VIRTUAL EDUCATION
IN VIRGINIA

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

VIRGINIA IS FOR LEARNERS

VIRTUAL VIRGINIA
VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

A Collection of Supports and Resources

MISSION

The mission of the Virginia Department of Education is to advance equitable and innovative learning.

VISION

Virginia will maximize the potential of all learners.

CORE SKILLS

The 5-C's are core skills that students and educators should possess:

- Critical Thinking
- Creative Thinking
- Communication
- Collaboration
- Citizenship

CORE VALUES

Core Values are values that every employee of VDOE should embody:

- Inclusion
- Excellence
- Service
- Optimism

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INTRODUCTION AND BELIEFS

The document provides support for Virginia school divisions with implementation and administration of successful virtual education programs. Virtual education is an instructional practice that uses digital technology to strengthen students' learning experience and improve educational outcomes. While virtual education utilizes digital technology, it relies on teacher facilitation to help students apply their learning in meaningful ways. The teacher uses various digital tools and practices, including instructional content, rich media, interactions (discussion boards, messaging, video communication, etc.), data and assessment systems, and feedback systems to receive timely and rich data used to guide learning tailored to individual student needs.

The Virginia Department of Education holds the following core beliefs about

—— VIRTUAL EDUCATION ——

- Virtual education involves a partnership between schools and families to make learning achievable for all students.

- Best practices for virtual education include a balance of virtual education with other offline opportunities for learning and feedback. It is not simply hours of screen time for teachers, parents, and students every day.

- Divisions should collaborate to implement a few high-quality, intuitive solutions for communication lines, teaching and learning, and student support.

- A daily routine of learning is valuable for overall success.

- Virtual education may not replicate a traditional "school day" at home but instead allows for alternative and innovative instructional strategies.

- Equity of resources should continue to be a significant priority for divisions. Critical factors for consideration are flexibility and providing information/instruction in a variety of ways.

- When implemented thoughtfully, technology can open doors and break down barriers for students and adults of all needs.

- Student privacy is a top priority.

- Maintaining effective communication between teachers, students, and families is a priority.

VIRTUAL EDUCATION DEFINITIONS

DIGITAL EDUCATION

A method of education in or out of school classrooms that uses digital technology to enhance learning experiences and promote educational outcomes.

LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (LMS)

A software application deployed on a wide scale for the delivery, administration, documentation, tracking, and reporting of educational courses or training programs. An LMS helps the online teacher deliver content to students, administer and analyze assessments, track student progress, and manage records.

VIRTUAL EDUCATION SETTING

A virtual program or school as defined below.

VIRTUAL COURSE

A course where teacher–led education takes place over the Internet, with the teacher and student separated geographically, using a virtual instructional delivery system which could include an LMS and video conferencing.

VIRTUAL SCHOOL

Organizations that work directly with students and deliver virtual learning services as a separate school within a division or region.

VIRTUAL PROGRAMS

Organizations that work directly with students and deliver virtual learning services, but are not "schools." Virtual programs in Virginia include Virtual Virginia and other school division initiatives.

VIRTUAL TEACHER

A teacher-of-record, instructing learning experiences in an online, virtual environment in which time and space separates teachers and learners.

MULTIDIVISION ONLINE PROVIDER (MOP)

As provided in § 22.1-212.23 et seq., the **Code of Virginia** allows school divisions to offer online instruction to students using a private organization,

educational institution, or nonprofit virtual school organization that meets Board of Education approval criteria to operate as a MOP. Entities seeking MOP approval from the Board of Education should review the instructions and approval process found on the Online Provider Application web page.

VIRTUAL LEARNING OPTIONS IN VIRGINIA

Virginia school divisions have the ability to offer virtual education options, therefore, students or parents should contact their school about exploring or enrolling in virtual education options offered by their division.

Virtual Learning Programs Developed by a School Division

School divisions may offer locally developed programs for part-time and full-time virtual learning that meet all local and state policies and regulations for public education. This guide provides support for divisions developing and operating a virtual learning program.

The Virginia Department of Education's (VDOE) Virtual Virginia Program

Virtual Virginia (VVA) offers online courses, digital content, and professional learning opportunities to Virginia's students and educators. VVA promotes equitable access for all learners—including underserved populations—to rigorous courses, high-quality instruction, and blended learning resources for schools in the Commonwealth and across the nation

VVA works in partnership with Virginia public school divisions to facilitate access to courses, content, and professional learning opportunities that may otherwise be unavailable due to a variety of circumstances, including but not limited to low enrollment, scheduling conflicts, or a lack of highly qualified instructors in specific subject areas. One of VVA's core commitments is to provide academic flexibility while preserving the autonomy of Virginia public school divisions in meeting the varied schedules, needs, and expectations of learners. All learners enrolled in VVA courses remain affiliated with their local schools and remain part of their schools' membership.

Virtual Learning Provided by Multidivision Online Providers (MOP)

MOPs supply virtual teachers coupled with virtual instruction to K-12 students. Providers may offer individual courses or a full array of courses as a virtual program provider contracted with a local school division. Approved MOPs and a list of the courses that they are approved to provide may be accessed via this online query tool. Additional information regarding the VDOE Multidivision Online Provider program can be found on the VDOE website.

POLICY

Legislation for the 2021-2022 School Year

During the 2021 legislative session, the General Assembly passed Senate Bill 1303 mandating the availability of in-person instruction for all students in the 2021-2022 school year. While the bill requires each school board to offer at least the minimum number of required instructional hours to any enrolled student during the 2021-2022 year, it also allows divisions to offer remote instruction to those students who elect that mode of participation. Senate Bill 1303 required the VDOE to establish benchmarks for successful virtual learning and guidelines for providing interventions to students who fail to meet such benchmarks and for transitioning such students back to in-person instruction. Below is the entirety of the guidance, which can also be found online here.

Local Virtual Learning Policy Considerations

To facilitate successful virtual learning in accordance with these guidelines, local school boards must establish a strong framework for student accountability, support, and intervention. Questions that local school boards may want to consider in establishing their local policies include:

1. What measures and/or expectations for virtual learning are already in place? Policies on measures and/or expectations for virtual learning should address technological access, attendance, student engagement, assignment submission, completion deadlines, among other key variables for success.

2. How will the division support and schools provide counseling to students and parents/families to determine which instructional environment may be the best fit for the student?

3. How will the division and schools support a student's ability to meet those expectations successfully and/or address potential barriers to success?

4. What student behaviors or characteristics related to established measures and/or expectations will trigger local action to (re)evaluate success and appropriate placement in a virtual setting?

5. What are the expectations for consistent communication and interaction between teachers and students that foster the development of relationships?

6. What are the expectations regarding appropriate synchronous and asynchronous instruction?

7. What resources will be provided to support students' social-emotional health and wellbeing?

8. What is the timetable for implementing the action plan/expectation contracts that are established? Is there a clear timetable and consequence for further adjustment if the student does not meet the terms of the contracts?

9. Have the above expectations and policies been clearly communicated to staff, students, and parents/caregivers before students embark on virtual learning?

