3. Enrollment and registration
 4. Family communications
 5. Technology access
 6. Mental health and wellness
 7. Transportation
 8. Public health

5 Special Education



Considerations

- **Continue convening all regularly scheduled IEP and progress monitoring meetings**
 - Use time in these meetings to review relevant goals and service delivery in the context of the current educational setting based on the school model and/or instructional delivery model for those specific students.
- **Document in detail any unavoidable deviations in providing FAPE due to extenuating or changing circumstances resulting from COVID-19, communicate proactively with families regarding such situations and make every reasonable effort to resume service provision.**
 - Use documentation to make any necessary decisions regarding compensatory services or extended school year options
- **Understand and account for student privacy requirements under HIPAA, IDEA and FERPA**

5 Special Education



Resources

- [TEA COVID-19 FAQ: Privacy and FERPA Considerations for Virtual Instruction](#)
- [TEA COVID-19 FAQ: Special Education in Texas](#)
- [US DOE Supplemental Fact Sheet: Addressing the Risk of COVID-19 in Pre-school, Elementary and Secondary Schools While Serving Children with Disabilities](#)
- [CDC Q&A on Providing Services To Children With Disabilities During The Coronavirus Disease 2019 Outbreak](#)

5 Calendar

Overview

School closures and the COVID-19 crisis could result in learning losses of up to a full year beyond what normally occurs during summer.



As such, an amended calendar may better support student learning and address learning losses, as well as offer time to teachers adapting their craft for unprecedented times.



Resources

- [2020-2021 Calendar Guidance and FAQs](#)
- [HB3 Additional Days School Year \(ADSY\) FAQs](#)
- [Intersessional Calendar Options for SY20-21](#)
- Example Texas ISD school calendars
 - [Example intersessional calendar with Additional Days School Year \(ADSY\)](#)
 - [East Chamber ISD](#)
 - [Clint ISD \(PK-5\)](#)
 - [Clint ISD \(6-12\)](#)



Considerations

- **Consider amending your school system’s current calendar to account for learning loss, address the need for teacher professional development, and to provide flexibility in the event of a COVID-19 resurgence.** This may include:
 - Adding additional days that can be flexed for instruction, remediation, and/or teacher PD
 - Starting the school year earlier or ending the school year later
- **Consider leveraging new calendar flexibilities allowed by TEA considering what is possible based on your LEA’s agreements with educator and other collective bargaining units**
 - Assess how an intersessional calendar might support the needs of your community
 - Evaluate the Additional Days School Year option for this year, or for future years
 - Consider offering additional school days for students who need remediation (e.g., Saturday school)

5 Enrollment and Registration

Overview

In order to appropriately plan for students learning modality and enable all families to register, new registration methods and policies may be considered





Considerations

- **Develop enrollment materials that clearly detail the options available to families**
 - To the extent the district or school is offering a mix of options between fully remote, hybrid and on-campus, provide enrollment information for each possibility so that families can make informed decisions
 - Consider instituting a certain date by which students/families should register for the option they prefer, and the ability to select and move between options throughout the school year
- **Provide families with clear guidance on enrollment procedures**
 - Reach out to families, particularly in transition grades (K, 6th, 9th), via multiple channels (mailing, phone calls, email etc.) regarding the enrollment process for SY20-21
 - Make sure that up to date enrollment information and FAQs are available via school and district websites as well as on-campus; consider posting visibly in other community spaces
- **Offer families both in-person and remote enrollment**
 - In the event that health considerations prevent a family from coming to a school or district office for enrollment, offer a remote enrollment via phone and/or online form **incorporating a mechanism for proof of residency (e.g. digital documents)**

5 Family communication

Overview

During this time, when health guidance, news events, and plans are rapidly evolving, it is critical for districts to constantly communicate with their communities.



Effective communication is key in building trust and buy-in from stakeholders, and it can combat the anxiety of uncertainty by offering a sense of clarity. In addition, communication is a two-way street; districts should strive to continually collect community feedback and actively invite others to engage in on-going discussions.



Resources

- [CDC Communication Resources](#)
- [TEA Survey Resource](#)
- [TEA Closure Guidance & Communication](#)
- [TEA Internet Safety: Communication](#)
- [NCDHHS Social Media Toolkit for COVID-19](#)

5 Family communication



Considerations

- **Develop a communication strategy for families and stakeholders including timeline on which documents to share, the schedule of release, and the appropriate audience, considering:**
 - Select mechanism(s) for communication:
 - Consider which communication channels are most effective for the community, and for what type of information (e.g. email, phone calls, webinars, video conference, text messages, social media, etc.)
 - Be clear about which channels you will use to share urgent news in the instance that an event such as a resurgence in COVID cases occurs
 - In addition to digital communication tools, consider distributing physical district / school communication flyers along with meal delivery / pick up in a remote/hybrid scenario
 - When communicating health guidance, use or link to information coming directly from reliable sources (official state websites, CDC, etc.)
 - Determine frequency of communications:
 - Announce communication timeline to stakeholders so people know when to expect what information
 - Maintain consistent schedule of communication (i.e. weekly community update calls that occur on the same day at the same time)
 - Be conscious not to overwhelm families with information overload; instead, communicate necessary information as clearly and simply as possible

