VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
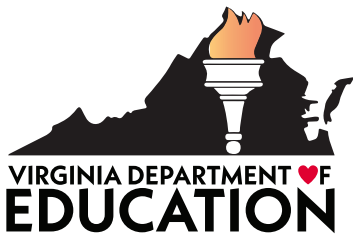
VIRGINIA IS FOR LEARNERS

VIRGINIA
LEARNS
ANYWHERE

A report and recommendations from Virginia's educators on the Continuity for Learning (C4L) Task Force

C4L∞
CONTINUITY
FOR
LEARNING

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT ♥ OF EDUCATION

VIRGINIA EDUCATION LEADERSHIP

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Governor of Virginia

Atif Qarni
Secretary of Education

Dr. James F. Lane
Superintendent
of Public Instruction

Jenna Conway
Chief School
Readiness Officer

MISSION

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

VIRGINIA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Daniel A. Gecker
President

Diane T. Atkinson
Vice President

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

Dr. Francisco Durán

Anne B. Holton

Dr. Tammy Mann

CORE VALUES

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

- Inclusion
- Excellence
- Service
- Optimism

Dr. Keisha Pexton

Pamela Davis-Vaught

Dr. Jamelle S. Wilson

VIRGINIA IS FOR *all* LEARNERS

FOREWARD

As we lean into the current unprecedented situation, the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE), Board of Education, and Secretary of Education recognize the significant impact to students an extended school closure can be as learning gaps may become wider and more apparent. While our local school divisions navigate this uncharted territory, it is incumbent on VDOE to provide guidance, technical support, and offer alternate solutions to continuity for learning to support the approximately 1.3 million students across the Commonwealth.

When Governor Northam announced the closure of schools for the remainder of the academic year, VDOE quickly formed a Continuity for Learning Task Force to develop guidance for educators to meet the immediate needs of supporting learning outside our brick and mortar classrooms. The team was thoughtful in selecting the phrase "Continuity for Learning" in an effort to appropriately define the work being done to ensure that instruction continues so students can successfully close out the 2019-2020 school year and remain prepared for the school year ahead. In doing so, educators and school division leaders can focus on meeting those academic needs from a global perspective that extends beyond online learning to maximize the potential of all learners. We challenged the Task Force to leverage this public health crisis to think outside the box and focus on a number of critical elements relevant to academic success, including equity, deeper learning, and the social emotional health of our students.

Members on this Task Force, including teachers, instructional leaders, and content knowledge experts, came together over the last few days to craft comprehensive guidance that will ensure learning continues for all students, while also ensuring students are served equitably, regardless of income level, access to technology, English Learner status, or special needs. The guidance includes an emphasis on instructional models that could include blending of non-technology; face-to-face, small-group learning sessions; virtual platforms; and/or a combination of all of these models. The continuity for learning plans will vary in each local school division. Local school boards and divisions will have to make local decisions that are unique to their student population, staff and resources. School divisions are encouraged to utilize the Task Force guidance to develop and implement continuity for learning plans in partnership with families, staff members, and local school boards.

We know this has been a difficult time for families, schools, and communities across the Commonwealth and throughout the country. We appreciate the educators and school division leaders who are working tirelessly during these uncertain times to help develop equitable and innovative approaches to continuing instruction that allows us to remain focused on maximizing the potential of all students. While the current public health crisis forced educators to pivot their instructional delivery, our Task Force has created a plan for school divisions to keep our students engaged and our educators supported.
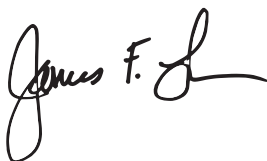
Serving as an exemplar for education, Virginia was the second state in the nation to close schools for the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year in response to the COVID-19 outbreak. Equipping students to succeed outside the classroom during this unprecedented time has required tremendous dedication and commitment from Virginia educators.

The health and success of all students in the Commonwealth remain the Virginia Department of Education's top priority. The work of the Continuity for Learning Task Force also ensures that even in unforeseen circumstances, we can maximize the potential of all learners. Thank you to everyone who agreed to be a part of this incredible collaboration.
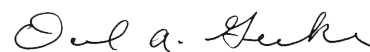
Sincerely,

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Commonwealth of Virginia

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Superintendent
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C4L TASK FORCE EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In an effort to support Virginia educators, the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) created a Continuity for Learning (C4L) Task Force to address the immediate needs of administrators and teachers in supporting students. The C4L Task Force consisted of teachers, leaders, and collaborating educational partners across Virginia. Over the course of three days, this C4L Task Force virtually convened over 120 members to create the recommendations in this document.

On March 30, Superintendent of Public Instruction James Lane convened the C4L Task Force and provided the educators and VDOE staff with the following charge:
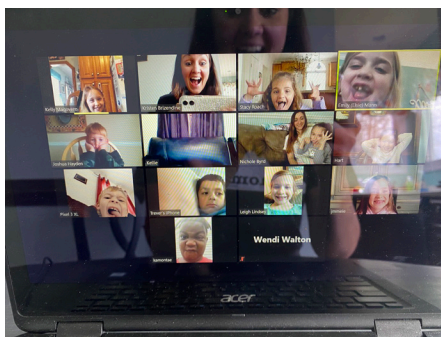
"We face the unprecedented closure of all Virginia Public Schools in the immediate future. This Commonwealth has some of the best educators in the nation. Let's use the Profile of a Virginia Graduate to create a response that serves generations."

While the Task Force recognizes the this is a difficult time for families, teachers, and students, it is also a time to come together as a community to ensure all of our students' needs are met. The recommendations in this document address strategies to prevent further expanding of currently existing learning gaps among our students. At the same time, this document discusses the importance of supporting the social and emotional needs of students first. Below you will find the common themes that arose from the work of the Task Force.

COMMON THEMES EMERGED FROM THIS WORK, INCLUDING THE NEED FOR GUIDANCE TO:

- Focus first on all students and their social and emotional needs. This is a devastating time for all Virginians and we must put the needs of our students before all else.

- Target essential knowledge and skills for grade levels and content areas. Educators must identify what is essential for learning to continue while also ensuring we don't expand upon already existing learning gaps.

- Create quality learning opportunities that integrate essential knowledge and Virginia's 5 C skills (critical thinking, creative thinking, communication, collaboration, and citizenship). Educators can deepen learning by focusing on the essential knowledge that students can engage in while at home.

- Provide equitable support for all students and families recognizing that some of our families do not have access to the same resources and supports.

- Focus on administrator-to-teacher, administrator-to-families, teacher-to-student and
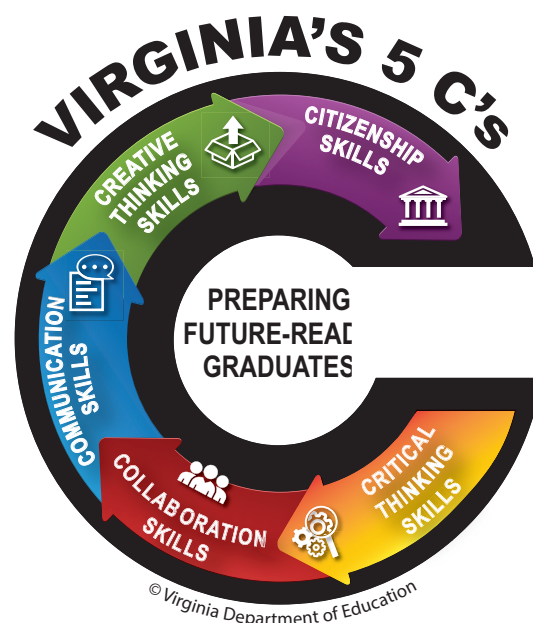
teacher-to-family communication in order to maintain clear and concise lines of communication and guidelines for learning. Communication should be weekly and address the expectations of student learning for the week.

- Use instructional models that contain innovative approaches to teaching and learning including learner-centered, teacher-centered, and hybrid models. Delivery of instruction should align with students needs and resources. Internet access may not be available for all students or teachers and lessons should be differentiated.

- Utilize materials, resources, learning management systems, and communication platforms that are consistent across grade levels and content areas within a school. A recommendation of the Task Force for schools is to utilize existing resources that are familiar to students, teachers, and families.

- Support assessment of and for student learning consisting of feedback to support continuity for learning. The VDOE does not recommend grading of student work during this time. The Task Force recognizes the importance of providing continuous feedback as a way to build relationships and provide meaningful feedback during a time when students are feeling isolated from their school community.

- Provide individualized professional learning to staff knowing this a busy and uncertain time for educators. Task Force encourages teachers to reach out to administrators and peers to support just-in-time learning.

- Provide a continuity of support to families. As social and emotional needs of students are critical during this time, the same can be said for our families. The Task Force recognizes our families are tackling many difficult issues and learning may not be the highest priority.

- Support local decision-making to honor local needs. This document provides recommendations for teaching and learning, divisions should analyze and address local needs while creating their continuity for learning plans.

When schools across the Commonwealth closed their doors, all Virginia public schools quickly transitioned from the comfort and familiarity of learning in schools to an unprecedented, technology-enabled, and remote learning model. Communities and school divisions continue to work tirelessly to manage this transition in ways that preserve a commitment to equity of access and purposeful, sustainable engagement. This difficult and at times overwhelming work is unfolding in the same days that families face uncertainty around continued employment, access to resources, and exposure to the COVID-19 virus.

However, the school year is anything but over. During this historic and uncertain window of time, Virginia teachers and administrators are actively mobilizing to provide a model for how essential knowledge and skills can yield deeper learning outcomes for students. Teachers are learning how to communicate and cultivate relationships with learners of all ages in innovative ways. Division and school administrators are working to discover new ways to spark much-needed dialogue between school and community. Educators are innovating around the creation and delivery of essential professional learning supports that simply did not exist at this level of scale a month ago.

The C4L Task Force Guide is intended for immediate use and in ways deemed most useful by each of the 132 public school divisions across Virginia during the extended school closure.

RESOURCES FROM THE VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

THE VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (VDOE) FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

The VDOE has compiled a list of COVID-19 FAQ for division and school-level administrators related to include school closures, Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) guidance, school budget and finance, assessment and accountability, instruction, early childhood, special education and student services, school nutrition, data collection and technology, teacher education and licensure, and public meetings.

The VDOE has developed further documents to provide further guidance and support to school divisions. Documents are linked below.

Guidance from the Department of Special Education and Student Services - The goal of this document is to provide school divisions and stakeholders with information and solutions around the provision of services for special education and student services.

COVID-19: A Parent Guide for School-Age Children - The VDOE has created this guide to serve as a resource for parents, families and caregivers on a variety of topics related to COVID-19 and their students.

Guidance on Graduation Requirements, Awarding of Credits, and Continuity of Learning - The goal of this document is to provide school divisions with information and solutions around graduation requirements, promotion, new instruction, and ease of process.

Emergency Child Care during Statewide School Closure - The Department of Social Services (VDSS) and the VDOE are working closely together in this effort to support critical members of the workforce and provide safe child care alternatives for their families. This document outlines a variety of options and waivers which different public and private entities and communities should consider in order to provide safe child care alternatives for essential personnel while maintaining stringent health protocols to minimize the risk of additional COVID-19 spread.

OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

The VDOE has provided resources through #GoOpenVA. #GoOpenVA is Virginia's home for Open Educational Resources (OER). It's 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. Refer to the Quick Guide to Open Educational Resources (OER) to learn more. Visit #GoOpenVA: COVID-19 Extended Closing Resources for materials provided by Virginia school divisions to support educational activities when schools are closed.

