



# Supporting Well-Rounded Education in a Distance Learning Environment

BRIEF

## Title IV, Part A Statute

Title IV, Part A of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) defines a well-rounded education as “courses, activities, and programming in subjects such as English, reading or language arts, writing, science, technology, engineering, mathematics, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history, geography, computer science, music, career and technical education, health, physical education, and any other subject, as determined by the State or local educational agency, with the purpose of providing all students access to an enriched curriculum and educational experience...”<sup>1</sup> In addition, a well-rounded education should be coordinated with other schools or community programs and may be done in partnership with external institutions and organizations.<sup>2</sup>

This resource provides state education agencies (SEAs) with information about delivering a well-rounded education through distance learning for all students by creating and expanding access to educational opportunities. Specifically, this resource discusses considerations for ensuring that a diverse curriculum is made available to students and how it may be adapted for a distance learning environment. Ways to address challenges accessing instructional content in a distance learning context are also discussed. This resource can help SEAs support local education agencies (LEAs) in offering distance learning courses, programs, and activities that allow for a well-rounded education. Checklists are provided to support SEA reviews of LEA applications for funds to support distance learning. Appendices provide selected distance learning strategies and resource suggestions.

Distance learning — also known as virtual or remote learning — refers to instruction that occurs when the student is not physically present for that instruction. Although distance learning often happens digitally (e.g., Web-based, device-based), it also includes nondigital, print-based formats. Distance learning approaches can include synchronous instruction (where all students learn together in real time) or asynchronous instruction (where students have the flexibility to access and engage in learning at their own pace or discretion). The distance learning approach is increasingly relevant as schools navigate using it as the primary mode for some instruction, as a supplement to traditional instruction for a blended learning approach, or as a combination of in-person and remote learning.

Distance learning may pose challenges related to equitable access for some students (e.g., many recommendations and strategies rely on students having reliable Internet access and a home computer and/or printer, and it is not safe to assume they have these resources). On the other hand, distance learning can also promote more equitable access to learning opportunities and support the development of external partnerships (e.g., with technological service providers or

## Creating Opportunities for Well-Rounded Education in Distance Learning

The Title IV-A statute encourages providing a diverse selection of content to students as part of supporting well-rounded education. Such content goes beyond core subject areas (e.g., English, math, science, and history) to include a broad offering of subjects (e.g., the arts, health and physical education, foreign languages, vocational classes, etc.) as well as opportunities to integrate learning across subjects and prepare for college, careers, and community involvement.<sup>1</sup> Distance learning efforts generally offer an array of content adapted to fit remote instruction and learning needs, but more work needs to be done to fulfill the goal of providing all students with a well-rounded education. The following sections discuss how to creatively provide and adapt instructional content for a distance learning context.

### Offering Diverse Educational Content for All Students

According to Title IV, Part A, SEAs and LEAs are responsible for determining what variety of content provides an enriching curriculum and educational experience. When the desired content is not viable to offer within a school via available instructors or resources, LEAs can identify creative ways to make opportunities available to students.

Partnerships can help to meet these needs of schools and LEAs by

- Utilizing instructors from other area K-12 schools to offer specialized courses;
- Connecting with colleges or universities for advanced course offerings;
- Leveraging the specialties of community-based organizations to offer field- or work-based learning opportunities; and
- Coordinating with local television stations to broadcast educational content.



other learning institutions). Both equitable access and partner engagement are central components of a well-rounded education.<sup>1</sup> In particular, distance learning can be used to offer access to

- Courses that may not otherwise be offered widely or at all, such as in schools or LEAs that do not otherwise offer Advance Placement classes;
- Educators who can work with students across multiple schools (a.k.a. “distributed learning”), which may be beneficial when few educators have a particular area of expertise, few students within a school need a particular course, or it is difficult to fill all staff positions within a school; or
- Other remote resources, such as partnering schools, community organizations, museums, or universities, that can be leveraged to provide additional content, exhibits, and learning experiences.

This resource also discusses how (1) LEAs can create opportunities for a well-rounded education through the content they offer and (2) minimization of potential barriers to distance learning expands access to a well-rounded education. Through this resource, State coordinators will gain background knowledge on distance learning options and considerations they can use to support LEAs. Each section is followed by a checklist of considerations for examining LEA applications for Title IV-A funds. These checklists may also serve as guides to inform LEA-focused technical assistance.