ADMINISTRATION

Planning for Successful Virtual Learning

It is the responsibility of educators and educator leaders to provide each student an instructional modality that best supports their academic success. To that end, school divisions should establish expectations for determining academic success in virtual education. Before enrolling students in virtual programs, divisions should ensure that each student is able to meet/demonstrate the characteristics of a successful virtual learning student. Divisions may do this in a wide variety of ways. However, careful consideration should be given to each student individually before enrolling the student in virtual programs. Such consideration should include but is not limited to the following characteristics of successful learners. Information regarding effective practices in virtual learning can be found on the VDOE's Supporting Virtual Learning page. For those students who are unable to meet all such characteristics, divisions should consider if/how individualized student support may be provided to promote success.

SUCCESSFUL VIRTUAL STUDENTS

- have access to a learning environment that is conducive to learning that minimizes distractions and has access to tools necessary to support effective learning;

- have consistent access to high-speed Internet, online applications, and resources that support virtual learning;

- demonstrate attendance consistent with local policy;

- consistently engage in learning activities, as directed by the teacher;

- participate in regular communication with teachers to ask questions, receive feedback on submissions, and provide feedback on their personal strengths and challenges;

- submit assignments in a timely manner;

- consistently demonstrate mastery of learning in alignment with any individualized learning plans;

- participate in services and supports provided as part of existing individualized education programs (IEP) or other learning plans (Section 504);

- work independently and demonstrate effective organizational, time management, and self-advocacy skills; and

- demonstrate positive characteristics of digital citizenship and academic integrity.

Additionally, given their unique learning needs, divisions should carefully consider the appropriateness of full-time virtual learning for the following:

- younger learners;

- students with individualized education programs (IEP) or other learning plans (Section 504);

- disadvantaged students;

- English learners;

- students that have failed a Standards of Learning assessment; and

- students with inconsistent or inadequate access to technology.

INTERVENTION

School divisions should work in conjunction with teachers to consistently monitor the effectiveness and appropriateness of virtual learning for each student consistently and regularly. VDOE recommends (re)evaluations at regular intervals to ensure timely and responsive interventions to any issues or concerns. At a minimum, such (re)evaluations should happen at the end of each quarter or semester (for students eligible under IDEA). This review is recommended to occur every four weeks and/or as often as progress is reviewed and provided for non-disabled peers). For those student populations that may need additional review (see above), the division may want to establish a more regular (re)evaluation schedule.

The questions below establish benchmarks for evaluating whether the student has demonstrated the ability to meet and maintain each of the characteristics of a successful virtual student. This list of questions is not exhaustive, and divisions may elect to add other questions that help indicate whether additional supports are necessary. Some questions may be used to evaluate more than one characteristic.

SUCCESSFUL VIRTUAL LEARNING	DETERMINING THE NEED FOR INTERVENTION
Have access to a learning environment that is conducive to learning that minimizes distractions and has access to tools necessary to support effective learning.	• Is the student staying engaged in virtual learning environments? • Are they responsive when called on during synchronous lessons? • Are they responsive to correspondence, including chats or emails?
Have consistent access to high-speed Internet, online applications, and resources that support virtual learning.	• Does the student not have regular access to necessary devices? • Does the student have a dedicated device for instructional purposes? • Are there connectivity issues that prevent the student from staying logged on or engaged?
Demonstrate attendance consistent with local policy.	• How many absences has the student accumulated? • How many are excused or unexcused? • How many are the result of connectivity issues, not having access to devices, or other technology concerns?
Consistently engage in learning activities, as directed by the teacher.	• Is the student responsive when called upon? • Are they completing their work? • Are they engaging with their peers when required?
Participate in regular communication with teachers to ask questions, receive feedback on submissions, and provide feedback on their personal strengths and challenges.	• Are students communicating with teachers to receive feedback? • Are students communicating with teachers about their challenges?
Submit assignments in a timely manner.	• What percentage of assignments have been submitted late?
Consistently demonstrate mastery of learning in alignment with any individualized learning plans.	• Are students demonstrating appropriate levels of mastery?
Participate in services and supports provided as part of existing learning plans (Section 504 and Individualized Education Programs).	• Are students participating in necessary services and supports?
Work independently and demonstrate effective organizational, time management, and self-advocacy skills.	• Does the student complete assignments independently and ask questions as needed for clarification of assignment instructions? • Is the student exhibiting skills of a self-directed learner by engaging in course routines and meeting course expectations?
Demonstrate positive characteristics of digital citizenship and academic integrity.	• Is the student consistently demonstrating their own thinking with original work on assignments that represents high standards of academic integrity and ethics? • Is the student demonstrating positive interactions and engagement with peers in the virtual class environment?

Developing Action Plans

If students have demonstrated that they have not been successful in remote settings, school divisions may choose to start an intervention program by establishing an action plan or expectation contract with the student and parent. Action plans or expectation contracts should be clear, specific, and outline measures of student success and benchmarks for determining improvement within a predetermined timeline, similar to attendance plans for improvement.

Core components of student action plans or expectation contract should include

- specificity around those characteristics/benchmarks which students are not meeting consistently or are at risk of not being able to meet consistently;
- corresponding supports needed for student success;
- a plan for engaging parents/guardians or other individuals, including school staff, to provide said supports and promote student success;
- concrete and measurable steps metrics that will indicate improvement;
- clear expectations for student and teacher responsibility in improvement plans; and
- a timeline for reconsideration.

Instructional Program

Approved local curriculum for virtual learning programs must meet or exceed learning goals of the Virginia Standards of Learning. The instructional program offered to virtual students must meet the Standards of Quality (SOQ) requirements outlined in the *Code of Virginia,* the Board of Education's Standards of Accreditation (SOA), and allow students to meet graduation requirements. Key sections of the Board's SOA that guide the development of instructional programs include:

- 8VAC20-131-70 Program of instruction and learning objectives
- 8VAC20-131-80. Instructional program in elementary schools
- 8VAC20-131-90. Instructional program in middle schools
- 8VAC20-131-100. Instructional program in secondary schools

SCED CODE REQUIREMENTS AND LICENSURE

To collect accurate data for all Virginia courses, divisions may only use SCED codes included in the Virginia Active SCED Code list, available through the Master Schedule Collection page of the VDOE website. SCED codes utilized by each division, including for locally created courses, must only reflect codes from the updated Virginia Active SCED Code list in the Master Schedule Data Collection.

Divisions should review the approved licensure endorsement areas for each Virginia Active SCED Code to ensure proper licensure of school personnel assigned to teach each course. SCED codes are assigned based on the alignment of the course content to the code.

While school division courses must align to the content of the SCED code on the Virginia Active SCED Code list, it is not required that the title of the course offered in the division exactly match the title on the list. School divisions may use locally developed course titles that best reflect the content included in the local course.

Each year a school division may request the creation of new course codes that are not available on the Virginia Active SCED Code list by completing the form available on the VDOE Master Schedule Collection webpage. SCED code requests are accepted annually through the last Friday in March.