#GoOpenVA
VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT ♥F EDUCATION®

EQUITY CONSIDERATIONS

EQUALITY

EQUITY

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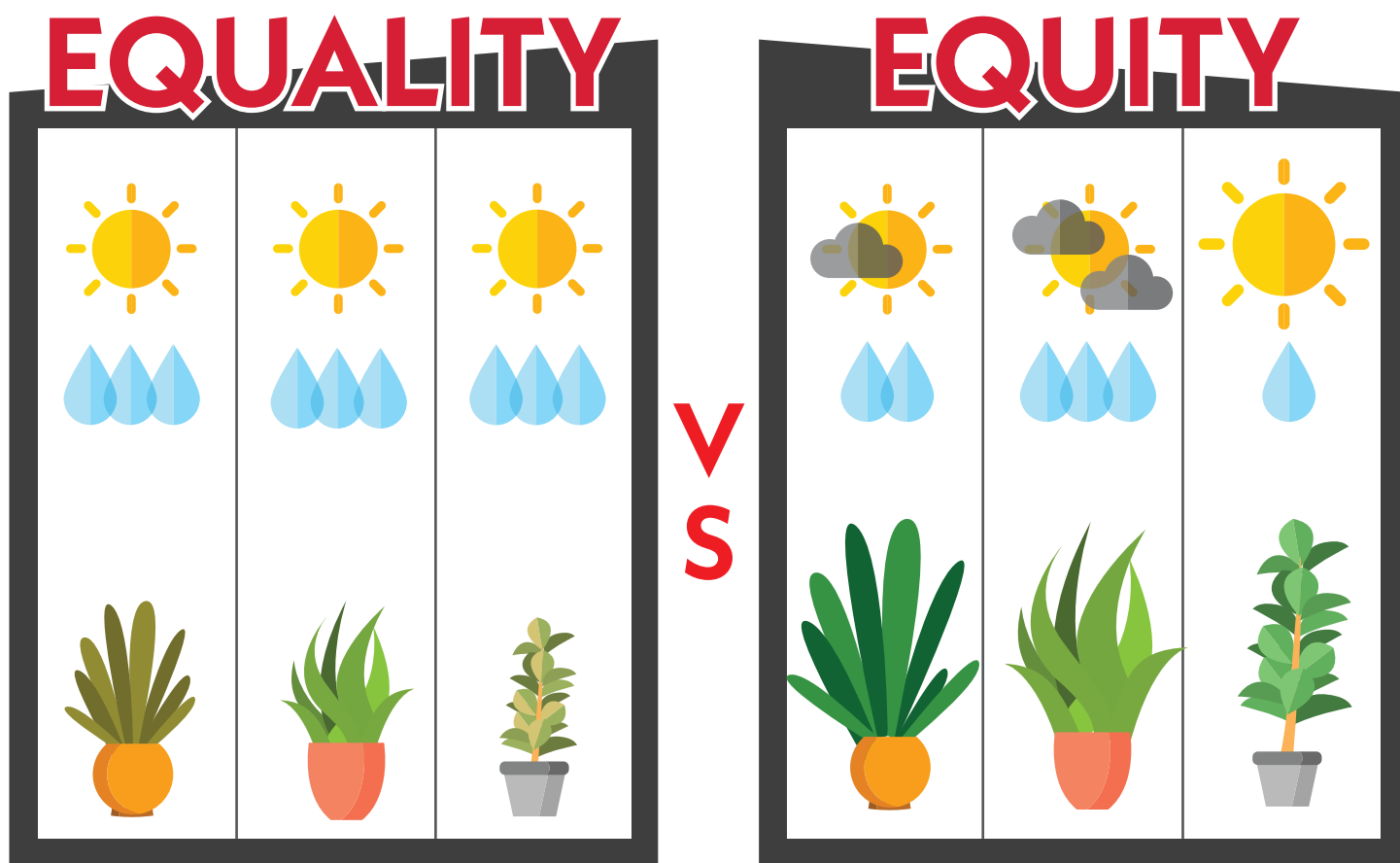
Many educators, schools, and school leaders are navigating uncharted territory. As local school divisions begin to explore options for virtual or online instruction, and other instructional delivery methods, careful consideration should be made to provide equitable access and support for a variety of student learning needs. Care should be taken not to exacerbate existing gaps in student achievement throughout this period of school closure. It is critically important that all educators are mindful of the needs of vulnerable student groups including early learners, English Learners, students experiencing homelessness, students from low socio-economic backgrounds, and students with disabilities.

Achieving equity in remote learning requires leaders to be intentional about ensuring support for student populations who often already have reduced opportunities for academic success in our traditional in-person education model. As you review the guidelines and resources provided here, please take care to keep equity at the forefront of your planning. As equity champions in our communities, ensuring the needs of ALL learners must remain our priority during this time. The next pages provide key steps and actions to follow during extended school closure.

"AS SCHOOL DIVISIONS REVIEW OUR GUIDANCE AND PLOT A COURSE FORWARD THAT BEST FITS THEIR UNIQUE CIRCUMSTANCES, THEY SHOULD MAKE SURE THAT EVERY DECISION IS EQUITABLE AND MEETS THE NEEDS OF ALL LEARNERS, INCLUDING EARLY LEARNERS, ENGLISH LEARNERS, STUDENTS EXPERIENCING POVERTY AND STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES"
- Dr. James F. Lane

EQUITY CONSIDERATIONS

EQUITY KEY STEPS AND ACTIONS

Key steps to ensuring educational equity during COVID-19 School Closures:

Strive to meet students' immediate needs first.

Prioritize the physical and social-emotional needs of particularly vulnerable students. Ensure safety, belonging, and mental health as a foundation for learning.

Actions you may consider:

- Provide training/guidance to school staff on culturally responsive student and family outreach strategies.
- Consider the historical impact the spread of the disease has had on native populations and how the COVID-19 pandemic may be impacting student members of Virginia's Tribes.
- Establish a protocol to assess the needs of vulnerable students, including, ELs, immigrant and refugee students, and students experiencing food, housing, or healthcare insecurity. Additional consideration should also be provided for students under state care (foster care, detention facilities, and hospitals).

Ensure equitable access to learning resources and provide the adequate supports necessary for students to achieve success.

Achieving equity in remote learning is more complex than simply providing equality in access to learning resources and technology. Keep in mind that it is not enough to simply provide resources; there must be adequate support to students and families to ensure student success.

As divisions explore continuous learning models, equitable access and proper supports for students must be a priority. While online and e-learning models are attractive, to reach all student groups, school divisions must consider equitable access to the Internet and technology and provide the necessary resources to ensure that families are able to support their student's education. Insufficient availability of supports for families and students may widen disparities instead of narrowing them.

Actions you may consider:

- Monitor the impact your model will have on underserved groups, including students of color, English Learners, and students experiencing poverty and homelessness.
- Send out a questionnaire to gather information about each students' learning environment, access to technology and adult learning support.
- Ensure instructional approaches, assignments and learning opportunities are culturally relevant and culturally responsive.
- Evaluate whether your distance learning model will improve or worsen disparities between student groups. Examine barriers to equitable implementation and unintended consequences.
- Monitor compliance with Federal and State Civil Rights laws and continued guidance being issued by VDOE and USED.

EQUITY CONSIDERATIONS

Provide clear, centralized, and regular communication to all families.

Actions you may consider:

- Develop a user-friendly, multilingual online hub for families to receive up-to-date information, educational resources, and request support.
- Establish common, division-wide systems for touching base with every student (via email, phone or text message) and family once per week in the family's primary language and ensure availability of on-call division teams that can connect students and families to statewide and community services when needed.
- Leverage all community wrap-around services including partnerships with local civil rights organizations, faith-based organizations, nonprofits, and relevant media outlets, to ensure that information reaches every population.

Begin developing a return to learning equity plan.

> Disruptions to the stability of traditional schooling that come with continued school closures may be particularly challenging for students to manage. Inequitable access to technology, learning supports, and family resources will disproportionately impact vulnerable students. The impact of sustained learning loss during this period of school closures combined with disparities in the implementation of continuity for learning models has the potential to exacerbate previously existing gaps in student achievements.

Actions you may consider:

- Form a division-level or school-based Return to Learning Equity Team that includes community-based organizations, wrap around partners and representatives from state-operated programs (foster care, detention facilities, and hospitals).

- Evaluate existing data to identify students and student groups most vulnerable to learning loss disproportionality.

- Design diagnostic systems to evaluate student learning growth and establish accountability measures to monitor progress.

INSTRUCTIONAL MODELS AND STRATEGIES

ESTABLISHING A SYSTEM FOR CONTINUITY FOR LEARNING

Divisions are encouraged to establish a local philosophy and approach for Continuity for Learning.

> Although school buildings are temporarily closed, "school" remains a means to engage students with experiences that continue the planned learning program and help them to stay connected with teachers and classmates. These learning experiences offer authentic opportunities to focus on essential knowledge and 21st Century skills. They emphasize communication, collaboration, creativity and involve a balance of on-screen and off-screen tasks that help connect to previous learning and the current curriculum.

The C4L Task Force identified three different models for teachers to use to support learning and delivery of instruction by grade levels (elementary) or content areas (secondary). Teachers should select the model most closely aligned to their comfort level given previous professional learning experiences combined with current circumstances. Teachers may also interchange models as needed to support content and instruction. Each model allows for the integration of the essential knowledge with Virginia's 5 C's. The availability of technology must be a key consideration in each model. Each of the three models provide the following:

- sample week-long agenda;
- suggested strategies; and
- recommended resources.

Specific examples for each model by grade level and content area are included at the end of this document. Teachers are encouraged to look across content areas and grade levels for unique ideas within each model. It is the hope of the C4L Task Force that these models will provide schools and teachers with flexibility in choice in how teachers facilitate learning.

> "
>
> *We must address the most important realm of human need during this particular time - to be emotionally cared for and healthy while continuing to explore, learn, create, take risks, fail and learn from those failures. Adults, children, and their families have to know that we are in this together and are not in a race to finish a check-list of concepts/skills.*
>
> *-Gena Keller*
>
> C4L Advisory Member and Director of the Commonwealth Learning Partnership
>
> "

INSTRUCTIONAL MODELS AND STRATEGIES

LEARNER-CENTERED MODEL

The learner centered model prioritizes open-ended discovery and authentic learning experiences. Teachers and students use a wide range of resources to understand and consistently apply content knowledge toward the creation of work products that they may safely share with their local and extended communities. Educators who choose the learner centered model:

- wish to seize the opportunity for expanded student autonomy during an extended school closure;
- possess an intermediate to advanced level of comfort with designing and facilitating virtual and student-led learning experiences using Virginia's 5 C's; and
- provide intentional check-ins on progress towards learning goals and task expectations.

TEACHER-CENTERED MODEL

The teacher centered model prioritizes consistency and structure for contexts when students need more direct and explicit instruction and guidance. Instruction continues along content specific lines, with accommodations made for remote learning conditions. Students create work products that are shared largely between themselves and their respective teachers. Educators who choose the teacher centered model:

- adapt a variety of high-yield instructional strategies to best serve the learning needs of students in the midst of profound change; and understand Virginia's 5 C's; and
- provide ongoing feedback to students.

HYBRID MODEL

The hybrid model meshes the familiarity of established teacher directed instructional models with openness for additional student independence with context specific projects that apply content to the outside world. Students interact with carefully curated assignments to refine content mastery. They then work with their teachers and each other to periodically showcase learning in non-traditional and innovative ways. Educators who choose the hybrid model:

- leverage their experience and skill as teachers to create innovative ways to explore prior and possibly uncovered content using multiple formats and/or platforms;
- maximize learning gains via a combination of established essential knowledge and innovative challenges aligned to Virginia's 5 C's; and
- provide ongoing feedback to students.

INSTRUCTIONAL MODELS AND STRATEGIES

The links below will direct teachers and administrators to the resources and instructional model samples by grade level and content area.

ELEMENTARY RESOURCES AND INSTRUCTIONAL MODEL SAMPLES
PK-5 Instructional Models (Learner-Centered, Facilitator-Centered, Hybrid):

Pre-K

K-5 Core

K-5 Resource

Pre-K Online Resources

K-5 Online Resources

K-5 Online Resources to Support Diverse Learners

SECONDARY RESOURCES AND INSTRUCTIONAL MODEL SAMPLES

6-12 Instructional Models (Learner-Centered, Facilitator-Centered, Hybrid)

English and Reading

Mathematics

Science

World Languages

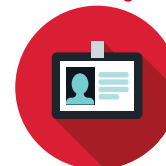Visual and Performing Arts

History and Social Science

Health and Physical Education

Career and Technical Education

6-12 Online Resources

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS FOR ADMINISTRATORS

1. WHAT CAN ADMINISTRATORS DO TO SUPPORT THE SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL NEEDS OF STUDENTS, FAMILIES, AND TEACHERS?