Ensuring that all students have the opportunity to participate is as important as offering an enriching educational experience. Students in schools or LEAs with fewer resources tend to have disparate learning opportunities, which disproportionately affect black and Hispanic students as well as students living in rural areas.<sup>3,4</sup> Even within schools, different students may have different educational experiences — such as black and Hispanic students, who tend to be underrepresented in advanced courses.<sup>3</sup> Removal of barriers to courses and other educational opportunities is central to providing all students the opportunity for a well-rounded education. In addition to partnerships, raising family and student awareness about coursework and other remote offerings and encouraging participation can promote student engagement in available opportunities. The Title IV-A statute supports assistance with financial barriers that may preclude course participation, such as reimbursing the cost of Advanced Placement exams, which can help students receive the full benefits of such courses.<sup>2</sup>

## Adapting Educational Content and Activities to Distance Learning Environment

To ensure all students reap the benefits of a well-rounded education, educational content can be adapted for the learning environment as well as student needs. This is especially important in a distance learning environment because students and teachers are not interacting in-person and teachers are not always able to readily adapt in real-time. Understanding the challenges posed by adapting distance learning content will help SEAs and LEAs devise thoughtful solutions, ensuring students have access to the content. Some challenges educators may encounter when attempting to adapt to a distance learning environment are

- Conducting hands-on learning or laboratory classes, such as in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) subjects;



- Integrating use of materials for the arts;
- Considering availability of indoor and outdoor space (and opportunities) for physical activity;
- Enhancing visibility of staff who may not be in contact with students every day, such as college and career counselors;
- Promoting positive connections and relationships among staff and students; and
- Ensuring that students with limited technological access receive their assignments and supporting learning materials.

LEAs working to find solutions to these types of challenges can engage in thoughtful planning around accessing learning materials, types of activities, integration across subject areas, and opportunities for interpersonal connection.

Educators can make sure that students have access to necessary and appropriate materials to promote participation. For example, LEAs can consider offering “education kits” containing supplies for

students to use at home.<sup>5</sup> Additionally, students can be encouraged to identify household items that are readily available to them that can be used in lessons and activities, such as cardboard tubes from a used roll of paper towels, salt, or baking soda.<sup>6</sup> Having students identify materials in their environment promotes problem solving and creativity.<sup>6</sup> In addition, being able to access these materials at home allows students the opportunity to participate in related lessons and activities.

Educators can also offer a variety of activities to engage students in a distance learning context.

- *Hands-on* activities might include assignments to conduct experiments, engineering design challenges, or practical applications of learning (e.g., field- or work-based learning, use of household items).<sup>6</sup>
- *Physical* activities could include outdoor or nature-based scavenger hunts or exercise activities such as creating or following an exercise video.<sup>7,8</sup>
- *Virtual interactive or enrichment* activities might include sharing information electronically through Web-based activities or lectures or leveraging virtual resources (e.g., museum, college, or digitized art tours).<sup>9,10,11</sup>
- *Critical thinking* activities can enable students to focus on the process rather than a finished product, such as by developing theories, generating ideas, planning to solve a real-world problem, or creating their own activities.<sup>7</sup>

Having a range of activities that can be completed independent of a virtual platform enables students to participate even when they do not have sufficient access to technology. In cases where assignments need to be turned in, students or their parents can mail in assignments as some LEAs offer resources to support this.

In addition, integrating content across course subject areas can enhance and make connections across learning. Title IV-A promotes integration of academic subjects, such as arts within STEM, as part of a well-rounded education and as a way to foster engagement.<sup>1</sup> For example, during a mathematics

class, students can explore the golden ratio by looking at famous paintings or the Fibonacci sequence by examining its prevalence in the natural world. College and career guidance objectives can be integrated into a writing course by having students satisfy the different requirements for writing a college essay (e.g., mapping out expectations for the content of the essay, choosing a topic, doing the research, completing the writing process, and soliciting peer feedback).<sup>9</sup> Educators can also use art to promote student engagement and learning across multiple subject areas, such as using art to introduce or build on the concept of geometric angles.<sup>12,13,14</sup> Social emotional learning can be built into lessons such as through reflection, stress management, and pausing to process feelings or solve interpersonal problems.<sup>12</sup> Integrating content across multiple disciplines within a distance learning environment helps to provide an enriching and well-rounded curriculum.

Educators can create opportunities for connection to build positive relationships and foster collaboration with and between students in a distance learning environment. Establishing a routine for staff to connect with families and students can help to increase visibility of and access to staff. For example, college and career guidance counselors may offer established times to connect with advisory cohorts and families. Similarly, educators can offer virtual “office hours” to consult on homework, student performance, or grades. It is also important to have a process for two-way communication; this helps empower students and elevates their voices.

Another way for students to connect is through peer-to-peer collaboration. Creating ways for students to collaborate can help them to stay connected, foster skills around teamwork, and promote peer-to-peer sharing and learning (e.g., sharing study tips or ways to stay physically active). Collaboration can be done through different modalities such as telephone or conference calls, letters, chat platforms, or shared online documents. Intentionally creating

opportunities for students to connect can promote a sense of belonging even if staff and students have limited or no in-person interaction.

Appendices at the end of this resource present selected distance learning strategies and resources. Appendix A provides a crosswalk of distance learning strategies and options for adaptation and application. Appendix B provides a few examples of distance learning resources for different subject areas.

## Creating Opportunities Checklist

The checklist below highlights questions for SEAs to consider as they support and fund LEAs working to make well-rounded educational opportunities available in and conducive to a distance learning environment.