ELECTIVE COURSES

It may not be possible to provide every elective course for instruction via virtual learning. However, elective courses are an important part of a comprehensive and well-rounded program of public education, and many elective courses can allow students to explore various skills and interests virtually. A virtual learning program should ensure that students have access to a well-rounded education and allow them to meet graduation requirements for elective credits.

Staffing

LICENSURE

Virtual education programs must follow teacher licensure requirements of the Standards of Accreditation (SOA). In general, educators must be licensed and endorsed in the area they are teaching. The VDOE Licensure page lists licensure requirements.

Virtual education programs should use or employ educators licensed and endorsed in the area they are teaching. The VDOE website's Licensure page lists licensure requirements, which can also be found in the Board's Licensure Requirements for School Personnel (8VAC20-23).

STAFFING AND CLASS SIZE

The SOQ guide staffing and class sizes. Class sizes should be guarded and maintained at levels manageable and provide for quality instruction for all students. Class size regulations for Virginia public schools can be found in the the Virginia Board of Education document: Guidance Regarding Maximum Class Size and Student–Teacher Ratios (PDF). Teacher workload and planning period requirements are also outlined in the SOQ.

EQUITY AND STUDENT SERVICES

Virtual programs should ensure representation of diverse experiences and perspectives including, but not limited to racial, ethnic, language, religions, and gender groups and inclusion of content that represents, validates, and affirms diverse groups from different rings of culture. Students shall not be excluded from participating in courses provided by virtual programs.

Virtual programs must comply with all federal and state laws governing the education of all public school students. The responsible school division is required to provide services and counseling for special populations, students with disabilities, English Learners, gifted students, minority students, and/or economically disadvantaged students, in the virtual learning setting as in a brick and mortar setting.

Written documentation to support compliance includes evidence that no students are excluded based on services required for special populations and evidence that materials used in courses are in accessible digital formats for use by assistive technology devices or programs and that content is Sharable Content Object Reference Model (SCORM) and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND DATA REPORTING

Virtual programs must have the capacity to ensure appropriate administration of Virginia Standards of Learning assessments and reporting of all data. Additionally, the Multidivision Online Provider (MOP) shall follow accountability and data reporting pursuant to the MOP agreement.

INFORMATION DOCUMENTING STUDENT ASSESSMENT AND PROGRAM ACCOUNTABILITY:

- Management and oversight of Virginia Standards of Learning test administration by school division and student participation rates in the Virginia Standards of Learning tests.

- Student participation rates in early literacy assessments or other types of standardized tests, including the names and types of assessments, grade levels, and participation rates.

- Student, school, and program performance results, including nationally recognized standardized test results; Standards of Learning assessments; results from end-of-course exams; college entrance and readiness exams, including the SAT, ACT, and Advanced Placement tests, where applicable; rates of promotion to the next grade; high school graduation rates; postsecondary enrollment rates and the need for remediation/developmental coursework upon enrollment in postsecondary education programs; professional licenses and credentials earned; successful completion rates; student mobility rates; and dropout rates.

- Summary data on non-completers or dropouts related to the timing of and primary reasons for withdrawal.

STUDENT PRIVACY

Virtual program policies must abide by the student privacy guidelines set forth by the Family Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Policies for students' right to privacy should be developed and shared with students and families.

The resource center from the U.S. Department of Education Protecting Student Privacy site provides resources aimed at answering student data privacy, divided into three specific audiences: educators, students, and parents. The Student Privacy Compass from The Future of Privacy Forum resource center also contains tools and resources to assist school leaders in developing student privacy policies. It's important to note that not all educational technology companies are sensitive to student privacy. Technology applications and programs utilized in virtual programs must be evaluated for student privacy concerns.

Virtual programs should review the division's media release policy for how student images may be shared by students at home rather than school.

STUDENT CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINARY ACTION

All students should be required to agree to abide by a Student Code of Conduct. The Code should outline expectations for appropriate student behavior and the consequences associated with failure to adhere to the Code. Code of conduct policies should contribute to a safe and supportive learning environment for all students.

Policies, systems, and practices related to student conduct in the virtual environment should be developed using guidance from the Virginia Board of Education and the VDOE Office of Student Services. The model and guidance resources on the VDOE website focus on ensuring equity and establishing prevention and intervention in a tiered system of supports.

Student Attendance

Keeping attendance is a critical task for schools and divisions; attendance is a metric for a multitude of statutory and regulatory requirements as well as data that can be operationalized for important school functions (Reference: Superintendent's Memo #188-20). Specifically, daily attendance is tied to compulsory attendance, monitoring truancy or gauging student well-being, determining funding by way of average daily membership (ADM), and serving as a proxy for student engagement, notably as it informs the chronic absenteeism indicator for accreditation. In a virtual learning setting, the ability to track attendance by conventional measures - i.e. visual observation or face-to-face interaction - is less practical/feasible. Alternative attendance measures may need to be developed, and the virtual program should consider the following key factors in selecting attendance tracking measures:

MEANINGFUL INTERACTIONS

To encourage the overall well-being of students, divisions should set a minimum expectation for the frequency of meaningful interactions. Meaningful interactions are understood here as two-way engagement with a student and staff that allows some sort of feedback or input from the student on successes and challenges. It is critical that divisions communicate these expectations to families to ensure they fully understand what is expected and seek ongoing feedback on challenges that families are facing in supporting children to attend.

Meaningful interactions may be structured in a way that a student is in contact with one of their teachers or appropriate school staff on a daily basis. However, the type of interaction will be necessarily different for individual grade levels. Elementary students (preK–5) should have a meaningful interaction with their teacher or appropriate school staff on a daily basis. Recognizing the young age of these students, families will play a key role in enabling access for remote attendance and divisions should communicate how these interactions will take place and offer ongoing support for families.

For secondary students (grades 6 - 12), interactions with teachers or appropriate school staff may be structured to allow for daily contact. For example, on Monday, the student touches base with a math teacher; on Tuesday, a science teacher; on Wednesday, their school counselor makes contact. However, at minimum, secondary students should have a meaningful interaction with each of their teachers or another staff member on a weekly basis with attendance checks, as detailed below, occurring on the other days.

The frequency and quality of meaningful interactions should also be considered in delivering services and support for vulnerable student populations such as students with disabilities, English language learners, etc. Certain students may require more intensive approaches in order to receive an appropriate education and needed supports.

TRACKING AND DEFINING ATTENDANCE

Attendance checks should be conducted on a daily basis regardless of instructional modality, so that a data point is available for each student on each school day. While the frequency of checks must be consistent for each student, different measures of "in attendance" may apply. Meaningful interaction with a student may double as an attendance check. For elementary students, this should already occur on a daily basis. However, for secondary school students, there may also be a need to determine what constitutes "in attendance" when a meaningful interaction cannot occur on a daily basis. Teachers and appropriate staff may need to pool their meaningful interactions or attendance checks so that a data point is available for each student on each school day.