> Continuity for learning starts with continuity for support.

Administrators need to be mindful of the social-emotional state of teachers and students, and they should ensure their basic needs are being met before there can be continuity for learning. The teachers are likely to be experiencing increased stress as they work to juggle working from home and engaging students in learning. It is important for administrators to check on the well-being of their teachers each week. Similarly, teachers should be checking in with their students each week.

Awareness of and attention to Maslow's hierarchy of needs is essential to maximize student learning. At a minimum, students must have their physiological and safety needs met, along with feeling a sense of love and belonging. The following actions can help fulfill some of our students' basic needs:

- Ensure current and newly eligible students receive breakfast and lunch each weekday and connect with local food banks, faith-based partners, and service organizations to provide food to help sustain students and their families over the weekends. More specific information can be found in Appendix A.

- Partner with community organizations to provide wrap-around support services for students and families.

- Develop guiding questions for teachers to use when checking in with students and families.

- Set expectations for teachers and staff to connect with students and/or families on a weekly basis.

- Have school counselors collaborate with teachers and families to support well-being and academic planning.

Maslow's hierarchy of needs applies to staff as well. Administrators should provide time and space for teachers to share their success and seek new ideas from their colleagues. Administrators should also establish a culture of risk-taking. Teachers must have trust that they can fail forward and have flexibility as they work to offer students authentic and deeper learning experiences in new ways.

For more information on supporting and engaging families see Appendix B.

> Remember that families may be dealing with losing jobs, family members getting sick, family members working from home, and daycares being closed. Requiring school work could be too much for families. Furthermore, some families do not have wifi access, basic resources, or access to food.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS FOR ADMINISTRATORS

2. HOW DO DIVISIONS PREVENT LEARNING GAPS FROM EXPANDING DURING EXTENDED SCHOOL CLOSURE?

It is known that the school closures caused by the COVID-19 crisis will exacerbate existing inequities. This assessment is not an educated guess because research has consistently affirmed impediments caused by the "summer learning loss" phenomenon on our most vulnerable student groups. Our most vulnerable student group consists of student who are socio-economically disadvantaged*, English Learners, and students with disabilities.   These variables are known to drive inequities in our society, and they cannot be mitigated if the needs of vulnerable students are not paramount in our discourse on instructional design, instructional delivery, and learning opportunities this must occur even during a pandemic. This time of crisis does not lend to the normal but requires us to consider what innovations can be implemented to ensure that the most vulnerable of our students are not left behind.

Learning opportunities need to be differentiated in ways that provide access to all students. For remote learning to be successful, divisions need to identify barriers and creatively find solutions to overcome them. An example would be to provide printed activities for students that are delivered with student meals. Another common solution is for divisions to provide mobile hot spots throughout communities known for lack of access. The Task Force recommends divisions work together to share best practices.

3. HOW CAN ADMINISTRATORS TAKE CARE OF STAFF DURING EXTENDED SCHOOL CLOSURE?

During this challenging time, administrators should recognize the varying needs of not only our students but our teachers as well. Administrators should remain positive and communicate often with staff, making sure they feel supported and happy. Encourage teachers to ask questions and be receptive to their feelings. Administrators should encourage self-care and the balancing of home and school responsibilities. Make sure staff is aware you have their back as they find their new normal. For example, principals can send "shout outs" about teachers who are innovating their instructional practices through social media. Another example is to hold a virtual meeting with staff to just check-in and have conversations. Teachers are the frontline and administrators have a responsibility to create a sense of normalcy and calmness throughout this period.

4. WHAT EXPECTATIONS FOR LEARNING SHOULD BE COMMUNICATED TO TEACHERS?

Administrators need to set clear expectations of teachers. Learning expectations need to account for student needs, and administrators should understand the nature of pandemics and other catastrophic events that could lead to school closures. Situations may shift frequently, so expectations and priorities need to be fluid. As changes need to be made, consistent and clear expectations need to be communicated in a timely fashion. It is also important to simplify and streamline the learning tasks teachers expect of students.

Administrators should encourage teachers to set realistic learning goals. Continuity for learning does not translate into teaching as if this is business as usual. This is an opportunity to promote and engage in quality instruction and feedback aligned to the essential concepts for the grade level or content area.

*Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 requires local school divisions receiving federal funds to provide students with equal access to educational technology without regard to race, color, or national origin. For more information, see October 1, 2014 Dear Colleague Letter

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS FOR ADMINISTRATORS

Administrators should ensure that teaching promotes success for students and provides assistance to families during the learning process. This can be accomplished in the following ways:

- Provide a continuum of learning opportunities to engage a range of parent desires during an extended closure. Some parents will desire a large amount of work while others may not have the capacity (time, resources, energy, technical skills, etc.) to place the same emphasis on work completion.
- Offer students the ability to research or complete tasks in multiple ways, including ways that do not require access to technology.
- Design learning experiences emphasizing inquiry, relevance, and skill development.
- Make learning meaningful and provide productive and motivational feedback.
- Create a learning environment that engages all family members in conversations and/or problem-solving.
- Utilize resources with which teachers and students are familiar.
- Ensure students have access to independent work which they have the ability to complete with minimal to no parental support.
- Refine life-ready skills for students.

5. WHICH PRIORITIES SHOULD ADMINISTRATORS FOCUS ON TO ENSURE CONTINUITY FOR LEARNING?

In addition to a focus on the social-emotional needs of students, teachers should provide personalized opportunities to deeply explore academic themes and the curriculum. Students should engage more deeply in the curriculum, and the learning experiences should focus on the essential knowledge and skills.

Consider the following priorities to support continuity for learning:
- Focus on relationship building and attending to students' social and emotional learning needs.
- Ensure plans address the specific needs of diverse populations including Early Learners, English Learners, students experiencing homelessness, economically disadvantaged students, and students with disabilities. More specific information can be found in both Appendix C for students with disabilities and Appendix D for English Learners.
- Encourage gifted students to go deeper in learning and provide opportunities to extend their learning.
- Identify the essential knowledge within grade levels and content areas at a division level and integrate Virginia's 5 C's.
- Provide effective communication regarding the learning management system and/or communication tools to be used across the school or division.
- Provide time for teachers to participate in grade level, content area, and/or cross-curricular teams for planning for continuity for learning.
- Give students the flexibility in choosing ways that they might demonstrate mastery of the essential knowledge by allowing for student voice and choice.
- Include non-technology based options such as performance-based assessments, student-choice reading, etc.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS FOR ADMINISTRATORS

> **"Addressing the Needs of Students with Disabilities - Administrator's Role":**
> Administrators' key role in addressing the needs of students with disabilities is to provide the internal structures and systems for teachers and specialists to collaborate in planning and implementing specially-designed instruction. Teachers should have access to each student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) and understand not only accommodations, but also the nature of each student's disability.
>
> **Administrators should consider:**
> - Developing systems to monitor that the teachers are implementing students' IEPs;
> - Documenting specially designed instruction, accommodations, and modifications, according to students' IEPs;
> - Documenting dates and time providing services; and
> - Keeping data and reporting student progress.
>
> For special education issues related to compliance, refer to **COVID-19 & VA Public Schools**.

6. HOW CAN ADMINISTRATORS PROMOTE AND SUPPORT DEEPER LEARNING?

Administrators should promote and encourage learning opportunities that provide for student choice and empower students - aimed at creating personalized learning opportunities with individualized assessments of and for learning that focus on deeper learning. While many school divisions have their own definition of deeper learning, the VDOE defines it as "[demonstrating] knowledge through six competencies: mastering core academic content, thinking critically and solving complex problems, working collaboratively, communicating effectively, learning how to learn, and developing academic mindsets." The VDOE provides guidance specific to equitable deeper learning experiences with innovative approaches to teaching and learning.

Deeper learning provides opportunities for students to:
- create communities of learning;
- lead their own learning;
- connect learning to larger themes, concepts and across multiple subjects;
- apply learning to real-world issues and problems;
- network beyond the school walls;
- personalize their learning; and
- use technology as a tool to support and enhance learning.

The quality of the learning experience may have an added benefit of students wanting to go deeper and extend the learning experience.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS FOR ADMINISTRATORS

7. WHAT ARE THE KEY CONSIDERATIONS FOR ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATION TO TEACHERS AND THE COMMUNITY?

Administrators should follow the school division's communication plan which should provide an overall vision for when and how information will be shared with staff, students, and families. A s some families have multiple students in different schools and each student could have multiple teachers, it is important for communication to be as streamlined as possible.

Administrators need to provide clear, concise, timely, and consistent communication to teachers and families. It is important to separate information into manageable chunks and then spiral back over multiple messages to help reduce the stress and feelings of being overwhelmed by information overload. Consideration should be given to sharing messages in multiple languages to ensure families have access to important information, as is federally mandated.

Communications between teacher and home need to occur on a routine basis. Teachers should let families know how often to expect communication and what medium will be used. All communication should clearly identify the school and teacher names, as many families may have multiple students within the division.

Items that need to be communicated to teachers and families:

- where to find current information on the school's or division's website;
- where and how to access division-supported resources, including school meals, computer support, internet access, etc.; and
- impact on key events (i.e., athletics, prom, graduation, etc.).

Forms of communication may include some of the following, but should be modes used routinely with staff and families:

- communication apps;
- emails;
- flyers at meal distribution sites;
- mail;
- live videos;
- local news stations;
- office hours for administrators and teachers;
- parent-teacher communication log;

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- phone calls;
- podcasts;
- robocalls;
- school website;
- social media;
- streaming videos; and
- text messaging.

8. WHAT ADVICE ON INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO LEARNING CAN ADMINISTRATORS SHARE WITH TEACHERS?

Administrators should encourage teachers to take risks. Administrators should provide opportunities for teachers to practice innovative teaching techniques prior to emergency situations. Teachers must have trust that they can fail forward if they are to offer students authentic and deeper learning experiences. Unusual times call for non-traditional approaches to educating students. Teachers may need to differentiate learning experiences for students based on access to technology and developmental appropriateness.

In emergency situations, such as during extended school closures, schools and school divisions will need to engage in innovative approaches to learning. Administrators may recommend that teachers and students explore a variety of possible new learning opportunities, such as:

- activities followed by reflection;
- authentic learning experiences;
- career exploration;
- creativity in learning;
- critical thinking exercises;
- game-based instruction;
- inquiry-based learning;
- problem- and project-based learning;
- problem-solving activities;
- reading a variety of genres;
- technology-based direct instruction;
- voice and choice for students (choice boards);
- writing for a variety of purposes; and
- workplace readiness preparation.
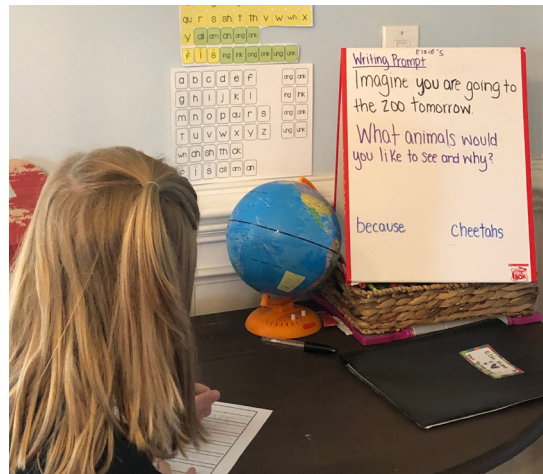
ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS FOR ADMINISTRATORS

9. WHAT IS THE ADMINISTRATIVE ROLE IN SUPPORTING CONSISTENCY IN THE USE OF TECHNOLOGY?

Administrators should have an awareness of technologies being utilized in their schools and should discuss the strengths and challenges of each. This can lead to providing consistency for teachers, students, and families. Teachers should engage students using the resources and technology with which they are familiar and have been vetted by the division's instructional team and allowed by the division's technology policies. It is recommended that administrators work with teachers to choose a communication platform for collaboration and a limited number of apps for students to utilize. Teachers must be realistic with available resources that students may have at home for projects including everything from access to technology to basic materials such as poster boards and colored pencils. In the near future, the VDOE plans to launch a statewide learning management system to support consistency in the delivery of instruction during times of extended school closure. For additional information on technology supports and resources see Appendix E.