- ✓ Are courses offered via distance learning? If so, are core academic subjects included? Are other, more diverse, subjects included?
- ✓ Are course offerings made available to all students within an LEA?
- ✓ Are all students made aware of and encouraged to participate in learning opportunities?
- ✓ Are LEAs leveraging community and school partnerships to offer courses, programs, and opportunities to students?
- ✓ Is there a process for reimbursing students from low-income backgrounds for relevant course or exam fees? If so, are reimbursement opportunities shared with students and families?
- ✓ Are necessary course materials available to or provided for students?
- ✓ Are students able to engage in learning through different types of activities?
- ✓ Is content across multiple disciplines integrated?
- ✓ Are there opportunities to foster connection and collaboration among students and between students and staff?

## Expanding Access to Well-Rounded Education in Distance Learning

As SEAs and LEAs work to offer an enriching curriculum to all students and adapt the content to a distance learning environment, they must also ensure that students have access to available instructional content. Ensuring access begins with understanding the potential constraints and needs of students and making accommodations to minimize barriers to participation.

- Students may lack ...
  - Computer access;
  - Consistent or reliable Internet access;
  - Printer access; or
  - Individual or regular access to learning devices within the household.
- Students may experience ...
  - Caregivers with limited time to provide supervision, facilitate projects or exercises, or check school work;
  - Special educational needs — including, but not limited to, cognitive or physical needs and English learner (EL) supports — which require different modes or types of learning and support; or
  - Challenging circumstances, including, but not limited to, those experiencing homelessness or unstable housing, living in foster care, or staying in youth detention centers.
- Students **will** have ...
  - Different learning styles;
  - Different home learning environments; or
  - Differing levels of digital literacy.

The following solutions, aimed at minimizing barriers, focus on technology access and use, modalities for instruction and activities, and accommodations to provide flexibility and support, including specific accommodations for students with access and functional needs (AFN) (e.g., students with disabilities, English learners).

Educators can be thoughtful about technology access and use. Students may not have computers, tablets, or Internet access at home; may rely on cell phones to complete work; or may have additional access issues due to unstable housing.<sup>15,16, 17</sup> Furthermore, families that do not have access to a computer at home may rely on public resources such as libraries, friends, or family members — none of which are guaranteed to be accessible at all times.

Additionally, Title IV-A allows LEAs to use a portion of funds to purchase technology infrastructure (i.e., devices, equipment, and software applications).<sup>1</sup> In such cases, LEAs and schools may consider providing devices and mobile hotspots or setting up devices for use without home-based Internet access.<sup>18, 19, 20</sup> In addition to individual students having limited access, some whole communities struggle with Internet access or the quality of Internet access.<sup>20</sup> LEAs can foster partnerships to enhance broadband access within such communities. Educators can avoid requiring use of mobile applications that students may not have access to (e.g., due to cost) or are unfamiliar with. Instead, they can consider leveraging mobile applications that students may already use frequently, such as offering office hours through social media platforms (depending on the age group) or delivering lessons through a video or podcast platform.<sup>15</sup> In addition, streamlining the use of technology tools and using them consistently can be helpful for families that may have multiple children who may be at different grade levels.<sup>15</sup>

Another resource from the T4PA Center, entitled [Supporting Effective Use of Technology](#), provides additional tips around technology access, use, support, and resources to support distance learning.<sup>21</sup>

With any device or mobile application use, LEAs must protect student privacy in keeping with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act; LEAs may consider [best practices](#) and considerations for [Terms of Service Agreements](#).<sup>22,23,24</sup>

Educators can offer course content through multiple modalities. For example, printed packets and materials can be provided for students to work on at home, particularly if LEAs are not able to offer devices to every student or students who do not have access to technology devices at home.<sup>18,19</sup> Printed materials may be especially helpful for younger, elementary-aged students who are less adept at technology and more often rely on parents and caregivers to assist.<sup>25,26</sup> For any hard-copy materials that students are required to submit, schools can offer prepaid postage materials to cover costs of mailing in completed assignments. As another example, distance learning may rely on synchronous activities to deliver instruction, including interactive activities with small groups of students. That said, asynchronous distance learning activities may be more accessible for students with limited ability to participate in synchronous learning during the school day. Asynchronous learning can also be a tool to help students learn to manage their own time, monitor their own learning, and work on different strategies to learn content.

Distance learning, ideally, is also flexible and accommodating of students' individual needs. For example, educators can modify or extend deadlines for students with limited technology or Internet access or for those who require specialized learning support. Recognizing that some students may have particular difficulty excelling in or adjusting to a distance learning environment, educators can arrange for tutoring or other individualized support for students. Additionally, efforts to communicate and collaborate with families can increase educators' awareness of students' unique distance learning experiences and challenges. When warranted, schools and families can work together to identify strategies, supports, and resources to facilitate student success when learning at home.