5 Family communication



Considerations

- **Where possible, communicate new processes and/or process changes in advance**
 - For example, communicate to families your plan for addressing a resurgence in your local area or an infection on a campus
- **Be mindful of the audience in all communications**
 - Consider the audience range in all communications (i.e. families with students with disabilities, special needs, at-risk, etc.)
 - Make sure to include multi-language / translated versions of key documents for households where English is not the primary language
- **Collect up-to-date student, teacher, and staff contact information (e.g., phone number, e-mail, address, etc.)**

5 Technology access

Overview

This crisis has highlighted that technology and internet connectivity are no longer “nice-to-haves,” but are necessities for K-12 education.



Many students, especially those from economically disadvantaged families, may lack access to the devices or internet required for effective distance learning. School districts play a critical role in addressing accessibility barriers and providing students and educators with the technology they need to engage in a hybrid or remote learning environment.



Resources

- [TEA Information Technology FAQ](#)
- [TEA Guidance to Districts on Providing Internet to Students](#)
- [TEA FERPA and Virtual Learning](#)
- [TEA E-Rate Program](#)
(Classroom Connectivity project)
- [Opportunity Labs Initiative Return to School Roadmap – “Technology”](#)
- [TEA Technology Standards](#)
- [Additional Technology Resources](#)

5 Technology access



Considerations

- **Provide all students and staff with access to the necessary devices based on your LEA's back to school scenario, and accounting for the possibility of a transition to fully remote learning**
 - Assess feedback from stakeholder surveys on accessibility
 - If there are still gaps in device access across student population:
 - Determine appropriate number of new devices needed to support a remote learning scenario, accounting for idle devices in school facilities that may be distributed
 - Create a plan to distribute and return devices
 - Plan should include bagging, transportation, sanitizing, maintenance, and inventory
 - Select an issue-tracking approach and establish a process to return devices
 - Create a plan for device monitoring along with use policies



Considerations

- **Provide students and staff access to broadband connectivity as needed**
 - If there are still gaps in Wi-Fi access:
 - Look into partnerships with broadband Wi-Fi providers
 - Review available TEA resources for broadband
 - Establish hotspots and communicate with families on how to connect
 - Consider purchasing or partnering with providers to deploy hotspots to families in hard-to-reach areas or where full connectivity infrastructure does not currently exist
 - If relevant, post information on your LEA's website about how families can access the internet (for example: district-provided wi-fi access or mobile hotspots, any home device or hotspot programs your LEA has organized)

5 Technology access



Considerations

- **Organize and centralize software required for instruction**
 - Aim to create one location to house communication channels, family portals, course-required applications, etc. In many LEAs, a learning management system (LMS) may be able to provide a centralized, single sign-on destination for students, educators and parent to access relevant information
 - Consider leveraging Texas Home Learning 3.0 curriculum and/or learning resources if your LEA's curriculum design is not sufficiently flexible to support a hybrid learning model or transition to remote learning if required (*See Academics > Curriculum and content for additional information*)



Considerations

- **Review and implement data security and privacy measures**
 - Consider implementing a single sign on for ease of use for families and staff
 - Develop and/or reinforce Acceptable Use (AUP) and Responsible Use (RUP) policies

- **Establish systems for students, families and staff to access IT support both for training and for issues that arise**
 - Deliver IT support to families, staff, and remote educators, accounting for equity considerations as it relates to access to devices and internet
 - If you have not already, establish IT help desk for schools
 - Determine training needs for technology tools
 - Create self-help videos / tutorials and post on centralized resource website

5 Mental health and wellness

Overview

Our nation has suffered collective trauma due to events of this spring and summer, related to the COVID-19 pandemic, economic uncertainty, and racial injustice. Many students, families, and communities experienced loss, disruption, and uncertainty.



LEAs have an increasing responsibility to address the needs of the whole child, especially their mental health and wellness, in order to support students in making educational gains this fall and make up for lost learning time. In addition, we must account for the well-being of educators and staff who, likewise, have experienced challenges and hardship during this time.