10. WHAT COULD ASSESSMENT OF AND FOR LEARNING LOOK LIKE?

Teacher feedback to students is powerful. Hattie identified the effect size of teacher feedback as 0.70 [1]. While there may be a push to assign grades to student work, the VDOE has recommended against this. The Task Force recognizes assigning grades to student work does not necessarily lead to greater learning or increased growth.

The focus should be on the continuity for learning, the equitable growth of all students, and engaging students through feedback.

Evidence of learning should be aligned to each student's learning needs, access to materials and equipment, and interests and could include the following:

- artwork;
- choice boards;
- informational brochures;
- journal entries;
- musical interpretations;
- photos of product/project;
- poetry;
- portfolios;
- projects;
- self-assessments (rubric);
- writing samples; and
- videos.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS FOR ADMINISTRATORS

As teachers ensure the continuity for learning, please remember grading guidance previously shared by the VDOE.

"The authority to award grades and determine grade point averages rests with local school divisions. School divisions have been asked to consider the guidance related to distance and online learning and the considerations regarding equity and a thoughtful approach to instruction and the impact of alternative measures of achievement and mastery. Whereas the VDOE recognizes that decisions on grades are a local decision, the VDOE does not recommend grading work completed during the closures since schools are closed. Additionally, VDOE recognizes that grade calculations and GPA are a local policy issue. VDOE does recommend that school divisions establish a methodology to fairly calculate grades based on work previously completed and a methodology for including said grades in GPA calculations and on student transcripts. VDOE encourages school divisions to work closely with VDOE should they feel they need additional flexibility within the transcript regulations."

11. WHAT PROFESSIONAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES SHOULD ADMINISTRATORS PROVIDE FOR TEACHERS TO PROMOTE THE DELIVERY OF QUALITY TEACHING AND LEARNING?

Administrators should assess the professional needs of teachers and staff that will inform decisions regarding teacher professional learning. Professional learning should be individualized for staff to support their immediate learning needs. It is also just as important to remember this is a busy and uncertain time for teachers so administrators should be thoughtful of time when mandating required professional learning and be careful not overburden them. Teachers should have access to anytime, anywhere, and personalized professional learning to meet their individual needs. Just as a "one size fits all" mentality does not apply to student instruction, a "one size fits all" approach to professional development for teachers is not meaningful. For most school divisions, professional learning on topics such as learning management systems and best practices has taken place prior to the extended school closing. If not, a school division should consider developing a transition plan in the future to support professional learning for teachers as they transition to remote teaching and learning.

The C4L Task Force recommendation for professional learning to support extended school closure includes a focus on a variety of topics, including, but not limited to:
- assessment for/of learning;
- deeper learning;
- distance learning;
- equity of access for all students;
- inquiry-based learning;
- learning management systems;
- legal and ethical issues on the topic of copyright and fair use;
- online IEP/504/EL accommodation technology and design considerations for instruction;

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- supports and accessibility considerations for English Learners and other vulnerable students;
- online research tools;
- online resources to support deeper learning;
- performance assessments;
- project-based learning;
- remote learning;
- simulations for content area instruction;
- social and emotional learning during extended school closure;
- student voice/choice/pace/place (for example, choice board, project-based learning, etc.);
- technology as a tool for engagement; and
- virtual learning.

Professional learning can be delivered through a variety of means during extended school closure including:
- eLearning self-studies;
- help desks;
- micro-credentials;
- self-guided learning modules;
- teacher-to-teacher instruction;
- virtual classroom learning (ZOOM, Skype, etc.);
- webinars; and
- other innovative methods that consider the uniqueness of school communities.

12. WHAT UNIQUE CIRCUMSTANCES EXIST WITHIN THE SCHOOL THAT REQUIRE LOCAL DECISION-MAKING?

Even within school divisions, programs may vary from school to school, requiring local decision-making. Such programs could include:
- Governor's Schools;
- magnet programs;
- language instruction educational programs (LIEP) for ELs;
- tech centers;
- specialty centers; and
- virtual programs.

Administrators should encourage teachers to set realistic learning goals. Continuity for learning does not translate into teaching as if this is business as usual. This is an opportunity to promote and engage in quality instruction and feedback aligned to the essential concepts for the grade level or content area.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS FOR TEACHERS

1. HOW CAN TEACHERS FOCUS ON THE SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL NEEDS OF STUDENTS?

As Virginia responds to the coronavirus (COVID-19) and the topic of extended school closings, the VDOE understands how important it is for teachers to attend to the social and emotional needs of our students. Before teachers focus on grade-level knowledge integrated with 21st Century skills, they must focus on continuing to build relationships and connections with all students.

Recommendations on addressing the social and emotional learning of students include the following:

- Focus on students first and their social and emotional needs before the work. Check in with students about how they are doing using:
  - emails;
  - Google Docs;
  - letters to students;
  - notes;
  - phone calls;
  - postcards;
  - videos;
  - video-conferencing; and
  - other means.
- Establish a time to host virtual class meetings with students using a variety of electronic means; call students who may not have access to technology.
- Pose a question when you communicate with students (for example, what is one fun thing you did today?).
- Collaborate with school counselors to support the expressed needs of students.

CASEL CARES is a new national initiative that connects the social and emotional learning community with experts to address how social and emotional learning can be most helpful in response to today's circumstances. The following FREE resources are available:
- Guidelines for Parents and Caregivers
- Resources: Talking to Children about the Coronavirus
- Resources: Planning Activities at Home
- Resources: Coping with Stress and Anxiety
- Guidelines for Educators

2. HOW DO TEACHERS SUPPORT STUDENTS TO PREVENT LEARNING GAPS FROM EXPANDING DURING EXTENDED SCHOOL CLOSURE?

It is known that the school closures caused by the COVID - 19 crisis will exacerbate existing inequities. This assessment is not an educated guess because research has consistently affirmed impediments caused by the "summer learning loss" phenomenon on our most vulnerable student groups. Our most vulnerable student group consists of student who are socio-economically disadvantaged, English Learners, and students with disabilities. These variables are known to drive inequities in our society, and they cannot be mitigated if the needs of vulnerable students are not paramount in our discourse on instructional design, instructional

delivery, and learning opportunities this must occur even during a pandemic. This time of crisis does not lend to the normal but requires us to consider what innovations can be implemented to ensure that the most vulnerable of our students are not left behind.

Learning opportunities need to be differentiated in ways that provide access to all students. For remote learning to be successful, teachers need to identify individual students within their classes who need extra resources and supports. This is the best time for educators to collaborate with colleagues within the building to address solutions and support individual students. For example, a Special Education/LIEP teacher should work in tandem with a core classroom teacher when developing weekly lessons. Together lessons can be adapted to meet the specialized needs of their student populations. Another example, school staff could deliver learner printed activities to students whose families do not have access to transportation and/or technology.

3. WHAT GUIDELINES FOR LEARNING ARE AVAILABLE TO TEACHERS?

Teachers may want to work through virtual grade level or content-area professional learning communities (PLCs) to determine what essential knowledge and skills need to be addressed during an extended school closure. Teachers may then want to consider assigning work to students that integrates cross-curricular teaching of the essential knowledge with Virginia's focus on the 5 C's. This could provide the opportunity for teachers to promote personalized and deeper learning experiences to demonstrate workplace readiness by creatively solving complex problems, thinking critically, collaborating, communicating and demonstrating responsible citizenship.

Keep in mind that many families have limited data or Internet bandwidth and/or one device which must be shared between multiple people. Some families may not have access to any form of technology. Learning times will vary from student to student based on their learning rate and supports available. For more guidance on using technology for remote learning see Appendix E.

Recommendations for student learning time are shown in the chart below. However, self-selected reading time should be in addition and encouraged daily. Times will vary from student to student, as all students learn at different rates. Families may also have unique circumstances.

GRADE LEVEL	MAXIMUM LEARNING TIME PER DAY	MAXIMUM LEARNING TIME PER WEEK
Pre-K	30-45 min daily	2 ½-3 ¾ hrs weekly
K-2	45-60 min daily	3 ¾-5 hrs weekly
3-5	60-90 min daily	5-7½ hrs weekly
6-12	30 min per teacher daily	2 ½ hrs per teacher weekly
Pre-K-12	**self-selected reading time should be encouraged daily and outside of recommended learning time**	

The recommendation above are meant for any delivery model to support different learning models. Teachers may find that they have to scale back and adjust based on individual student needs. Teachers should give themselves and students flexibility during this time. Everyone is adjusting and many have multiple roles at home.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS FOR TEACHERS

4. WHAT ARE THE TEACHER PRIORITIES TO ENSURE CONTINUITY FOR LEARNING FOR STUDENTS?

These learning experiences offer innovative opportunities to focus on essential knowledge aligned with 21st Century skills. Experiences should emphasize authenticity, interaction, and creativity and involve a balance of on-screen and off-screen tasks that help connect to previous learning and any current curriculum.

Consider the following teacher priorities to support continuity for learning:

- Focus on relationships and social and emotional learning and not just content.

- Ensure instructional plans address the specific needs of diverse populations including Early Learners, English Learners, students experiencing homelessness, economically disadvantaged students, and students with disabilities. More specific information can be found in both Appendix C for students with disabilities and Appendix D for English learners.

- Encourage gifted students to go deeper in learning and provide opportunities to extend their learning.

- Identify essential knowledge in grade levels and content areas at a division level.

- Integrate Virginia's 5 C's with essential knowledge.

- Utilize the management system and communication platforms identified by the division to interface with students and families.

- Choose an instructional model to support teaching and learning based upon your level of comfort and students' needs (learner-centered, student-centered, hybrid).

- Provide resources for students to support teaching and learning.

- Provide guidance for students and families as to learning expectations and timelines.

ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Teachers' key role for addressing the needs for students with disabilities is to collaborate with each other and related services specialists/therapists to adapt individual student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) services for a virtual or distance learning environment. All teachers should recognize and accept that learning outcomes will vary for the students they serve, and understand that they are responsible for implementing instructional accommodations and modifications as needed. Therefore, teachers should have access to students' IEPs. If the continuation of learning includes co-teaching, then the expectations for those teachers should be to co-plan together to reach all of the learners.

Following are a few resources to assist co-teaching teams in thinking about ways to implement strategies for effective virtual co-teaching. By no means will they encompass all the creative approaches co-teaching teams are utilizing. Some resources to consider include:

- Practical Access Podcasts - Drs. Lisa Dieker and Rebecca Hines

- 3 Ways to Use Video Conferencing with Students Learning Remotely - This website does not specifically address co-teaching virtually, but it does address how to develop small group instruction and discussion through video conferencing (similar to parallel and station teaching). It also shares ideas for conferencing with students, which could be one way special educators could provide accommodations.

- TtacOnline - Community sharing resources to educate students with disabilities.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS FOR TEACHERS

5. WHAT ARE SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF AUTHENTIC LEARNING EXPERIENCES FOR STUDENTS?

Authentic learning is a term used to describe instructional strategies that are designed to connect the subjects students are taught in school to the real world. Authentic learning can:

- prepare students for the real world;
- help students make informed career choices;
- bridge skill gaps;
- enhance critical thinking;
- improve creativity;
- increase engagement;
- motivate students;
- boost retention of information;
- provide multiple perspectives on issues; and
- help build 21st Century skills.