For students with AFN, educators can employ specific accommodations such as assistive technology (e.g., closed-captioning, text-to-speech software or programs) and collaboration between EL or special education staff and general education staff.<sup>27,28</sup> For SWDs in particular,

educators must meet the unique learning needs of these students, as required by provisions of the [Individual with Disabilities Education Act \(IDEA\)](#), regardless of where learning is taking place.<sup>29,30</sup> Educators may create individual distance learning plans for each student and establish a process for the students' individualized education plan team to meet virtually.<sup>27,31</sup> In addition, educators may reassess student needs periodically and consider pedagogical needs for specific conditions, such as limiting sensory input or using visual cues.<sup>32</sup> The [Office of Special Education Programs](#) offers resources on how to support SWDs in a distance learning environment.<sup>33,34,35</sup> For ELs, educators can also work with curriculum vendors to develop or implement existing adaptations for distance learning. Translation and interpreter services for students and caregivers or visual supplements may also be useful, depending on students' language proficiency level.<sup>36</sup> Schooling in the home environment offer educators a unique opportunity to leverage students' home language and culture to make connections in their learning (an important aspect of differentiating instruction to meet students' needs).<sup>37</sup> Distance learning can also be set up to offer regular opportunities for EL students to practice speaking English with others in pairs or small groups; students can exchange feedback on language development as well as content knowledge.<sup>38,39</sup>

There is no singular approach to guarantee access for all students; rather, SEAs and LEAs may provide guidance on a combination of schoolwide and individualized supports such as the considerations noted above.

## Conclusion

This resource is designed to help SEAs understand the dimensions of distance learning that can support or impede delivery of a well-rounded education. State Coordinators can use this information to make decisions about LEA applications proposing to use Title IV, Part A funds for distance learning. SEAs may also use this information to support technical assistance provided to LEAs on related topics.

## Expanding Access Checklist

The checklist below highlights questions for SEAs to consider in their work with LEAs to support them in minimizing barriers to accessing course content and learning opportunities.

- ✓ Do all students have access to a device to access course content? If not, do courses and lessons have contingencies for students without technology or Internet access?
- ✓ If used, are mobile applications ones that students are already familiar with using?
- ✓ Does the LEA have plans in place to protect student privacy?
- ✓ Are asynchronous lessons and activities available for students to complete at their own pace?
- ✓ Are educators flexible in modifying deadlines as needed?
- ✓ Is tutoring or other individualized support offered to students having difficulty with distance learning?
- ✓ Are there processes that the LEAs have put in place to help educators engage parents and caregivers?
- ✓ Are there opportunities for students to make connections to home language and culture?
- ✓ Will students have access to assistive technology, if needed?
- ✓ Will relevant staff and planning teams have the opportunity to collaborate?
- ✓ Will instructional accommodations be made for different levels of abilities?
- ✓ Will instruction, communication, and materials be adapted for students who speak a language other than English?

# Glossary of Terms

For purposes of this resource, key terms commonly used in distance learning are defined as follows:

- *Assistive technology*: tools, software, devices, or systems to support performance of activities that may be otherwise difficult for SWDs.
- *Asynchronous learning*: students engage in remote learning independently and at their own pace within the confines of the learning experience. The educator facilitates independent work through the provision of instruction, materials, activities, and other necessary resources.
- *Blended learning*: students engage in learning that combines elements of in-person interaction with educators and distance learning, where students have an element of control over the timing and path of distance learning.
- *Distance learning*: students and educators engage but do so remotely rather than in person. Distance learning may involve the use of print, video, audio, Web-based, digital, or other technologies to facilitate learning.
- *Distributed learning*: educators work with students across multiple schools.
- *Synchronous learning*: students engage in remote learning together in real time and with facilitation by an educator.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup>Title IV, Part A Statute, Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015, 20 U.S.C. § 7117 (2015). Retrieved from <https://t4pcenter.ed.gov/T4PAStatutes.aspx?AspxAutoDetectCookieSupport=1#Sec%204102>

<sup>2</sup>Title IV, Part A Statute, Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015, §§ 4001-8526 (2015). Retrieved from <https://t4pcenter.ed.gov/T4PAStatutes.aspx?AspxAutoDetectCookieSupport=1#Sec%204102>

<sup>3</sup>U.S. Department Education, Office for Civil Rights. (2014). *Data snapshot: College and career readiness* (Issue Brief No. 3). <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED577784>

<sup>4</sup>The Foundation for Blended and Online Learning & Evergreen Education Group. (2018). *Digital learning strategies for rural America: A scan of policy and practice in K-12 education*. Retrieved from <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED588911>

<sup>5</sup>National Art Education Association. (n.d.). *Remote learning toolkit*. Retrieved from <https://www.arteducators.org/learn-tools/remote-learning-toolkit>

<sup>6</sup>Cowen, A. (2020, April 23). 12 engineering design challenges perfect for remote learning [Web log post]. Retrieved from <https://www.sciencebuddies.org/blog/engineering-design-challenge-lessons>

<sup>7</sup>Zuger, S. (2020, April 23). How it's done: Remote STEM learning. *Tech & Learning*. Retrieved from <https://www.techlearning.com/how-to/how-its-done-remote-stem-learning>

<sup>8</sup>Gilllin, H. (2020, April 8). Integrating physical activity into distance education. *Texas A&M Today*. Retrieved from <https://today.tamu.edu/2020/04/08/integrating-physical-activity-into-distance-education/>