Some of the examples below may also be considered a meaningful interaction based on the quality of exchange and whether it is "two-way engagement with a student that allows some sort of feedback or input from the student on successes and challenges."

Time-based

- Virtual presence for a synchronous online lesson
- Login time to a learning management system
- Activity log on a learning management system
- Total time log on a learning management system
- Phone call or real-time online chat
- Time-stamp for posts or submissions

Task or Product-based

- Participation in a synchronous online lesson
- Demonstrated evidence of engagement with peers for collaborative work
- Engagement on a discussion board
- Email exchange
- Phone call

- Submission of task or assignment
- "View" tracker for asynchronous online lesson

The options above may be used to determine attendance as it informs a student's status on the school roll, as provided in the Standards of Accreditation at 8VAC20-110-130.

Attendance Considerations

- How will the division communicate attendance expectations and support to families?

- At what point does attendance data signal a need to engage with a student and/or the adults supporting their learning remotely differently, more frequently, etc.? Divisions should use an equity lens and specifically monitor attendance of vulnerable populations to ensure equitable access (e.g., students with special needs, English Learners (EL), homeless children, young learners).

- What support can the division provide to students not attending? For certain populations, divisions may also need to consider support for families.

Divisions should consult their school board attorney to ensure that nothing in their guidance shall be construed to excuse a parent or guardian from the compulsory attendance requirements set forth in § 22.1-254 of the *Code of Virginia*, which permits participation in educational programs and courses at a site remote from the school with the permission of the school and in conformity with applicable requirements.

ATTENDANCE DATA AND REPORTING

Whether via meaningful interactions or supplementary attendance checks, attendance data must be reported and operationalized. The need for reliable, consistent data should be a consideration for local school divisions implementing a program of virtual learning.

Data and Reporting Considerations

- Beyond state-level needs, what role does attendance data play for the division? Does the attendance tracking system continue to meet these needs?

- What other data does the division need to support truancy officers?

- Can selected daily attendance tracking practices apply per course or per period? Divisions will want to consider how requirements for teachers keeping attendance log may serve as a complementary

record-keeping function.

- What is considered an excused or unexcused absence? For example, if a student was unable to login because of device or connectivity issues, is that considered an excused absence? School divisions should evaluate their policies on excused and unexcused absences with an equity lens.

ATHLETICS AND EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Student athletics and activities can be an important part of a student's school experience and the building of skills and experience for career and college readiness. For students enrolled in virtual learning programs, consider policies to allow access to athletics and activities offered by their school or division.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

Each student should be required to agree to an Acceptable Use Policy designed for the program of virtual learning. The school division should evaluate the current Acceptable Use Policy for considerations for virtual learners and see if adjustments are necessary. For example, consider adjusting language, specifically referencing the school building and editing for students learning in a virtual education setting.

COPYRIGHT AND FAIR USE

Students and teachers must remain mindful of all copyright and Fair Use guidelines. The Library of Congress offers a resource to guide students and teachers through copyright issues related to educational materials and student work.

DEVICES FOR VIRTUAL EDUCATION

Select a plan for student devices that meets the needs and resources of the program. The school or division could provide devices, or students could be required or offered an opportunity to use a personal device. By providing students with a device, virtual learning programs can ensure that student devices meet the software requirements for the program. The list below outlines additional suggestions for student devices:

- Create a system for devices to be checked out to students/families and returned to school.

- Create a clear and accessible system for tech support and assistance.
- Develop a guidance document for device care, IT support help protocols, division policies, and Internet safety.
- Consider division policies and procedures that need to be altered because of the varied Internet access use of end-users, including damage or loss of devices, support for student-owned devices.

Guidance for charging students for instructional materials, including student devices, is published in Supts Memo 218-20: Fees Charged for Instructional Materials (docx).

DIGITAL DEVICE HEALTH AND SAFETY GUIDELINES

In January 2020, Virginia legislators passed House Bill 817 requiring the Department of Education, in collaboration with the Department of Health and medical professional societies, to develop and distribute health and safety best practice guidelines for digital devices in public schools. The document *Digital Devices in the Classroom: Health and Safety Guidelines* can be found on the Virtual Learning Hub of the VDOE website.

Digital Citizenship for Students and Teachers

Students and teachers should be aware of the importance of digital citizenship and consider the following:

- Review the school division Acceptable Use Policy.
- Use appropriate language when speaking or writing; no profanity, obscenities, sexually explicit material, or expressions of bigotry, racism, and/or hate.
- Exhibit behaviors that do not intimidate, bully, harass, or embarrass; consider the perspective of others when communicating.
- Maintain individual anonymity and privacy and do not reveal personal addresses, phone numbers, social networking identities, or other personal information, including passwords; do not use the accounts of others or trespass in the work, files, or folders of others.
- Maintain a balance between online and offline time.
- Use reliable and credible sources; be mindful of all copyright and Fair Use guidelines.

Virginia's *Digital Learning Integration Standards* provide a framework for educators regarding teaching and learning with digital modalities and include sections on digital citizenship in the content strand titled Digital Citizen (DC). This content strand provides measurable performance indicators for K–12 students by grade band regarding the rights, responsibilities, and opportunities of living, learning, and working in an interconnected digital world. They act in ways that are safe, legal, and ethical. The performance indicators in the *Standards* refer to four key Learning Priorities for Digital Citizenship, listed below. Refer to the whole document, which can be found by following the link above, for the specific performance indicators by grade band.

VIRTUAL INSTRUCTION

Virtual instruction requires different skills and approaches for teachers than those suited to in-person instruction. This section will outline specific instructional considerations for educators teaching in a 100% virtual setting.

Classroom Environment and Management

The same as an in-person classroom, classroom management is key to providing a safe and supportive learning environment where students are prepared and ready to learn. Critical aspects of a positive virtual classroom environment include clear and consistent communication, clear expectations, and a safe and supportive virtual classroom environment.

COMMUNICATION

- The teacher should establish their teaching presence early and often by posting announcements, appearing on video, and participating in discussions. This lets students know that a "real" teacher is on the other side of the screen.

DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP LEARNING PRIORITIES:

A

Cultivate and manage their digital identity and reputation and are aware of the permanence of their actions in the digital world.

B

Engage in positive, safe, legal, and ethical behavior when using technology, including social interactions online or when using networked devices.

C

Demonstrate an understanding of and respect for the rights and obligations of using and sharing intellectual property.

D

Manage their personal data to maintain digital privacy and security and are aware of data-collection technology used to track their activity online.

- The teacher should show their personality, passion, and expertise. Even in an online environment, the teacher may share his/her love for teaching. This may also be an opportunity for the teacher to engage with all members of the family. Communication is the key to establishing an online community with students and families.

- Establish office hours and other instructional sessions to answer questions and connect with students. Communicating in an online setting and expectations should be discussed with students and their families.

- Use an online calendar to help students maintain the organization of assignments and due dates.

- Communicate with school counseling staff and other appropriate staff about your online students, schedules, special education, English Learner (EL) needs, medical and other information pertinent to student participation.