While many school divisions have their own definition of deeper learning, The Virginia Department of Education defines it as "[demonstrating] knowledge through six competencies: mastering core academic content, thinking critically and solving complex problems, working collaboratively, communicating effectively, learning how to learn, and developing academic mindsets."

Deeper learning provides opportunities for students to:

- create communities of learning;
- lead their own learning;
- connect learning to larger themes, concepts and across multiple subjects;
- apply learning to real-world issues and problems;
- network beyond the school walls;
- personalize learning; and
- use technology as a tool to support learning.

Teachers may also integrate a variety of learning experiences that integrate 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.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS FOR TEACHERS

6. HOW DO TEACHERS COMMUNICATE AND SHARE INFORMATION WITH FAMILIES?

The emphasis on expectations for clear, consistent and frequent information from teachers to families is critical. Communication from teachers to families should be clear and consistent within a school. Communication recommendations for teachers include the following:

- Utilize a common and familiar division learning management system and communication platforms.

- Remain professional while communicating with families.

- Use student- and family-friendly language when communicating and avoid educational jargon that parents may not understand.

- Use a family/teacher communication log to document contact with parents.

- Consider setting "office hours" for parents to contact teachers with questions.

- Coordinate communication with collaborative teachers including counselors, EL specialists and teachers, special education teachers, gifted resource teachers, and others.

- Obtain feedback from families on how communication is going (are the basic needs of students and families being met?).

> Expectations should be clear about when teachers and students need to be logged on. A full day in front of a screen is a lot for kids and teachers, especially for families who may be sharing one device. Many schools are choosing two check-in times – a morning meeting and an afternoon check-in – and then allowing families flexibility about how they organize the at-home school schedule.
> - ISTE

- Provide critical communication in languages representative of student and family/caregiver populations.

- Communicate entire classroom expectations but also communicate with individual families when needed for additional support.

More specific information can be found in Appendix B.

7. HOW SHOULD TEACHERS COMMUNICATE AND SHARE INFORMATION WITH STUDENTS?

The expectation for frequency and extent of communication to students is critical and should be a school-based decision.

Consider the following recommendations:

- Communicate to students regularly and consistently.

- Use age- and language proficiency-appropriate communication to students.

- Consider setting "office hours" for students to contact teachers.

- Coordinate communication with collaborating teachers including EL teachers, special education teachers, gifted resource teachers, and others.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS FOR TEACHERS

- Obtain feedback from students on how communication is going (are the basic needs of students being met?).
- Contact students with class messages at least once per week using the following suggestions:
    - emails;
    - Google Docs;
    - learning management platforms;
    - phone calls;
    - postal mail;
    - school websites;
    - social media platforms;
    - texts; and
    - video-conferencing.
- Provide critical communication in languages representative of student populations.
- Communicate entire classroom expectations for learning but also communicate with individuals when needed for additional support.

8. WHAT INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO LEARNING CAN TEACHERS USE TO ENGAGE ALL STUDENTS?

Teachers should consider integrating essential knowledge and 21st Century skills in engaging ways for students. Teachers are encouraged to use authentic and deeper learning experiences to "disrupt" traditional education and benefit students. This time also allows the opportunity to provide students choice in voice and choice in learning. Teachers may need to differentiate learning experiences for students based on access to technology and developmental appropriateness.

Extended school closures is a time to consider innovative approaches to learning. Consider exploring the following innovative learning opportunities for students:

- activities that require student reflection;
- authentic learning experiences;
- career exploration;
- creativity in learning;
- critical thinking exercises;
- game-based instruction;
- inquiry-based learning;
- outside investigations/explorations;
- play-based learning;
- project-based learning;
- problem-solving activities;
- reading a variety of genres;
- technology-based direct instruction;

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- voice and choice for students (choice boards);
- workplace readiness preparation; and
- writing for a variety of purposes.

9. WHAT RESOURCES ARE ACCESSIBLE FOR STUDENTS?

Teachers need to utilize the division identified and supported learning management system and communication platforms when interacting with students and families. Teachers should also use familiar apps that students were exposed to prior to the school closure. Teachers must be realistic with available resources available to students for projects including everything from access to technology to basic materials such as poster boards and colored pencils.

Teachers should refer to resource recommendations for student learning by grade level and content area found later in this document. **The tools and resources identified in this document are not intended as endorsements and are merely offered as examples that teachers may take into account in their own continuity for learning planning efforts.**

10. WHAT CAN ASSESSMENT OF AND FOR LEARNING LOOK LIKE FOR STUDENTS?

Having weekly assignments, projects, and video check-ins are all ways to assess learning. Keeping with just one or two platforms will make both student learning and assessment of/for learning more efficient. If you have learning management systems already in place, utilize those platforms.

Teachers are encouraged to review student work and provide feedback to students. Teacher feedback to students is powerful. Hattie identified the effect size of teacher feedback as 0.70[1]. Assigning grades to student work does not necessarily lead to greater learning or increased growth.

Teachers can assess learning and give feedback to students through a variety of means:

- computer-based and web-based assessments (games, simulations, computer-adaptive assessments);
- creative assessments (flip boards, blogs, vlogs, collages, sketches, performances);
- discussion groups;
- exit slips;
- forms;
- group assessments;
- journal reflections;
- meaningful writing assignments;
- open-ended questions that allow students to think critically and write;
- peer-to-peer feedback;
- performance-based assessments;
- portfolio feedback (rubrics);
- questionnaires;
- rubric-based assessments; self-assessments;
- sentence stem-based assessments;
- virtual presentations and demonstrations; and
- virtual whiteboards.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS FOR TEACHERS

As teachers focus on assessment of and for learning, please refer to the guidance previously shared by the VDOE regarding grading:

"The authority to award grades and determine grade point averages rests with local school divisions. School divisions have been asked to consider the guidance related to distance and online learning and the considerations regarding equity and a thoughtful approach to instruction and the impact of alternative measures of achievement and mastery. Whereas the VDOE recognizes that decisions on grades are a local decision, the VDOE does not recommend grading work completed during the closures since schools are closed. Additionally, VDOE recognizes that grade calculations and GPA are a local policy issue. VDOE does recommend that school divisions establish a methodology to fairly calculate grades based on work previously completed and a methodology for including said grades in GPA calculations and on student transcripts. VDOE encourages school divisions to work closely with VDOE should they feel they need additional flexibility within the transcript regulations."

11. WHERE CAN TEACHERS FIND SUPPORT TO TRANSITION FROM TRADITIONAL INSTRUCTION FOR STUDENTS TO REMOTE LEARNING?

Teachers are encouraged to self-reflect on individual professional learning needs to support their work in transitioning to remote learning environments. Teachers should let administrators and fellow teachers know of their needs to best support staying connected to students in innovative ways. Whether it be additional help to support working in a learning management system or support in using innovative ways to communicate with students, teachers are encouraged to seek individualized professional development support. This is a unique time in Virginia history, and teachers are being challenged to reach out to students remotely in a variety of ways. Seeking help and support is a natural part of the learning experience that teachers need to grow during this time.

Through professional learning communities, teachers can stay connected to their peers to support planning for grade levels and/or content areas to support a continuity for learning for students. Peer-to-peer support is a way teachers can seek additional professional learning to support their needs.

The VDOE supports and encourages innovative practices to improve teaching and learning and all aspects of public education in the Commonwealth's 132 school divisions. The VDOE Professional Learning and Development portal connects educators to information about opportunities and resources developed by VDOE and nonprofit organizations that provide professional learning opportunities for public school educators. The portal also provides a venue for school divisions to collaborate and share innovations and promising practices.

In summary, teachers are encouraged to continue their professional learning from home through a variety of means to support continuity for learning during extended school closure including:

- eLearning self-studies;
- help desks;
- self-guided learning modules;
- peer-to-peer support;
- professional learning communities;
- virtual classroom learning (ZOOM, Skype, etc.);
- webinars; and
- other methods that consider the uniqueness of school communities.

NEXT STEPS FOR THE VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND SCHOOL DIVISIONS

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

The Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) plans to revisit the recommendations of the C4L Task Force found in this document and assemble representatives from stakeholder groups - families, educators, local and state leaders, and business representatives - to reflect and receive feedback in the spirit of continuous improvement.

Areas of specific focus will include reflection on effective and equitable strategies, practices, and models supporting continuity for learning; necessary professional development for teachers and staff; building technological infrastructure for access to devices and high-speed Internet; and the continued integration of a focus on Virginia's 5Cs. The VDOE will continue its focus on proactive preparation for the likelihood of similar situations that may interrupt education for Virginia's students.

VIRGINIA'S SCHOOL DIVISIONS

Each of Virginia's school divisions are encouraged to reflect on their own successes and challenges as they were required to move rapidly to fully-remote operations. These reflections will assist in better preparing for similar pandemic or other emergent situations in the future that require closure of school buildings. In order to support continuity for learning, school divisions are encouraged to consider efforts to better understand and proactively address the

- professional development needs of teachers, staff, and students;
- issues associated with processes and systems to support remote operations;
- community needs and readiness;
- issues with implementation of remote learning, including potentially offering additional opportunities for teachers to work remotely with students through "remote learning days" and for staff to practice their support continuity of operations. Please note that school divisions should seek approval from the VDOE if they plan to include "remote learning" instructional time towards meeting the instructional requirements of 180 days/990 hours at any time following the COVID-19 crisis.

The innovative skills administrators and teachers have acquired during this unusual time in our history will transfer into innovative practices and transform the future of public education in Virginia and the United States.

Stay connected with the C4LinVA and Virginia Department of Education using the following hashtags:

#C4LinVA
#VAis4Learners
#Va5CsatHome

APPENDIX A

SCHOOL NUTRITION

The Virginia Department of Education, Office of School Nutrition Programs (VDOE-SNP) administers the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) school and child nutrition programs to include the National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program, and the At-Risk Afterschool Program of the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, school and non-school program sponsors can elect to operate the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), the Seamless Summer Option (SSO), and the At-Risk Afterschool CACFP under the unanticipated school closure waiver and elect to implement a non-congregate feeding waiver.

In Virginia, local school divisions, private schools, and non-school sponsors have established SFSP, SSO, and CACFP meal programs, many effective as of March 16, 2020, under the election of waivers for unanticipated school closures and non-congregate feeding. While schools and non-school sponsors are not mandated to provide meal service during this time, it is a critical resource providing for the basic nutritional needs of low-income children, whom under school and summer programs have access to these meals. As unemployment levels and application for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits increase so does the need to meet community food insecurity needs. School and child nutrition programs provide for this need while continuing to support the economy through an infusion of federal dollars and by maintaining employment and purchases of goods and services. Partnerships and collaborations with other agencies and stakeholders allow additional family food insecurity needs to be met.

Meals at the approved sites are available to children 18 years old and younger. Meals provided meet the nutritional standards as established by the USDA. Multiple delivery models, such as grab-and-go, drop-off on bus routes, and home deliveries ensure low-income children receive meals during the COVID-19 pandemic. As a means to support social distancing, operational guidance has been provided, including the delivery of multiple meals for multiple days and maintaining space at work stations.

The VDOE-SNP has elected to implement 19 national waivers provided by USDA. The chart of waivers, timelines, reporting requirements, and approval process is attached. The waivers provide program flexibilities to lessen the administrative burden and to assist sponsors in maintaining optimal meal programs, ensuring all Virginia children have equitable access to good, healthy food.

APPENDIX B

ENGAGING FAMILIES AS LEARNING PARTNERS /GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR ALL DIVISIONS

In order to best create in-home learning experiences and conditions for all students, the following considerations should be used when creating a distance learning plan:

ACKNOWLEDGE THE CONTEXTUAL CHANGES IN LEARNING

How instruction was designed and delivered prior to COVID-19 bears little resemblance to how learning should now be constructed for home consumption. The content is the same, but the context of education is completely different.

CENTER APPROACHES AROUND EQUITY

When considering learning approaches, use an equity perspective. Educators can not assume access to items and manipulatives that would have been in the traditional classroom. Always ask and assess in-home resources. Also, be prepared to offer supplemental suggestions. Consider family schedules as many may be working during traditional school hours and they may be more involved in the evening or on the weekends as time permits.