<sup>9</sup>Digital Learning Now. (2015). *Smart Series: Personalizing and guiding college & career readiness*. Retrieved from <http://www.digitallearningnow.com/policy/publications/smart-series/>

<sup>10</sup>National Association for College Admission Counseling. (n.d.). *NACAC virus response resource directory*. Retrieved from <https://www.nacacnet.org/news--publications/newsroom/virus-response-resource-directory/>

<sup>11</sup>Carnegie Museum of Art. (n.d.). Collection. Retrieved from <https://collection.cmoa.org/?page=1&perPage=10>

<sup>12</sup>Schwartz, K. (2015). How integrating arts into other subjects makes learning come alive. *KQED Mind Shift*. Retrieved from <https://www.kqed.org/mindshift/38576/how-integrating-arts-into-other-subjects-makes-learning-come-alive>

<sup>13</sup>Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning. (n.d.). CASEL Cares Initiative Connecting the SEL Community. Retrieved from <https://casel.org/resources-covid/>

<sup>14</sup>Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning. (n.d.). Distance learning. Retrieved from <https://casel.org/sp-faq/distance-learning/>

<sup>15</sup>U.S. Department of Education. (2020). *STEM & distance learning* [Webinar]. Retrieved from [https://edstream.ed.gov/webcast/Play/45f5275bfb334b95834ddfc1f81219821d?utm\\_content=&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_name=&utm\\_source=govdelivery&u](https://edstream.ed.gov/webcast/Play/45f5275bfb334b95834ddfc1f81219821d?utm_content=&utm_medium=email&utm_name=&utm_source=govdelivery&u)

<sup>16</sup>Cator, K. (2019, January 9). Closing the digital learning gap [Web log post]. Retrieved from <https://digitalpromise.org/2019/01/09/closing-the-digital-learning-gap/>

<sup>17</sup>Konopelko, D. (2020, May 26). How K-12 IT leaders can support digital equity. *EdTech*. Retrieved from <https://edtechmagazine.com/k12/k12/k12/k12/k12/k12/k12/article/2020/05/how-k-12-it-leaders-can-support-digital-equity>

<sup>18</sup>Castelo, M. (2020, April 9). Continuing remote learning for students without internet. *EdTech*. Retrieved from <https://edtechmagazine.com/k12/k12/k12/k12/k12/k12/k12/article/2020/04/continuing-remote-learning-students-without-internet>

<sup>19</sup>Kurtz, J. (2020, March 13). Even without internet at home, students can keep learning [Web log post]. Retrieved from <https://www.blog.google/outreach-initiatives/education/offline-access-covid19/>

<sup>20</sup>U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Technology. (2017). *Reimagining the role of technology in education: 2017 National Education Technology Plan update*. Retrieved from <https://tech.ed.gov/netp/>

<sup>21</sup>Title IV, Part A Technical Assistance Center. (n.d.). Supporting effective use of technology (Contract #EDESE-15-A-0015). Retrieved from <https://t4pcenter.ed.gov/T4PAUploadFiles/ProductResource/SupportEffectUseTechlogy508C.pdf>



<sup>22</sup> iColorin colorado! (n.d.). *Distance learning for ELLs: Privacy considerations*. Retrieved from <https://www.colorincolorado.org/distance-learning-ells-privacy>

<sup>23</sup> U.S. Department of Education. (2014). Protecting student privacy while using online educational services: Requirements and best practices. Retrieved from <https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/resources/protecting-student-privacy-while-using-online-educational-services-requirements-and-best>

<sup>24</sup> U.S. Department of Education. (2016). Protecting student privacy while using online educational services: Model terms of service. Retrieved from <https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/resources/protecting-student-privacy-while-using-online-educational-services-model-terms-service>

<sup>25</sup> Burke, M. (2020, April 6). LA Unified shows progress with distance learning but has challenge connecting elementary students. *EdSource*. Retrieved from <https://edsources.org/2020/la-unified-shows-progress-setting-up-distance-learning-but-faces-biggest-challenge-connecting-elementary-students/628218>

<sup>26</sup> Toch, T. (2020, March 20). The do's and don'ts of distance learning in a pandemic. *EducationNext*. Retrieved from <https://www.educationnext.org/dos-and-donts-distance-learning-pandemic-coronavirus-covid-19/>

<sup>27</sup> The New Teacher Project. (2020). Specialized support for students with diverse learning needs engaged in at-home learning. In COVID-19 School Response Toolkit. Retrieved from <https://tntp.org/covid-19-school-response-toolkit/view/supporting-students-with-diverse-learning-needs-at-home>

<sup>28</sup> National Center for Learning Disabilities. (2016). Personalized learning: Policy & practice recommendations for meeting the needs of students with disabilities. Retrieved from [https://nclld.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Personalized-Learning-Recos-Final\\_11Q917-4.pdf](https://nclld.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Personalized-Learning-Recos-Final_11Q917-4.pdf)

<sup>29</sup> U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services. (2020). Supplemental fact sheet: Addressing the risk of COVID-19 in preschool, elementary and secondary schools while serving children with disabilities. Retrieved from <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/frontpage/faq/rr/policyguidance/Supple%20Fact%20Sheet%203.21.20%20FINAL.pdf>