- Follow the school division policy on the use of video conferencing with students.

- Help students dive straight into the content by providing them with a detailed syllabus, class schedule, and clear assignment instructions.

SETTING PROCEDURES, EXPECTATIONS, AND NORMS

- Establish classroom procedures, expectations, and norms for learning in the online environment.

- Be present and maintain regular communication with students.

- Digitally organize, distribute, and collect assignments, course materials, and student work. Teachers can also post an assignment to multiple courses or modify and reuse assignments.

- Create consistent routines and procedures for engaging in lessons, coursework, and collaborative activities.

- Consider the types and length of assignments to avoid online "overload" of screen time and data or bandwidth consumption.

- Be mindful that students and families may be facing life circumstances and challenges that you may not be aware of, considering the more limited interactions with students during virtual learning.

- Establish a safe environment where all students have a voice. Encourage students to be kind and courteous to each other. Watch out for online bullying, and report any violations to the school administrators and parents.

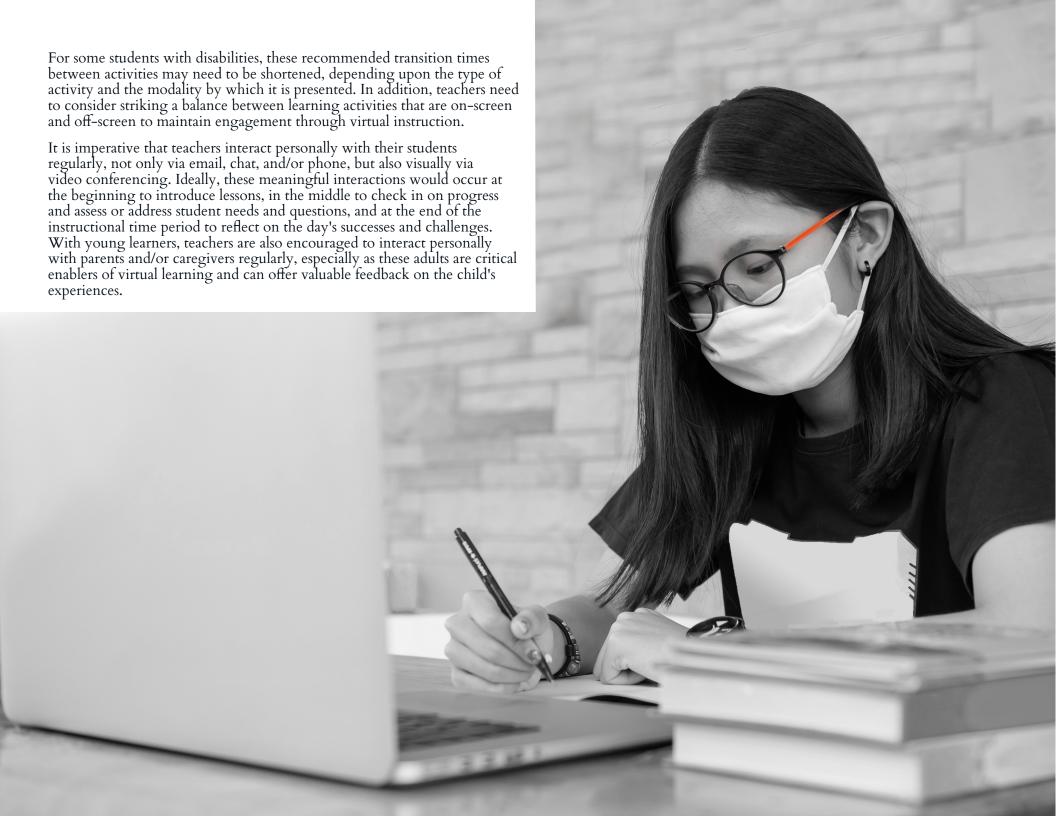## VIRTUAL WORKING ENVIRONMENT

- Set up an appropriate and adequate working environment, and consider elements of the physical environment with minimal interruptions. The use of a headset with a microphone will help to eliminate audio feedback and distractions.

- Be professional in voice, tone, and attire.

- Help students understand the logistics and elements of learning in an online environment, e.g., using features such as mute, chat boxes, discussion boards, assignment submission, or hand-raising.

Instructional Design & Delivery

When developing the structure of instructional time in virtual settings, the teacher should provide

- experiences that build relationships, trust, and a safe environment for learning;

- experiences that build community and culture;

- procedures for effective communication

- time for face-to-face interactions with teachers regularly;

- time for individual and/or small group support daily;

- a variety of engaging learning activities in synchronous and asynchronous formats;

- a variety of on-screen and off-screen learning activities, including structures for physical activity; and

- timely and substantive feedback on student submissions.

When educators make decisions about time constraints in synchronous and asynchronous learning activities in a virtual setting, consideration must be given to student attention spans and the learning activity's level of engagement. Students have a range in their ability to focus, potentially impacted by several factors, including hunger, stress, distractions, disabilities, among others. As a general rule in a traditional or virtual classroom, educators find that changing learning activities every 10–15 minutes in elementary settings and every 20-25 minutes in secondary settings is common practice to maximize student focus and the benefits of instruction.

For some students with disabilities, these recommended transition times between activities may need to be shortened, depending upon the type of activity and the modality by which it is presented. In addition, teachers need to consider striking a balance between learning activities that are on-screen and off-screen to maintain engagement through virtual instruction.

It is imperative that teachers interact personally with their students regularly, not only via email, chat, and/or phone, but also visually via video conferencing. Ideally, these meaningful interactions would occur at the beginning to introduce lessons, in the middle to check in on progress and assess or address student needs and questions, and at the end of the instructional time period to reflect on the day's successes and challenges. With young learners, teachers are also encouraged to interact personally with parents and/or caregivers regularly, especially as these adults are critical enablers of virtual learning and can offer valuable feedback on the child's experiences.

Synchronous and Asynchronous Learning

Virtual learning utilizes two modalities of online learning – asynchronous and synchronous learning.

SYNCHRONOUS

In a synchronous approach, which more closely models direct instruction in the classroom, students experience learning activities simultaneously. Examples of virtual synchronous learning might include a video conference for a morning meeting, a live science demonstration that all students watch together, or the use of tools where a teacher presents content and students can interact during a lesson. The synchronous approach for a student puts the student into direct contact with a teacher and usually other peers. This approach is preferred for working with students who need the support of conversation, direct feedback, and situations where students can work cooperatively and collaboratively.

ASYNCHRONOUS

The asynchronous modality affords students time to work on their learning on their own schedule. The teacher has designed a sequence of activities for students to work independently, and therefore this work may not be completed in tandem with other students. Asynchronous learning is often completed outside of regular class time. Examples of asynchronous assignments might include reading, watching videos, taking assessments, completing projects, completing homework, or answering questions. Students may need extra support in structuring their time to complete work within the parameters set by the teacher. Students may also be given options to make choices about prioritizing their time, which can provide practice in time management. Considerations for instructors include the student's age, maturity, and evidence of prior success in working on asynchronous assignments, as well as the types of support available at home.