RE-IMAGINE THE PACE OF LEARNING

Learning is not going to move along at its normal pace. Slow learning down and take cues from the partnerships developed with families as to how learning should occur. Continuous improvement will require many mid-course corrections.

USE A TRAUMA-INFORMED APPROACH

It is imperative that we attend to the trauma that the pandemic has placed on both teachers, students, and families. Almost everyone is traumatized by the upending of normal school routines. Families who have traditionally played a tangential role in learning, are now thrust center stage. Focus on building relationships, helping families and students by listening and acknowledging fears. Provide mental health resources to support families and students during this time.

GIVE FAMILIES AN ACTIVE ROLE IN LEARNING

Divisions, schools, and teachers tend to provide information for which families need to take action or comply with directions (sign the agenda book, review the report, etc.). Neither of these roles will advance learning through this period. Instead, provide ideas that engage and incorporate families in the actual learning that is taking place, not the role of the supervisor of learning. Clarifying this role should help to minimize stress.

PRIORITIZE FAMILY PARTNERSHIPS

Educators have to form a partnership with families to continue the process of learning. Engage them in lesson development ideas. Get their reactions to potential assignments. Ask for their help and guidance and in turn give them suggestions, questions, look for answers and ask for their feedback. Listen. These partnerships can have powerful, positive impacts.

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS AND TASKS FOR ALL DIVISIONS

The role of families is being thrust front and center as learning from home is becoming a new normal. As a general recommendation, the VDOE suggests that divisions connect, communicate, and partner with families as partners in an effort to successfully navigate extended home.

APPENDIX B

CONNECT

Direct connections with families is a foundational requirement during an unexpected crisis. Engage with families to determine household wellness and their ability to support their children within these circumstances. It is hard to learn when basic needs are not met, so a quick assessment is important as access to basic needs will impact the learning environment.

- Ensure that someone within each school is making direct connections with families. Do not overlook the need to inquire about the well-being of your families. If there is concern, households/children should be recommended to the designated school official. This is likely a school social worker, counselor, or family engagement liaison. The designated school official should ensure the proper division-level personnel is aware.

COMMUNICATE

Once connected to families, be sure to communicate helpful and relevant information and resources. There is information coming from every angle so they may value direction and guidance regarding priorities. Engage families as learning partners and provide them with the information and resources they need to be involved with their children's learning process.

- Agree on the most effective way to communicate and provide clear instructions on where to access information and what to do with it. Most teachers, school officials, and division leaders already have a process in place, yet it may be helpful to realign expectations and understandings during this time. The ability to effectively communicate will make a significant difference regarding how supported families feel during this time.

- It is essential to consider the diversity of your division and ensure effective communication with EL families. Language justice is a critical component of quality communication to ensure that families are not further left behind during an evolving crisis. Special attention to families of English Learners must be incorporated into your communication plan.

APPENDIX B

PARTNER

Viewing families as partners will foster the type of collaboration that is necessary to achieve continuity in learning outcomes for students. Partner with families in the planning and development of learning to account for the differences that are occurring in routines, family structure, and ability to manage learning activities at home.

- As everyone adjusts to new settings and environments, it is important to normalize the unique and varying schedules of households. Work collaboratively with families by providing learning activities that are flexible and nondependent on a particular schedule or time frame. Discuss creative strategies for families to use at home.

ASSET MAPPING FOR INCREASED IMPACT

Through collective efforts of school communities, school divisions, community agencies, and government agencies, families should have access to resources and items of need to keep homes functioning as well as possible. It is necessary for divisions to rely on asset mapping to support collective impact and highlighting community resources. Hopefully, your school communities have identified assets in your division. If not, now is a great time to do this with the support of social workers and community partners.

COLLECTIVE IMPACT

- Strategic partnerships and collective action are a key approach to supporting the basic needs and functions of Virginia's most vulnerable students and families. Stay connected to community partners that continue to support schools during COVID-19. New partnerships may emerge as several are looking to support children. Considering areas such as food, technology, childcare, and transportation-partners allow divisions to be creative on how to reach families.

- Many divisions are encouraging public-private partnerships in addition to regional and collective impact efforts to strengthen support and to approve unified approaches to necessities such as feeding children. Work through the community coalition or regional collaboration established to assist community members who are willing to volunteer or serve students, schools, or families.

LESSONS FROM THE FIELD

Henrico County Public Schools quickly partnered with their education foundation, Henrico Education Foundation. Through this partnership, they have secured financial support from community members and partners that will allow the provided deeper support to families during the extended school closure. This has included food supports and will evolve into an emergency fund to support the most vulnerable families in the county.

COMMUNITY RESOURCES

- Equipping families with adequate information on how to support basic needs will support well-functioning learning environments. The better equipped all school personnel are with a list of specific resources/agencies, the better information will flow to families.

- Consider creating a resource focused FAQ for all personnel, especially those speaking directly with families. This will support your staff members that are likely managing an overwhelming number of inquiries.

APPENDIX B

SCHOOL MEALS FOR CHILDREN AND STUDENTS

Emergency meals through the USDA nutrition program are for all students and children, ages 2+, regardless of income. Divisions have been proactive about providing grab and go sites to support children in accessing meals. Divisions should be intentional around location and times when deciding on grab and go sites. Through extended school closures, it is important for divisions to remain flexible on how they are delivering meals.

LESSONS FROM THE FIELD
Richmond City Public Schools believed it was important to have a division strategy that put them proximate to the people they most needed to serve. Thus, they shifted 80% of their efforts to a community-based meal on the go, using bus routes to get as close to family households, especially those who may have limited access to transportation. As a result, they have used both bus drivers and volunteers to create a mobile meal distribution program that placed the community at the center.

IDENTIFY BEST PRACTICES AND PARTNERS WITH ONLINE LEARNING

Instructional partners with family-friendly approaches are most useful at this time. Determine organizations with expertise in working with families to determine best practices in providing continuity in student learning. The more streamlined this information is for teachers, the better they can direct families that may be overloaded with information.

CLEAR EXPECTATIONS OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION AND TEACHERS

Ensure that teachers and administrators have a clear understanding of the division's expectations regarding learning and next steps. The more clarity that is provided, the more prepared they will be when collaborating with families. Teachers should also have a clear understanding of the role that families should play in this altered process of education.

CONSISTENT AND COLLABORATIVE COMMUNICATION

Create communication channels so that learning across school administrators and teachers is happening. Whether this is a bi-weekly video conference or a weekly telephone call, space for staff to learn and hear from one another will provide additional support and ideas for teachers.

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APPENDIX C

RESOURCES TO SUPPORT SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

As educators, finding methods to meet the academic needs of students with disabilities can be challenging, particularly in school divisions and regions with limited resources. Inclusive education has proven effective in promoting positive student outcomes through strategies that focus on fully engaging all students regardless of their disabilities or other learning challenges. Inclusive education, as required in federal and state law and regulations*, encompasses practices that concentrate on creating meaningful access to instruction for all students across academic, social, and physical environments. For many children with disabilities, this means receiving individualized educational and behavioral supports to address students' specific learning differences and needs. Information on how the various disabilities affect learning and instructional best practices can be found at the Virginia Department of Education's (VDOE) [Specific Disability Information](#) website.

The VDOE and the Department of Special Education and Student Services is committed to ensuring that the public education system is positioned to advance equitable academic outcomes by providing access to learning environments that meet the needs of its diverse student population. [The K-12 Inclusive Practices Guide](#) is an informational resource to support school divisions and parents looking to improve outcomes for students with disabilities by meeting their needs to the maximum extent possible in general education settings. This guide aligns with those efforts as it illustrates what inclusive education looks like in practice and offers support to school divisions and parents seeking to improve outcomes for students with disabilities. The guide includes information on strong tier one instruction using Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles and differentiation.

FOR ADMINISTRATORS

Administrators' key role in addressing the needs of students with disabilities is to provide the internal structures and systems for teachers and specialists to collaborate in planning and implementing specially-designed instruction. Teachers should have access to each student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) and understand not only accommodations, but also the nature of each student's disability.

Administrators should consider:

- Developing systems to monitor that the teachers are implementing students' IEPs;
- Documenting specially designed instruction, accommodations, and modifications, according to students' IEPs;
- Documenting dates and time providing services; and
- Keeping data and reporting student progress.

> Students with disabilities who receive online instruction are entitled to receive a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. For more information, see March 21, 2020 guidance from USED

APPENDIX C

FOR TEACHERS

Teachers' key role for addressing the needs for students with disabilities is to collaborate with each other and related services specialists/therapists to adapt individual student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) services for a virtual or distance learning environment. All teachers should recognize and accept that learning outcomes will vary for the students they serve, and understand that they are responsible for implementing instructional accommodations and modifications as needed. Therefore, teachers should have access to students' IEPs. If the continuation of learning includes co-teaching, then the expectations for those teachers should be to co-plan together to reach all of the learners.

Following are a few resources to assist co-teaching teams in thinking about ways to implement strategies for effective virtual co-teaching. By no means will they encompass all the creative approaches co-teaching teams are utilizing. Some resources to consider include:

- Practical Access Podcasts - Drs. Lisa Dieker and Rebecca Hines
- 3 Ways to Use Video Conferencing with Students Learning Remotely - This website does not specifically address co-teaching virtually, but it does address how to develop small group instruction and discussion through video conferencing (similar to parallel and station teaching). It also shares ideas for conferencing with students, which could be one way special educators could provide accommodations.
- TtacOnline - Community sharing resources to educate students with disabilities

For special education issues related to compliance refer to COVID-19 & VA Public Schools Frequently Asked Questions.

APPENDIX D

RESOURCES TO SUPPORT ENGLISH LEARNERS

When Designing Remote Lessons for English Learners (ELs), teachers can think of lesson design in terms of inputs and outputs. Inputs are supports and scaffolds that teachers provide that help ELs understand the lesson, content, directions, etc. Outputs are ELs' performance products (formal or informal assessment measures). For ELs, it is important that lessons incorporate all language domains (reading and listening, inputs) and (speaking and writing, outputs).

INPUTS: What can you provide to help (beginning) ELs understand directions, expectations, texts, and content?
- Listening: Teacher/student created or shared instructional videos or podcasts
- Reading: Online or paper articles, books, texts

Keep it Simple and Clear
- Chunked or bulleted text or shorter listening passages/tasks
- Step-by-step directions in basic terms (including how to navigate new technologies)
- Definitions for academic terminology in simple, familiar terms (including technology terminology)
- Leveled reading options for less complexity, e.g., Breaking News in English, Times in Plain English, CommonLit
- Easy access and sign-in processes when using technology

Keep it Visual
- Screencast or video of teacher accessing a new resource step by step, e.g., Screencast-o-matic
- Graphics and pictures to accompany text or new terms

Keep it Familiar
- Primary language materials and directions* (e.g., For communicating with students and families: Remind/Talking Points/Microsoft Translator. For reading or content: Khan Academy in Spanish, Children's Books Online, Global Story Books)
- Connections to prior learning, lessons, tasks, experiences, identities
- Previously used sites and supports, e.g., audio support/read alouds via phone, video, or app feature
- Learning buddy system with a classmate or language peer

Electronic translation and interpretation options are provided to support communicating with families about providing instructional support at home, given these unprecedented circumstances. These often do not provide accurate translations. Please indicate when you are providing information using a translation application to prepare students and families for inevitable misinformation from inaccurate transfer between languages.

OUTPUTS: What can you provide to help students craft verbal and/or written responses?