<sup>30</sup> Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. (2020). Questions and answers on providing services to children with disabilities during the coronavirus disease 2019 outbreak. Retrieved from <https://sites.ed.gov/idea/idea-files/q-and-a-providing-services-to-children-with-disabilities-during-the-coronavirus-disease-2019-outbreak/#Q-A-5>

<sup>31</sup> California Department of Education. (2020). *Distance learning considerations*. Retrieved from <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/cr/dl/dlconsiderations.asp>

<sup>32</sup> Deschaine, M. (2018). *Supporting students with disabilities in k-12 online and blended learning*. Lansing, MI: Michigan Virtual University. Retrieved from <https://mvlri.org/research/publications/supporting-students-with-disabilities-in-k-12-online-and-blended-learning/>

<sup>33</sup> U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs. (n.d.) *Continuity of learning during COVID-19*. Retrieved from <https://osepideasthatwork.org/continuity-learning-during-covid-19>

<sup>34</sup> Herberger, D. (2020). Considerations for teachers providing distance learning to students with disabilities. San Francisco, CA: WestEd. Retrieved from <https://www.wested.org/resources/providing-distance-learning-to-students-with-disabilities/#>

<sup>35</sup> National Center for Learning Disabilities. (n.d.). *COVID-19 educator resources*. Retrieved from <https://www.nclld.org/covid-19-educator-resources#1585860121650-c7248472-4ff7>

<sup>36</sup> English Learners Success Forum. (2020, March 23). 5 things districts and educators can do to support instruction for English learners during COVID-19. *English Learners Success Forum*. Retrieved from <https://www.elsuccessforum.org/news/5-things-districts-and-educators-can-do-to-support-instruction-for-english-learners-during-covid-19>

<sup>37</sup> U.S. Department of Education. (2018). *Educator toolkit: Using educational technology – 21st century supports for English learners* (Contract No. ED-PEP-11-O-0088/TO27). Retrieved from <https://tech.ed.gov/files/2018/10/18-0158-EducatorToolkit-2018-10-12.pdf>

<sup>38</sup> U.S. Department of Education. (2016). *English learner toolkit for state and local education agencies* (SEAs and LEAs) (Contract No. ED-ELA-12-C-0092). Retrieved from <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oela/english-learner-toolkit/eltoolkit.pdf>

<sup>39</sup> TNTP. (2020). *Supporting multilingual learners (MLLs)/English language learners (ELLs) during the COVID-19 shutdown*. Retrieved from [https://tntp.org/assets/documents/ELL\\_and\\_ELD\\_At-Home\\_Learning\\_Support-TNTP.pdf](https://tntp.org/assets/documents/ELL_and_ELD_At-Home_Learning_Support-TNTP.pdf)

## Appendix A: Distance Learning Strategies and Options for Adaptation and Application

The following chart provides examples of distance learning strategies, including those that utilize virtual resources and tools; foster active participation, critical thinking, or collaboration; or use a variety of materials. For each strategy, notation ('X') indicates options for the related format (i.e., tech vs. low or no-tech), focus (i.e., how they address common challenges that arise in distance learning), and WRE subject area(s); see the key below the chart for more details.

Five areas of focus offer opportunities for adaptation with each distance learning strategy:

- “Learning materials” refer to different types of physical items that may be used for instruction
- “Instructional format” strategies are examples of different methods for conveying content or engaging students in learning

- “Learning environment” refers to where activities take place (e.g., in the home, at another site, virtually/online)
- “Knowledge integration” activities connect concepts and learning across subjects or content areas
- “Connections and relationship” strategies foster connections among students and between students and staff.

The suggested focus areas for each strategy are not mutually exclusive, and educator’s preferences and instructional design may suggest opportunities to adapt and apply different strategies in unique ways beyond the suggestions in this table. The chart is not meant to provide an exhaustive list of strategies but rather to provide some inspiration and ideas for ways to engage students in distance learning activities. Footnotes below the chart provide additional information on select strategies that may not be broadly understood.

| DISTANCE LEARNING STRATEGIES         | Format             |                | Strategy Focus     |                      |                      |                       |                             | Applicable Subjects   |              |                    |                             |                           |                    |                         |                  |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------|----------------|--------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|--------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|------------------|
|                                      | Tech- or web-based | Low or no-tech | Learning materials | Instructional format | Learning environment | Knowledge integration | Connections & relationships | STEM+Computer Science | Music & Arts | Physical Education | College and Career Guidance | Social Emotional Learning | History/Government | Environmental Education | Foreign Language |
| <b>Virtual Resources &amp; Tools</b> |                    |                |                    |                      |                      |                       |                             |                       |              |                    |                             |                           |                    |                         |                  |
| Virtual museum tours                 | X                  |                |                    | X                    | X                    | X                     |                             | X                     | X            |                    |                             |                           | X                  | X                       |                  |
| Mobile applications <sup>1</sup>     | X                  |                |                    | X                    | X                    | X                     | X                           | X                     | X            | X                  |                             | X                         |                    |                         | X                |
| <b>Active Participation</b>          |                    |                |                    |                      |                      |                       |                             |                       |              |                    |                             |                           |                    |                         |                  |
| Video demonstration                  | X                  |                |                    | X                    | X                    |                       |                             | X                     | X            | X                  | X                           | X                         | X                  | X                       | X                |
| Photo sharing <sup>2</sup>           | X                  |                |                    | X                    | X                    |                       | X                           | X                     | X            |                    |                             |                           |                    | X                       |                  |
| Scavenger hunt <sup>3</sup>          |                    | X              |                    | X                    | X                    | X                     |                             | X                     | X            | X                  |                             |                           | X                  | X                       |                  |