SYNCHRONOUS AND ASYNCHRONOUS LEARNING

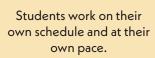DIFFERENT APPROACHES PROVIDE DIFFERENT INSTRUCTIONAL BENEFITS.

SYNCHRONOUS

An approach that most closely models direct instruction in the classroom.

Students experience learning activities simultaneously and work collaboratively.

Students have direct contact with the teacher and peers, which allows them to feel connected to a class community.

Conversations can support student learning.

Direct feedback can be offered, and students can ask questions in real time.

ASYNCHRONOUS

Students work on their learning on their own schedule.

Students work on their own schedule and at their own pace.

Students can be given options to make choices about prioritizing their time.

Teachers can offer a range of learning tools based on various student needs.

Lessons can be paused, reviewed, and rewatched to aid in comprehension and reinforcement.

Teachers may use a combination of synchronous and asynchronous approaches depending on learning targets and outcomes. Both approaches offer benefits to students, and the success of each approach may depend on factors like age, maturity, and support available at home.

Instructional Delivery

Key considerations for instructional delivery are outlined below:

PLANNING

- Ensure all technology is working correctly before the start of the online lesson, including all necessary documents and presentations, and have a back-up plan.

- Teachers are encouraged to use applications and resources that students are familiar with to reduce anxiety in transitioning to a new online setting.

- Ensure that students have an understanding of all features and functions of the platform. Be considerate and thoughtful as students adjust to a new learning process.

- Differentiate activities to meet the needs of all learners in your classroom, including English Learners (ELs), students with disabilities, and gifted populations. Consider cultural differences and include culturally relevant materials, artifacts, and pedagogy.

COMMUNICATION

- Communicate regularly based on class expectations.

- Consider establishing office hours or support time for students to contact their teachers.

- Be clear and consistent in online announcements.

- Give concise and straightforward directions.

- Explain the details of an assignment providing information on where to locate the assignment and when it is due.

- Communicate and involve parents in the online learning process.

ENGAGEMENT

- Motivate students by making real-world connections.

- Create educational experiences for students that are challenging, enriching, and that extend their academic abilities.

- Provide students with opportunities to interact with peers, such as through discussion and group work.

- Show students how they will apply what they are learning.

- Provide a creative way for students to master content using a variety of instructional strategies and technologies.

- Personalize instruction and give students the power to "own" their learning through providing choice.

- Be selective and thoughtful with assignments.

- Tasks should be manageable based on the curriculum.

- Differentiate based on student needs; coordinate and collaborate with teachers, including EL teachers, special education teachers, gifted resource teachers, and others.

- Teachers may also integrate a variety of learning experiences that incorporate technology into daily instruction, including:
  - authentic learning experiences;
  - inquiry-based learning;
  - online coursework;
  - online research;
  - project-based learning;
  - simulations;
  - virtual games; and
  - virtual learning experiences.

ASSESSMENT AND FEEDBACK

Feedback is such a common word, and unfortunately, some interpret it as figuring out if we were right or wrong. But good feedback in an instructional setting guides *what's next*. Assessments provide both teachers and students feedback on what students know and with better assessments, how well they know it. So if students are tasked with watching a three-minute video clip as the instructional strategy, how do we know what they have learned from that interaction? Adding three to five multiple-choice questions after the video is watched (or during the video, as is now possible with some management tools), we engage students in thinking about the content and gain insight into their understanding. This example provides immediate feedback, and while perhaps not the highest form of feedback, it is critical in a virtual learning environment to assess student progress.

The type of feedback we can provide students through email, a video chat, or written comments should do more than just tell students if their efforts

were right or wrong. Quality feedback is appropriate for task and project-based work that is specifically designed around the 5 C's. This type of feedback allows students to reflect upon their work and the teacher's role is to point students where that student can take their work next.

Your video presentation on the water cycle was well organized, but I was confused with the animation you created to show precipitation. Were you happy with the way that turned out? What could you change so that others like me are not confused the next time they watch your video? If you had more time, what else could you have added to your video to ensure that everyone understood the most important concepts?

Almarode and Vandas (2019) recommend that feedback—what we might consider quality feedback—answers the following three questions for students and for teachers:

- Where am I going?
- How am I going?
- Where do I go next?

Providing students with meaningful feedback can significantly enhance their learning and achievement. Feedback is most effective when shared with students in a timely manner. The teacher may highlight specific information that will help students achieve progress toward goals and outcomes. Using various ways to provide feedback to students provides an opportunity to address students' unique learning styles. While some technology tools can provide feedback in terms of answer choices that are right or wrong, feedback from teachers reinforces the relationships teachers have with students and can help motivate a student's next step with their learning.

While individualized feedback between the teacher and student may appear to be a daunting task with virtual instruction, do not forget that with training, students and subject experts (adults) can also provide valuable feedback through video breakouts, discussion forums, and cloud-based documents. Working with students to provide feedback with rubrics can be an effective method for ensuring that student feedback is valuable. Graham Nuthall reveals in his book, *Hidden Lives of Learners* (2007) that the majority of feedback received by students is from their peers, and most of that feedback is wrong or inaccurate. While we can use students as a feedback loop, it still requires supervision.

IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS FOR STUDENT ASSESSMENT AND FEEDBACK IN VIRTUAL ENVIRONMENTS INCLUDE:

- Communicate learning objectives and align the objectives to assessments. Remove extra content not directly supporting the learning objectives or make it optional.

- Provide clear expectations and guidelines for assessing students.

- Describe criteria broadly so that it can be demonstrated in multiple ways.

- Give feedback in a timely manner.

- Use flexible structures and rubrics that allow for a huge variety of experiences and resources. Place student reflection and self-assessment at the center of feedback.

- Consider exploring the following innovative reflection opportunities and assessment formats for students:

  - activities that require student reflection;
  - authentic learning experiences;
  - discussion groups;
  - career exploration;
  - computer-based and web-based assessments (games, simulations, computer-adaptive assessments);
  - creativity in learning;
  - creative assessments (flip boards, blogs, vlogs, collage sketches, performances);
  - critical thinking exercises;
  - electronic polls and forms;
  - exit slips;
  - group assessments;
  - inquiry-based learning;
  - journal reflections;
  - meaningful writing assignments;
  - open-ended questions that allow students to think critically and write;
  - outside investigations/explorations;
  - peer-to-peer feedback;
  - play-based learning;
  - portfolio-based assessments;
  - portfolio feedback (rubrics);
  - project-based learning;
  - problem-solving activities;
  - questionnaires;
  - rubric-based assessments;
  - self-assessments;
  - technology-based direct instruction;
  - virtual presentations and demonstrations;
  - virtual whiteboards;
  - voice and choice for students;
  - workplace readiness preparation; and
  - writing for a variety of purposes.