Resources

- [TEA Remote Counseling and Student Support Services](#)
- [TEA Mental & Behavioral Health Support Resources](#)



Considerations

- **Provide teachers and staff with on-going training on school re-entry, grief, and trauma identification (in order to refer students to mental health services)**
- **Create clear protocols for staff to report trauma to relevant officials**
 - Offer a hotline or office hours with counselors, social workers, psychologists, and/or teachers where students can get help or speak with an adult
 - Check-in with educators and staff to determine their mental health needs and work with Human Resources / Employee Assistance to identify appropriate supports needed
- **Increase support staff including school counselors, social workers, and school psychologists needed to support students' well-being**
 - Consider the need to hire additional social workers, psychologists, nurses, and counselors



Considerations

- **Communicate mental health services to families and the community, particularly the highest needs families**
 - Provide telehealth / tele-counseling services for those remote in-part or in-whole
- **Build mental health programming into the curriculum**
 - Implement a character development program attending to mental health and social skills and/or whole child programming that connects academics to character
 - Create consistent opportunities for students to build school culture
 - Consider planning school spirit events, regardless of re-opening scenario



Considerations

- **If the district decides to provide hybrid schools of choice (not at every campus) then the district will need to consider developing new bus routes**
 - Evaluate placement of any hybrid schools of choice creating them as central to the student population opting into these models as possible
- **To further decrease density of students on buses consider district and campus campaigns for multi-modal transportation:**
 - Walk to school
 - Bike to school
 - Family drop off

5 Public health routines



Resources

Two resources coming soon:

- Public Health Procedures and Communications Guide
- Public Health Planning Exercises

The situation surrounding COVID-19 is dynamic and rapidly evolving on a daily basis. This document is not and is not intended to: (i) constitute medical or safety advice, nor be a substitute for the same; nor (ii) be seen as a formal endorsement or recommendation of a particular response. As such you are advised to make your own assessment as to the appropriate course of action to take, using this document as guidance. Please carefully consider local laws and guidance in your area, particularly the most recent advice issued by your local (and national) health authorities, before making any decision.

Recommended action steps

1 Understand student learning needs, especially special populations, and family preferences

2 Consider organizational capacity and operational constraints

3 Design for instructional quality, coherence and continuity

4 Determine and develop the set of school models that meet the community needs

5 Address district-wide core operational considerations

6 Develop a plan to review, iterate, and continuously improve during SY20-21

6

Develop a plan to review, iterate, and continuously improve during SY20-21

Review and iteration process



- It's important to plan now for evaluating early and often in SY20-21
- TEA recommends that LEAs conduct this process at the 6 and 12-week marks

**Survey students
/ families**

Consider asking student/families both qualitatively and quantitatively,

- How their experience has been with regards to content, instructional delivery, community/teacher engagement, mental health and well-being, and plans for learning location going forward

Survey teachers

Consider asking teachers both qualitatively and quantitatively,

- What challenges/successes they've faced in their current teaching environment, what professional development resources would be helpful, where they are experiencing hardship connecting with / engaging students, what their plans are for teaching location going forward

**Continuously
offer feedback
mechanisms**

- In addition to surveys, consider offering a hotline, web forum, and/or other feedback mechanisms for stakeholders
- Ensure that each family is contacted by staff at least once per six week period to assess their current needs and desires

Collect data

Collect data to inform plans going forward. This data may include, but is not limited to:

- Student performance, by and across campuses
- Student engagement, by and across campuses
- Local public health statistics (e.g., confirmed cases of COVID-19, deaths due to COVID-19, etc.)
- Technology access and needs
- Transportation usage
- Personal protective equipment (PPE), environmental sanitation, and hygiene supply use and needs
- Staffing vacancies or gaps

Review data

- Consolidate survey and other data
- Identify trends, needs, and gaps

Collect data

Deeply examine instructional quality, coherence and continuity of school models:

- Are instructional materials rigorous and challenging students?
- Are instructional materials designed to facilitate continuity between different education settings (on-campus and remote)?
- Do instructional materials require upgrading? If so, which grades and subjects?
- What additional development and support do educators need?

Review data

- Consolidate survey data
- Consolidate observation data (from classroom observations, whether on-campus or virtual)



Academic Delivery

- How are your school models – whether on-campus, remote or hybrid – meeting the needs of all students?
- How is the academic delivery model – whether synchronous, asynchronous or blended – meeting the needs of all students?



Curriculum & Progress Monitoring

- How are students progressing across TEKS with the current curriculum?
- Does the curriculum effectively transition across learning modalities (e.g., remote vs. on-campus)?



Schedule

- What adaptations can be made to the schedule to account for student learning losses?
 - To provide time for teachers to sufficiently plan?
 - To offer 1-on-1 and/or small group support to students?



Staff Deployment

- Are you leveraging your teachers to play to their strengths?
- Do all students have staff support / access?
- What trainings might educators benefit from?



Family Engagement

- What current supports are you providing to families? Do families find these sufficient / insufficient?
- What other supports would families benefit from?
- How are you addressing the needs of the whole child?

Leverage data and reflections to adapt and improve your LEAs and school strategies across these dimensions to support students and families