*Continued on next page*

| DISTANCE LEARNING STRATEGIES                  | Format             |                | Strategy Focus     |                      |                      |                       | Applicable Subjects         |                       |              |                    |                             |                           |                    |                         |                  |
|---|--------------------|----------------|--------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|--------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|------------------|
|   | Tech- or web-based | Low or no-tech | Learning materials | Instructional format | Learning environment | Knowledge integration | Connections & relationships | STEM+Computer Science | Music & Arts | Physical Education | College and Career Guidance | Social Emotional Learning | History/Government | Environmental Education | Foreign Language |
| <b>Critical Thinking</b>                      |                    |                |                    |                      |                      |                       |                             |                       |              |                    |                             |                           |                    |                         |                  |
| Theory development                            | X                  | X              |                    | X                    |                      | X                     |                             | X                     | X            |                    |                             |                           |                    |                         |                  |
| Experiment design <sup>4</sup>                | X                  | X              |                    | X                    |                      | X                     |                             | X                     |              |                    |                             |                           |                    |                         |                  |
| Reflection/journaling                         | X                  | X              |                    | X                    |                      | X                     |                             | X                     | X            |                    | X                           | X                         | X                  |                         |                  |
| <b>Collaboration</b>                          |                    |                |                    |                      |                      |                       |                             |                       |              |                    |                             |                           |                    |                         |                  |
| Sharing tips                                  | X                  | X              |                    | X                    |                      | X                     | X                           |                       |              |                    | X                           | X                         |                    |                         |                  |
| Class check-ins                               | X                  | X              |                    |                      |                      |                       | X                           | X                     | X            | X                  | X                           | X                         | X                  | X                       | X                |
| Tracking/ sharing information                 | X                  |                |                    | X                    |                      |                       | X                           |                       |              |                    | X                           |                           |                    |                         |                  |
| Shared documents in a virtual drive or folder | X                  |                |                    | X                    | X                    | X                     |                             | X                     | X            | X                  | X                           | X                         | X                  | X                       | X                |
| Phone or video call/conferencing              | X                  | X              |                    | X                    | X                    |                       | X                           | X                     | X            | X                  | X                           | X                         | X                  | X                       | X                |
| Email/letter exchanges                        | X                  | X              |                    |                      | X                    |                       | X                           | X                     | X            | X                  | X                           | X                         | X                  | X                       | X                |
| Virtual office hours                          | X                  |                |                    | X                    | X                    |                       | X                           | X                     | X            | X                  | X                           | X                         | X                  | X                       | X                |
| <b>Variety of materials</b>                   |                    |                |                    |                      |                      |                       |                             |                       |              |                    |                             |                           |                    |                         |                  |
| Use of items available at home or outdoors    |                    | X              | X                  |                      |                      | X                     |                             | X                     | X            | X                  |                             |                           |                    |                         | X                |
| Take-home material kits                       |                    | X              | X                  |                      |                      |                       |                             | X                     | X            | X                  |                             |                           |                    |                         | X                |
| Hard copy materials/packets                   |                    | X              | X                  |                      |                      |                       |                             | X                     | X            | X                  | X                           | X                         | X                  | X                       | X                |

<sup>1</sup> **Mobile applications:** software programs, or “apps”, that are typically designed for use on a smartphone, tablet, or smartwatch. In this context, mobile applications can be used to access specific content relevant to a course or topic. Additionally, mobile applications, can allow students and educators to connect with one another such as through social media, especially those that students may already be familiar with using.

<sup>2</sup> **Photo sharing:** capturing and sharing video or picture images. In this context, photo sharing can be used to allow students to actively shape their own learning or tell a story, especially when students can capture videos or images that they select.

<sup>3</sup> **Scavenger hunt:** finding items on a provided list. In this context, a scavenger hunt can be used to help students learn more about their environments and understand practical applications of what they learn, especially when students can participate in an outdoor scavenger hunt. In a distance learning environment, students can do the scavenger hunt independently or collaborate as a team to identify items in their respective environments (e.g., homes, neighborhoods, area parks) to complete the list.

<sup>4</sup> **Experiment design:** developing a plan to answer a research question, including developing an informed research question, identifying and developing tools to collect information to answer the research question, planning who to collect information from and how, and developing an approach for making sense of the information they collect. In this context, students can work independently or collaboratively to develop an experimental design in lieu or ahead of carrying out an actual experiment. A research design can be developed to answer questions across a range of disciplines.