Virginia's Digital Integration Standards of Learning

The proposed 2020 Digital Learning Integration Standards of Learning provide comprehensive standards statements for digital integration. Additional components (learning priorities and performance indicators) are provided to assist in local implementation. Digital learning has the potential to empower students as learners by improving their functional literacy as digital citizens capable of constructing knowledge, designing innovative works, thinking computationally, creatively communicating, and collaborating with others locally, regionally, and globally. The *Standards* are developed within five content strands, as illustrated in the graphic below. The full standards document can be found on the VDOE website, linked above.

CITIZENSHIP
(Digital Citizen)

- Recognize the rights, responsibilities and opportunities in a digital world.
- Act in ways that are safe, legal, and ethical.

COLLABORATION
(Global Collaborator)

- Use technologies in a design process.
- Create new, useful, and imaginative solutions or iterations.

CREATIVE THINKING
(Innovative Designer)

- Use technologies in a design process.
- Create new, useful, and imaginative solutions or iterations.
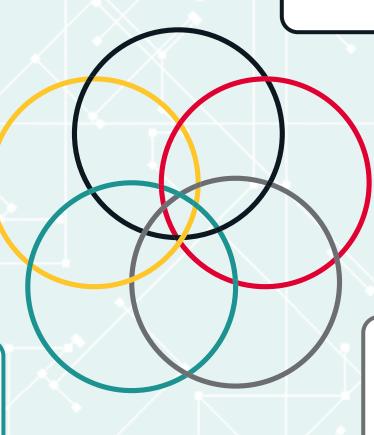
COMMUNICATION
(Creative Communicator)

- Communicate clearly and express creatively using technologies.

CRITICAL THINKING
(Computational Thinker)

- Develop and employ strategies for understanding and solving problems.
- Leverage technology methods to develop and test solutions.

VIRTUAL LEARNING: PROMOTING STUDENT SUCCESS

As is true for all classrooms, virtual or in-person, student success begins with setting expectations and ensuring that students understand the expectations and have the tools for achievement. In virtual learning settings, teachers should provide students with

- expectations for success;

- training on meeting expectations;

- information regarding appropriate behaviors in virtual settings;

- information on setting up the student home-learning environment;

- opportunities for students to share information regarding challenges (home environment, connectivity issues, limitations due to device sharing, etc.); and

- training on navigating the learning management system (LMS), video conferencing applications, and other instructional tools.

In addition, school divisions and teachers should provide information to parents, guardians, and other caregivers on how to access class content, navigate courses, and best support their children for academic success. Frequent communication of information is especially encouraged for younger learners whose families and caregivers play a more significant role in facilitating learning.

Successful virtual learning programs serve diverse student needs and offer a wide range of opportunities to learn, and just as importantly, support and empower teachers to take full advantage of all that digital curriculum has to offer. The result is a virtual learning environment that engages students, gives them ownership over their learning, and motivates them as they master content and experience success.

Academic Integrity and Ethics

Consider how virtual students will demonstrate commitment to academic integrity. Virtual Virginia developed the guidelines for students that have been adapted for this guide:

- Students should verify that their work on each assignment is their own.

- The teacher must pre-approve collaborations with another student on any assignment.

- Students may not plagiarize in any form.

- No student may allow others to copy his/her work.

- No student may misuse content from the Internet.

- No student should store work on a public or shared network drive.

The virtual school will need to enact policies for consequences for violating the Academic Integrity and Ethics Agreement. Such consequences could include loss of credit for the assignment, removal from the course with a failing grade, or other consequences enforced at the principal's discretion.

Considerations for Addressing the Learning Needs of English Learners (EL)

The following considerations for educators of ELs planning virtual instruction were provided within Colorín Colorado's Guide for Distance Learning for ELLs: Needs Assessment:

- How do you plan to support the four domains of language (reading, writing, speaking, and language)? Note that oral language development is particularly critical as students are missing interactions with their peers and educators.

- How will you provide different tasks or scaffolded support for students with different English language proficiency levels through strategies such as the following?

  o modified tasks

  o organizing platform tools to provide choice

  o scaffolded supports

- How might you connect lessons to students' personal experiences and use other culturally responsive practices?

- If you have students with interrupted education, what types of support might they need?

- Which staff members work most regularly with ELs? Do they have recommendations or insights on planning instruction?

- How have you or other teachers connected with EL families throughout the year?

- What is the literacy level of your EL families? Do some families need oral instructions and others written translations?

Considerations for Addressing the Learning Needs of Students with Disabilities

The following considerations for educators planning virtual instruction were provided by the Accessible Educational Materials Center, AEM: Resources for Access and Distance Education.

- Are students with disabilities able to acquire the same information, engage in the same interactions, and enjoy the same services in an equally effective integrated manner and with equivalent ease of use as learners without disabilities?

- Are the curriculum and instruction programs available to every learner, including specially designed instruction materials?

- Are the curriculum and instruction programs accessible to every student?

- Can every student use the curriculum and instruction programs? For example, how can students receive information from a device, interact with, and express or provide input into a product or a device (i.e., speech to text, keyboard options, etc.)?

- What are the technological resources needed for educators/staff and students/families? Do all students/families have access to these resources? If not, how can the school division remedy this situation?

- Are students proficient in using the technology resources, computing devices, software, and the virtual platforms that they will access?

- Do all stakeholders have access to reliable Internet connectivity? If not, how can the school division support access in certain regions/neighborhoods/homes?

- What is the impact of virtual learning on educators/staff and students/families? What supports are needed to ensure effectiveness and efficiency?

Social and Emotional Learning for Virtual Students

Social emotional learning (SEL) is critical to engage and support students, build relationships and school communities, and create equitable learning environments whether instruction is conducted in-person or virtually. The following key factors were developed for the Virginia Department of Education's Recover, Redesign, and Restart (PDF, p 47-49) document and have been adapted for this guide. Additional information and resources can be found on the VDOE SEL website.

Key factors that support social and emotional learning include:

QUALITY OVER QUANTITY

Leaders should carefully select specific and targeted initiatives that school staff can embrace and implement with fidelity. SEL initiatives hinge on the manageability of implementation, teacher buy-in, and authenticity.

COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT

The goal of social-emotional learning (SEL) programming is to foster the development of five emotional and behavioral competencies: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and decision-making.

DEDICATED TEAM

Schools may use existing teams focused on multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS), student services, student support teams (SST), or social-emotional learning (SEL) for the planning and implementation of social-emotional and wellness curriculum and supports. SEL teams should consist of administrators, teachers, noninstructional staff, after/before-school providers, other community partners, students, and families.

VALUING STUDENT VOICE

Including students in SEL action planning is a crucial component. School teams must have meaningful conversations with their students to understand their perceptions and gain feedback on future plans and current initiatives.

PRIORITIZE TWO-WAY COMMUNICATION BETWEEN FAMILIES AND SCHOOLS

Communication between schools, families, and community organizations has always been critical to SEL, but is particularly front and center during times of uncertainty and transition. That means that to promote SEL, schools and families will need to work closely to learn from and support one another in creating environments that can support students socially and emotionally, which includes helping families address stresses, anxieties, etc. and asking families to inform school and division approaches to SEL

Steps to Succeed in Virtual Courses

The list below represents characteristics that may set a student up for success in a virtual education environment. This information has been adapted from materials provided by Virtual Virginia, available on the Student Success page of the Virtual Virginia website.