*Continued on next page*

**Key:**

- **Distance learning strategies:** Ways to engage students in learning and activities. See chart footnotes for details on select strategies.
  
- **Format:** Mode of using strategies.
  - Tech- or web-based: Strategies that use, or can use, a device or internet.
  - Low- or no-tech: Strategies that do not require a device or internet, or only minimal use.
  
- **Strategy Focus:** How strategy can be used to address various challenges in a distance learning environment, through use and provision of materials, provision of instruction, consideration of learning environment, integration of knowledge, or relationship building.
  - Learning materials: Strategies that address physical items used or needed.
  - Instructional format: Strategies that address methods for conveying content or engaging students in activities.
  - Learning Environment: Strategies that address where learning is taking place, particularly virtual interactive or outdoor environments.
  - Knowledge Integration: Strategies that address connecting concepts and learning across content areas.
  - Relationships: Strategies that address fostering and maintaining connections among students and between students and staff.

## Appendix B: Selection of Distance Learning Resources for Different Subjects

The following chart, organized by selected instructional subjects, lists some examples of resources that could be used to support distance learning. This list is not meant to be exhaustive and is intended to give the reader an idea of the types of resources that are available. Featured subjects include areas of instruction that may require more thought and planning to translate into a distance learning situation.

| Subject Area                                      | Definition   | Informational and Activity Resources   |
|---|--|--|
| Science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) | Promotes skills in solving problems, making sense of information, and gathering and evaluating evidence to make decisions <sup>1</sup>                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">National Nanotechnology Coordinated Infrastructure</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Smithsonian Science Education Center</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Science Buddies</a></li> </ul>  |
| Arts  | Promotes expression through dance, media arts, theater, or visual arts <sup>2</sup>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">National Art Education Association</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Museum Computer Network (MCN)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Carnegie Museum of Art</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">The Kennedy Center</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Wide Open School</a></li> </ul>  |
| Physical education                                | Develops motor skills and knowledge of nutrition, physical fitness, and related benefits <sup>3</sup>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Shape America</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Online Physical Education Network (OPEN)</a></li> </ul>  |
| College and career guidance                       | Supports students and families in making informed educational and career choices by raising awareness and assisting with planning and preparation <sup>4</sup> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Digital Learning Now</a> (see resource titled <i>Personalizing and Guiding College &amp; Career Readiness</i>)</li> <li>• <a href="#">Pullias Center for Higher Education</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">National Association for College Admission Counseling</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Association for Career and Technical Education</a></li> </ul> |
| Social emotional learning (SEL)                   | Builds competencies to manage emotions, set goals, make decisions, display empathy, and develop positive relationships <sup>5</sup>                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Center to Improve Social and Emotional Learning and School Safety</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">National Center on Safe and Supportive Learning Environments</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">CASEL distance learning resources</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">National Art Education Association—Social Emotional Learning: Remote Learning</a></li> </ul>      |

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Department of Education. (n.d.). *Science, technology, engineering, and math, including computer science*. <https://www.ed.gov/stem>

<sup>2</sup> Swapp, N. (2016). Creativity and academics: The power of an arts education. *Edutopia*. <https://www.edutopia.org/blog/creativity-academics-power-of-arts-education-neil-swapp>

<sup>3</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (n.d.). *Physical education*. <https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/physicalactivity/physical-education.htm#:~:text=Physical%20education%20provides%20cognitive%20content,physical%20activity%20and%20physical%20fitness.&text=Supporting%20schools%20to%20establish%20physical,physically%20active%20for%20a%20lifetime>

<sup>4</sup> Digital Learning Now. (2015). *Smart Series: Personalizing and guiding college & career readiness*. Retrieved from <http://www.digitallearningnow.com/policy/publications/smart-series/>

<sup>5</sup> Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning. (n.d.) *What is SEL?* <https://casel.org/what-is-sel/>



## CONTACT US

Help Desk Toll-Free Number: (833) 404-4845

Help Desk Email: [info@T4PACenter.org](mailto:info@T4PACenter.org)

T4PA Center Website: <https://t4pacenter.ed.gov>

 [@T4PACenter](https://twitter.com/T4PACenter)

Established in 2018, the T4PA Center is operated by Synergy Enterprises, Inc. under Contract #ED-ESE-15-A-0015 awarded by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Safe and Supportive Schools (OSSS). All materials created or disseminated by the T4PA Center, including the contents of this publication, should not be presumed to reflect the positions or policies of the U.S. Department of Education or to imply endorsement by the U.S. Department of Education. The U.S. Department of Education and the T4PA Center do not guarantee the accuracy, timeliness, applicability, or completeness of any outside information provided in these materials. The T4PA Center does not endorse products, services, or service providers.

This publication may contain hyperlinks and URLs for information created and maintained by private organizations. This information is provided for the reader's convenience. The inclusion of information or a hyperlink or URL does not reflect the importance of the organization, nor is it intended to endorse any views expressed or services offered. All hyperlinks and URLs were accessed March 2021.