BE SELF-MOTIVATED AND SELF-DISCIPLINED

Freedom and flexibility require responsibility. You should take ownership of the learning process and stay organized and on task. Successful virtual students are independent!

ASK FOR HELP WHEN NECESSARY

Many of the nonverbal cues instructors use in a physical classroom are not visible in a virtual setting. If you have issues with the technology or the course content, you must communicate this concern immediately.

READ AND WRITE AT GRADE LEVEL, AND COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY THROUGH WRITING

In a virtual classroom, most communication is written, so it is critical that you feel comfortable expressing yourself in writing. In addition, you should be able to comprehend grade-level content materials.

MEET THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE PROGRAM

Virtual courses are flexible and convenient—but that does not mean they are easy. Virtual courses offer the same content and rigor as courses in a physical classroom setting.

HAVE REGULAR, DAILY ACCESS TO A COMPUTER WITH INTERNET CONNECTIVITY

The virtual course and its activities and assessments are all accessed and completed via the Internet. Therefore, you must have access to a reliable internet connection throughout the academic year. Basic computer skills are essential.

Suggested Virtual Student Daily To-Do List

Completing the following tasks daily will help students be more successful in virtual courses. This list has been adapted from information communicated to students for the Virtual Virginia program. It can be used as a sample set of suggestions for students engaging in virtual education.

- It is important to log in to your course Monday through Friday (and over the weekend to get ahead) to check news items, emails, due dates, and course updates.

- Communicate with your teacher when you need assistance. Know your teacher's office hours.

- Avoid missing an assignment due date listed in your course calendar, as it will be recorded as a zero when the deadline is missed.

- Avoid late work penalties by completing work before the due dates listed in the course calendar.

- Plan to spend time on your course during and after school.

- Spend time reading, studying, and self-learning, and allow more time for complex concepts.

- Work ahead on assignments (starting them days before the due dates) to allow time for questions and responses from your teacher. Working on assignments last minute does not allow much time for help if needed.

- Respect deadlines. This is a real course and cannot be completed at your convenience. Yes, you have freedom each day when you work on it, but your class will have set deadlines each week.

- Follow the pace set in the course by your teacher, as it is designed to lead you to learn the material effectively. Avoid jumping around, clicking through items out of order, and working too fast just to get something done.

- Know the expectations for completing work during school closures due to emergencies or inclement weather.

- Communicate with your instructor and keep up with course deadlines.

- Participate in live sessions when scheduled and be actively engaged in the discussions.

- Return emails and phone calls from your teacher promptly.

- Do not share work with other students, copy work, or participate in activities that could jeopardize your learning and success in this course.

- Work hard to learn the material and not just to make an A. Working only to earn a grade can lead to a gap in your overall understanding of the material.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Virtual Learning Support Toolkit

The Office of STEM and Innovation at the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) has partnered with the Center for Implementation and Evaluation of Education Systems (CIEES) at Old Dominion University to develop a series of asynchronous learning modules, videos, and resources to support the effective delivery of virtual instruction. This professional development website offers research-based guidance to support school leaders, educators, and key staff in navigating both blended and fully online environments.

- Supporting Positive Student Behavior in a Virtual Environment
- Planning for the Virtual Learning Classroom
- Structuring a Successful Virtual Learning Classroom
- Synchronous and Asynchronous Teaching and Learning
- Instructional Models
- Effective Instructional Practices
- Substantive and Timely Feedback
- Voice and Choice
- Effective Assessment Practices

VDOE Virtual Learning Teaching & Learning HUB

Virtual learning has become an integral part of our educational system. Virtual learning can aid in

- Increasing student engagement and choice,
- Supporting personalized learning experiences for students, and
- Increasing equity in access to high-quality learning experiences.

Virtual learning programs offer flexibility to students while providing instruction aligned with the Standards of Learning. Several Virginia school divisions allow their students to take online courses as a part of their regular course offerings.

The VDOE Virtual Learning Virtual Teaching and Learning Hub provides resources for teaching and learning virtually in Virginia's public schools.

Virtual Virginia Professional Learning

Virtual Virginia's Professional Learning program empowers educators to explore new instructional practices with the flexibility to achieve more—all at their own pace. Virtual Virginia offers online professional learning opportunities for all Virginia public school educators at no cost.

RESOURCES

Open Education Resources from #GoOpenVA

Virginia's home for Open Educational Resources (OER) is #GoOpenVA. It is a growing community of educators and education partners working together to help teachers personalize learning and address the learning goals of the Profile of a Virginia Graduate.

#GoOpenVA is a repository of openly licensed educational resources and a community of people who create, curate, and share. On #GoOpenVA, any registered member can create a Group, which is a space for people with the same interests to share things and exchange messages and can vary in size.

To use #GoOpenVA to find resources, visit https://goopenva.org to search or browse by SOL, subject, topic, and grade level. To use the community features and to add materials, you need to have a registered account. School divisions are providing single-sign-on access through their local networks using either Clever or Google. Please ask your local technology staff for instructions. If your division does not have a single sign-on, please contact the #GoOpenVA Administrator at goopenva@doe.virginia.gov.

eMediaVA

eMediaVA is a valuable statewide platform for free PK–12 instructional resources with over 160,000 learning objects, all searchable by SOL. Content comes from 500+ trusted providers such as NASA, the Library of Congress, the War Memorial Museum of Virginia, PBS, Colonial Williamsburg, the Science Museum of Virginia, Scholastic, Disney Education, and many more. These resources (videos, audio files, images, interactivities, lesson plans, etc.) can be used for face-to-face instruction, blended or flipped classrooms, and online content. Creating playlists and downloading content are among the many features available. eMediaVA also easily integrates with Clever and Google Classroom.

Free access to these resources is provided through a partnership between the Virginia Department of Education and WHRO Education. Free training is also available for school divisions upon request. These instructional resources can be previewed at www.emediava.org.

International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE)

The International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) inspires the creation of solutions and connections that improve opportunities for all learners by delivering: practical guidance, evidence-based professional learning, virtual networks, thought-provoking events, and the ISTE Standards. The Online Learning focus area on the site contains playlists, free downloadable guides, online professional learning, research, articles, and more related to virtual education.

Virginia Society for Technology in Education (VSTE)

The Virginia Society for Technology in Education (VSTE) was founded in 1986 as the Virginia Educational Computing Association and is Virginia's affiliate of the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE). VSTE's mission is to promote excellence in education through professional development endeavors supporting the integration of existing and emerging technologies.

National Standards for Quality (NSQ)

The Virtual Learning Leadership Alliance (VLLA) and Quality Matters (QM) are leading a broad-based effort to revise the National Standards for Quality Online Learning, building upon the work started by The International Association for K–12 Online Learning (iNACOL). Links to the most current versions of the standards are available on the NSQ website.

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