- Written: On paper and take a picture to send by text/WhatsApp/email, chat features within virtual spaces or Google Docs/Forms
- Spoken: Discussion or breakout groups in virtual, synchronous classes; short videos of ELs responding to given prompts (e.g., via Flipgrid)
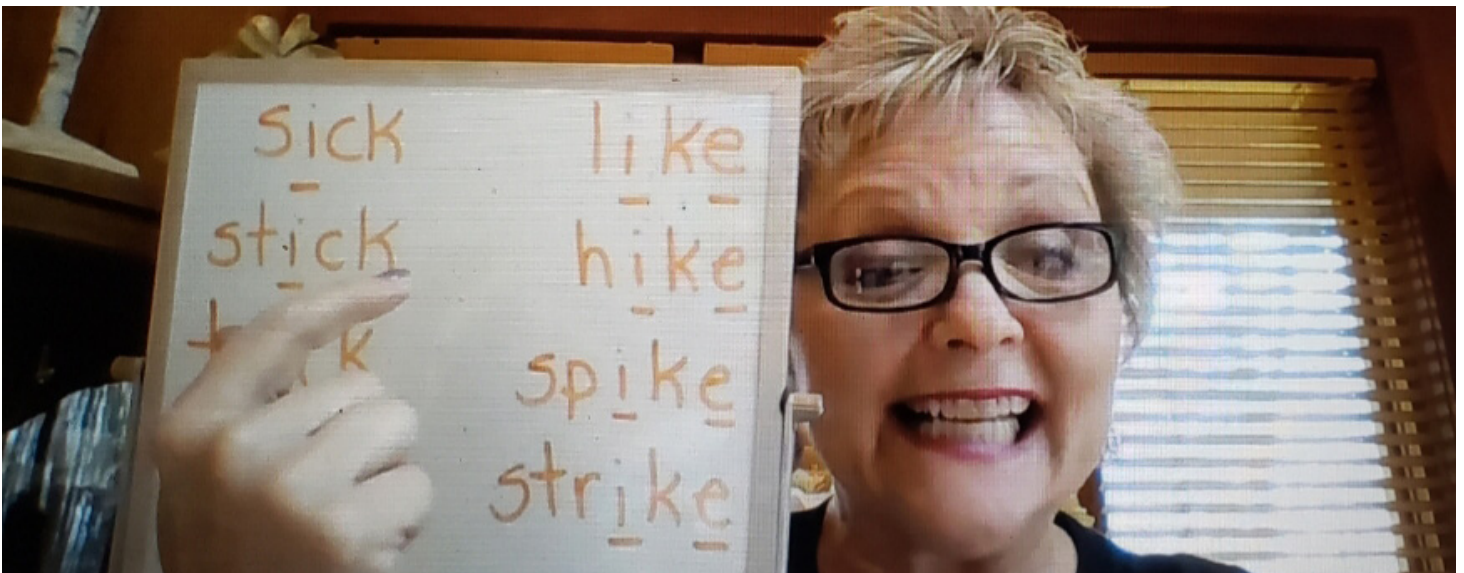
APPENDIX D

Keep it Supported*
- Sentence frames
- Model paragraphs and mentor texts
- Sample and model products (via pictures or videos)
- Short checklist or simple rubric to self-assess or to monitor progress on tasks
- * See EL Teacher Toolkit for lists of supports and examples.

Keep it Familiar
- Primary language responses for beginning-level ELs
- Connections to prior learning, lessons, tasks, experiences, identities
- Previously used sites and supports, e.g., audio support/read-aloud recordings

Additional Considerations for Lessons in ESL/ELD classes:

- Work with ELs to build social, emotional, and communication skills. Help them use this time to craft portraits and resumes that highlight their interests and skills, e.g., ways I learn best, reading topic preferences, etc. Students can give these to their teacher(s) next year.

- Ensure that the language development in a primary/home language supports language development in English. Share ideas with families of how to incorporate academic thinking activities into daily routines, e.g, describe characters and their conflicts after reading together, explain how or why things happen, share cultural tales and discuss connections.

- Remember that some families may not have easy access to someone who can help interpret assignment directions or that some families may not have primary language literacy and will not be able to access written information in that language.

- Remember some ELs may not be as familiar with cultural/American references or idiomatic expressions, or their families may be newer to the country and may not yet have materials that other households may, e.g., newspapers/magazines, simple art supplies, etc.

- Note that even recently arrived/newcomer ELs should still be provided grade-level content that is supported appropriately. It would not be appropriate for their only source of language instruction and support to come from a single application or site, e.g., DuoLingo.

APPENDIX D

WHEN CONSIDERING TECHNOLOGY TOOLS AND RESOURCES FOR EL INSTRUCTION
ADAPTED FROM SEIDLITZ EDUCATION[2]

KEY TO USING TECHNOLOGY WITH ELS	GUIDING QUESTION(S)	PRODUCTIVE FEATURES
Authentic Language Use	It is able to promote authentic language use?	• Provides compelling input (reading and listening) • Offers compelling reasons to use English • Empowers students to receive and contribute to global funds of knowledge
Funds of Knowledge	Does it connect with students' backgrounds and prior knowledge or include necessary information/supports to build background?	• Leverages students' funds of knowledge (what they already know and know how to do) • Enables peer collaboration for content support • Provides tools for students to acquire necessary background knowledge or understanding of tasks • Connects students with knowledge communities outside of the classroom
Language Development	Does it promote language development for students at all proficiency levels? Which language domains will students be using and practicing (listening, reading, writing, speaking)?	• Adapts text as needed • Supports tracking print and choral response • Enhances comprehensible input and output • Enables language support during peer interaction
Responsive (Culturally and Linguistically)	Does it facilitate student inquiry and (supported) autonomy?	• Provides a space for celebrating a variety of cultures • Honors students' knowledge, experiences, and stories • Provides opportunities for multiple perspectives
Student-Centered	Does it facilitate student inquiry and (supported) autonomy?	• Moves students towards active discovery • Allows student choice and voice • Involves students in critical and higher-level thinking

Divisions and schools are responsible for making choices about appropriate and allowable technologies, products, and instructional materials.

APPENDIX E

TECHNOLOGY GUIDANCE FOR CONTINUITY FOR LEARNING

OVERALL CONSIDERATIONS FOR DIVISIONS

- Equity is a major concern for school divisions. Equity means meeting the needs of all students using digital technologies or other means, such as paper, to support individual learning and allow for individual circumstances. Not all students require the same resources, but each student should be provided learning experiences that address their individual needs.
    - Consider legal obligations, and maintain the standards for delivery of instruction and student accommodations. While this is the norm, some adjustments may be necessary in emergency situations so divisions should keep up-to-date with announcements from governmental education agencies.
    - Consider the practical steps necessary to appropriately serve every student equitably, based on your local demographics and capabilities for technology support. Provide flexibility to teachers to address student needs in many different ways.
- Continuity for learning is a partnership between schools and families that makes learning achievable for all students. It will not replicate a traditional "school day" at home but allows for alternative learning to take place. A daily routine is valuable for overall success, and to help families balance other responsibilities and activities.
- Continuity of learning using online technologies should provide a balance of online learning 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 implement a few high-quality, intuitive solutions for communication lines, teaching, and learning, and student support, prioritizing tools that students and teachers are already familiar with to avoid long learning curves for all involved.
- Divisions need to provide technical support, professional development, and clear policies and procedures to support online learning.
- When implemented thoughtfully, technology can open doors and break down barriers for students and adults of all needs.
- Student privacy is a top priority, as are digital citizenship practices.
- Digital resources used should be considered in light of accessibility and copyright clearances.
- Communication between teachers and students is essential even when students are not involved in online learning. Technology can support this communication.

WHAT SCHOOL DIVISIONS NEED TO CONSIDER WHEN PREPARING FOR ONLINE LEARNING

Divisions already have many policies developed for technology and online access. Review to see if adjustments to these policies are needed for online learning situations. It may be helpful to develop an easy to read reference for parents and students pulling together all the related rules, guidelines, and expectations.

USE OF DEVICES (SCHOOL-OWNED OR USER-OWNED):

- Create a system for devices to be checked out to students/families/staff and returned to school, based on school division needs.
- Determine how the school will handle damage/loss of devices and support for student-owned devices.

- Provide support for staff who are telecommuting to include security issues.

- Consider revising your school division password policy to avoid passwords expiring or needing to be reset, until stakeholders are comfortable with new processes and tools.

- Consider turning off other automatic procedures, such as regularly scheduled updates, during emergency situations.

USE OF DIGITAL RESOURCES

- Divisions should assist students, parents, and teachers in finding good resources by providing web pages with links and/or paper handouts.

- Ensure teachers have an understanding of copyright guidelines for educational fair use.

- If teachers find resources on their own, ask that teachers evaluate resources based on accessibility and ensure they are not using copyrighted materials.

STUDENT PRIVACY

- Not all Ed Tech companies are student privacy sensitive. Consider how you might increase awareness for student data privacy during extended building closure. Make sure to provide clearly written information for parents as well as teachers.

- Even if you are not currently set up with single-sign-on, you may be able to implement such a system very quickly with vendor help. This can help mitigate some student privacy issues.

- Review media release policy to adjust the sharing of students' Personally Identifiable Information (PII) for online platforms and social media, if needed.

- Local school divisions are required to comply with FERPA and all relevant federal and state laws and regulations pertaining to student privacy and the protection of PII.

EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENTS

- Review the Acceptable Use Policy, any Digital Citizenship Policies, and/or the Student Code of Conduct to see if adjustments need to be made. Is there language that says specifically, "while in the school building, students should...."?

- Consider any concerns about the dress code for students participating in synchronous online classes.

- Be cognizant of student life circumstances during an unplanned school closure that may impact their ability to participate in online learning.

ONLINE TEACHING

Online teaching requires different skills and approaches for teachers. This section will help teachers make the shift from the face-to-face classroom setting to online learning. In cases of unplanned school closures, face-to-face teaching and learning may transition to online teaching and learning. Learners with a device and internet connection or a Smartphone and mobile phone service can access online content from anywhere, and at any time. In order to provide effective and high-quality instruction, teachers should consider using a variety of technologies and digital learning strategies.

APPENDIX E

CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT & MANAGEMENT

COMMUNICATION AND CALENDAR:

- The teacher may post videos to let the students know there is a "real" teacher on the other side of the screen. 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 organization of assignments and due dates.

- Communicate with school counseling staff and other appropriate staff about your online students, schedules, special education and EL needs, medical and other information pertinent to the success of student participation.

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

EXPECTATIONS:

- 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 classes or modify and reuse assignments.

- Consider the types and length of assignments to avoid online "overload," screen time and data/bandwidth consumption along with adherence to the C4L Task Force recommended guidelines for maximum time for student learning. Be mindful that students and families will have to manage all classes, required work, and extraordinary life circumstances during the time of extended school closure.

- 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.

ONLINE 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 feedback. 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, or hand-raising.

INSTRUCTIONAL MODEL & DELIVERY

PLANNING:

- Ensure all technology is working properly prior to the start of the online lesson, including all necessary documents and presentations.

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

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- 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:

- Use your division's learning management system or other platforms for both synchronous and asynchronous instruction.
- Communicate with students about their classwork and provide announcements and reminders about assignments. Check in with individual students to answer their questions and offer support.
- Ensure all participants are aware when live sessions are being recorded. Consider recording all live sessions to allow students who may have missed the session an opportunity to review the content.

ENGAGEMENT:

- Provide a variety of instructional strategies to meet the needs of all learners with appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities and ELs.
- Break content into smaller parts (chunking the material) and check for understanding.
- Create learning opportunities to allow students to self-direct and to chose their learning task(s) or pathways (i.e., learning menus or playlists).
- Build in time for students to learn how to manage continuous learning in an online environment.
- Utilize the features of the platform to encourage engagement using a variety of methods, such as chat, hand raising or screen sharing.
- Provide a variety of options or choices for students to demonstrate learning and mastery of concepts. Engage your students by picking interesting, enriching challenges and experiences enhancing and expanding their academic skills.
- Provide the opportunity for students to interact with their peers online, e.g., collaborative discussions or group sessions.

ASSESSMENT & FEEDBACK:

- Use a variety of strategies to assess students (i.e., PBL, performance-based such as writing samples, artwork, music) and check frequently for understanding.
- Emphasize the importance of learning the essential knowledge and skills while engaging students.
- Give students consistent and timely feedback on their work.

DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP

- Maintain and model professional and appropriate communication and behavior in the online environment.
- Use reliable and credible internet resources. Follow school division policy for any resource that requires student information.
- Review your school division's Acceptable Use Policy guidelines and expectations as guidelines

will apply in the online classroom.

- Follow school division policies on the use of student pictures, audio, and video in the online classroom.
- Emphasize and model all copyright regulations and Fair Use guidelines.
- Review digital citizenship with students:
  - Review local school or school division's Acceptable Use Policy with students.
  - Emphasize the use of appropriate language. No profanity, obscenities, sexually explicit material, or expressions of bigotry, racism, and/or hate.
  - Encourage behavior that does not intimidate, bully, harass, or embarrass; consider the perspective of others when communicating.
  - Remind students to 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.
  - Remind students to maintain a balance between online and offline time.
  - Remind students to use reliable and credible sources.

If you are seeking additional information regarding virtual learning, the VDOE has provided additional resources in the Student and Family Virtual Learning Companion.

VIRTUAL LEARNING KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS
A list of terms and definitions associated with Virtual Learning:

TERM	DEFINITION
Digital Learning	A method of learning 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
Online Course	A course where teacher-led education takes place over the Internet, with the teacher and student separated geographically, using an online instructional delivery system.
Blended Learning	An education plan where students learn in part through online instruction, and in part at a brick-and-mortar location away from home. Blended learning includes some element of student control over time, place, path, and/or pace.
Online Programs	Organizations that work directly with students and deliver online learning services, but are not "schools." Online programs in Virginia include Virtual Virginia and other school division initiatives.
Online Teacher	A teacher-of-record, instructing learning experience in an online, virtual environment or blended environment in which teachers and learners are separated by time and space.

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TERM	DEFINITION
Open Educational Resources (OER)	Educational materials that are available in the public domain or through a license that allows for sharing with specific restrictions. OER resources in Virginia include GoOpenVA.org
Asynchronous Learning	Learning activities are accessed by learners at different times and from different locations. Examples are email, online discussion forums, message boards, blogs, podcasts, etc
Synchronous Learning	Learning in which the participants interact at the same time and in the same space, such as virtual meetings via web conferences.
Competency-based Learning	Learning that allows students to move ahead upon mastery of course content. Support is differentiated and based on the learner's individual learning needs
Distance Learning	Distance learning may be a combination of methods used to learn when teachers and students are separated. Learning may take place on the computer, with packets that are mailed to the students or a combination.

TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

To prepare for this transition teachers are strengthening their skills to address the academic needs of all students using new approaches and engaging students online. Important elements of professional training and delivery will include strategies related to blended learning or entirely online learning.

Professional development is made available through the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE), #GoOpenVA, and other educational agencies and professional organizations.

- Use instructional models that may contain innovative approaches to learning including a blending of non-technology, face-to-face, and virtual platforms.
- Provide professional development on how to design, implement, and assess in a virtual environment, as well as how to connect and communicate with students remotely.
- Use how-to tutorials, industry certifications, and/or micro-credentials to enhance professional skills. Encourage teacher leaders to assist with professional development.
- Consider effective tools for teaching online (i.e., a learning management system, a learning platform, digital communication, and collaboration tools).
- Follow school division approved applications, software, and use of Internet resources.

DIGITAL TOOLS AND RESOURCES

The VDOE does not endorse specific digital tools or providers in this document. School division staff should check with their Information Technology and procurement departments before deploying or using these tools with students or staff.

The purpose of digital technologies is to support instructional models with innovative approaches to learning. This includes a blending of non-digital and virtual learning platforms. Instructional models should not focus on technology usage in isolation for the sake of technology. Instructional models should consider

the essential role of technologies in the deeper learning experiences of students in content areas, as digital citizens in an ever-increasing digital world.

When using digital technologies, schools should be mindful of concerns about student screen time and technology dependence, especially at the K-2 level. The use of non-digital, or unplugged instructional activities, is suggested. Additional information on suggested school division policies related to screen time is provided in the Policy section of this document.

School divisions with student populations that lack or have low levels of device and/or Internet access should consider innovative ways of collaborating with community-based organizations to provide instructional materials to families. Collaboration with other state and local agencies that play a role in providing wrap-around services such as food and clothing should also be considered.

The lists below are not intended to be inclusive of all digital technologies and each provides more functionality than listed in the table below. Additional technologies exist and school divisions should seek those that best meet their needs.

Considerations:
- Efforts should be made to provide equitable access to digital devices and broadband access required for some digital technologies.
- Use of data for messaging may result in data usage costs.
- When designing online learning, please give consideration to student limitations due to data plans as some of these tools will require data to access.
- Determine which digital technologies best meet the needs of your community.
- Hosting professional development on the use of digital technologies to support deeper learning experiences of students in content areas is essential.
- Limit the number of new digital technologies introduced to staff at one time. Consider providing division expectations for:
  - Age-appropriate duration of use;
  - Frequency of use;
  - Student privacy; and
  - Parental assistance in using some technologies.
- Check with your division information technology staff to determine any web addresses associated with technologies that may need to be whitelisted for access on division servers.
- Technologies provided may also be used to create professional development for division staff on instructional practices and other educational areas.
- Some technologies can be used as plug-ins/extensions for devices and may need authorization.
- Check devices to ensure compatibility with the desired features.
- Access and permissions related to digital communications such as online meeting rooms should be maintained by teachers. Access includes ensuring online meetings are closed once ended.

DIGITAL MESSAGING TOOLS

Digital messaging tools are designed to foster communication between students and teachers about work

assignments. The tools differ from communication and collaboration tools in that they are for one-to-one communication of questions or comments between a student and teacher. They are not intended for collaboration or class discussions.

TOOL (*)	COMMENTS
Remind	Allows teachers to send a message to parents/students through SMS and email. Available in multiple languages.
Bloomz	Allows teachers to communicate via two-way messaging.
Class Dojo	Allows for email and SMS text while also providing a social media component to share with a group.
Google Voice	Teachers can use Google Voice to contact parents through text or voice without disclosing his/her personal phone number while using their personal phones.

DIGITAL COMMUNICATION AND COLLABORATION TOOLS

Digital communication and collaboration tools are designed to foster student and family engagement with teachers and other students. The tools can be used for class discussions, student group interactions, and other activities intended to connect students and families with teachers.

TOOL (*)	COMMENTS
Google Hangouts/Meet	Google Hangouts/Meet allows groups to connect through video, audio, chat, or dial in. Users can easily share screens as they connect. This tool allows up to 250 participants.
Skype	Skype allows groups to connect through video, audio, chat, or dial in. Users can easily share screens as they connect. This tool allows up to 250 participants.
Zoom	Zoom is a video conferencing tool. It allows users to connect through video, audio chat, or dial in. Users can easily share screens as they connect. This tool allows up to 100 participants on their basic plan. Other plans are available.
Microsoft Teams	Microsoft Teams is the hub for team collaboration in Office 365 that integrates the people, content, and tools your team needs to be more engaged and effective. This tool allows up to 250 participants on their Office 365 A1 Plan. Other plans are available.

LEARNING PLATFORMS

Learning platforms are designed to provide access to existing content and assessments, provide content

and assessment creation, gradebooks, assignment and class management, and other features. The extent of features distinguishes content management systems from learning management systems.

TOOL (*)	COMMENTS
Seesaw	Digital portfolio and learning system where teachers can create multimedia experiences for students. A paid upgrade allows tracking of skills mastery. Seesaw is available within web browsers, Chrome Web Store, an Android app, an iOS app, and Kindle Fire).
Google Classroom	Part of Google's G-Suite for Education, this tool helps teachers manage workflow and communication with their students (it's available within web browsers, an Android app, and an iOS app).
Microsoft Teams	Classes connect through shared notebooks, chat sessions, virtual meetings, and resource sharing. MS Teams is available within web browsers, an Android app, and an iOS app.
Canvas	Canvas is a web-based Learning Management System (LMS) used by schools to build online courses and consists of communication, collaboration, grading, videoconferencing, and reporting capabilities, to help students learn content.
Schoology	Schoology is a web-based learning management system (LMS). Teachers can create tasks/assignments, assessments, and discussions for students (or even other teachers). Individual teachers can opt for the free version loaded with features related to time management, organization, and feedback or schools/divisions can pay for the enterprise version that includes additional audio, student progress, and support features as well as all the administrative features necessary to manage hundreds of users and many different classes.
Blackboard	Blackboard is a virtual learning environment and learning management system developed by Blackboard Inc. Blackboard offers different product options that may fit your school divisions needs.
Moodle	Moodle is an open-source Content Management System with similar features and options of many popular management systems.

SCREEN RECORDING TOOLS

Screen Recording tools are designed to provide a way to introduce new information and model concepts for users. The tools can be used during instruction with students and during professional development with staff.

TOOL (*)	COMMENTS
Screencast-o-matic	Create tutorials or lessons for classroom instruction. Share videos with students so they can learn on their own.
Screencastify	Video that can capture your tab, whole screen, or webcam only. Narrate with your microphone and you can record offline (no Internet required).
Loom	Capture your screen, voice, and/or face and instantly share. Allows users to require a password or make your video viewable only to specific email addresses.

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AUXILIARY DIGITAL TOOLS THAT SUPPORT ALL STUDENTS

Auxiliary tools are designed to provide additional functionality or formatting to existing tools along with providing access for students with special needs. When creating content, accessibility must always be considered.

TOOL (*)	COMMENTS
Google Read & Write	Read&Write for Google Chrome™ provides personalized support to make documents, web pages and common file types in Google Drive more accessible.
EquatIO	Easily create mathematical equations, formulas, and quizzes. Intuitively type or handwrite, with no tricky math code to learn.
Closed Captions	Closed captioning is a universal design feature that helps all students on video platforms.
Microsoft Immersive Reader Tool	Enlarge fonts, highlights words as it reads them, allows you to set the rate of speech, and uses other helpful features, e.g., translation.
Grackledocs	A plugin that aids in the creation of accessible docs in Google's G-Suite

Additional resources ISTE for use with diverse learners can be found here.

* Reminder: School division staff should check with their Information technology and procurement departments before deploying or using these tools with students or staff.

DIGITAL RESOURCES

THE VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION'S 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 to rigorous courses, high-quality instruction, and blended learning resources for schools in the Commonwealth as well as across the nation. VVA also provides educational options to all learners, including underserved populations, as a complement to local public school offerings.

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.

OER - #GOOPENVA

Virginia's home for Open Educational Resources (OER) is #GoOpenVA. It's 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.

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#GoOpenVA is a repository of openly-licensed educational resources, but it is also a community of people who create, curate, and share. The sharing community that you can help create in #GoOpenVA is probably the most important part you can play! We all need help and support right now--everything is new to just about everyone. Sharing your ideas with others will lessen their load, but also their isolation from colleagues in these stressful times. On #GoOpenVA, any registered member can create a Group. A Group is a space for people with the same interests to share things and exchange messages. You can have small groups of just a few people or large groups of hundreds. But they have to start with someone!

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 own local networks using either Clever or Google. Please ask your local technology staff to get directions. If your division does not have 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, in blended or flipped classrooms, and in 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.

LIBRARY AND MEDIA RESOURCES

Establish a protocol to provide library and media resources for teachers and students in a distance learning environment. The school library is an integral part of instruction. Just like the classroom teacher, the librarian should maintain office hours to answer questions and provide research assistance as needed. Librarians will provide direction to educators and students for how to locate resources from the school and public libraries, as well as trusted online sources.

Librarians should provide services in accordance with the AASL Standards for Teaching and Learning such as:
- Promoting reading for informational needs, as well as personal pleasure.
- Providing instructional support that increases reading proficiency.
- Curating reliable and credible resources in a wide variety of formats that reflect diverse and inclusive points of view.
- Collaborating to encourage student inquiry and critical thinking.
- Designing lessons that strengthen intellectual tools to sustain an inquiry process.
- Promoting the use of ethical guidelines for gathering and using information.

- Encouraging the use of a wide variety of resources that reflect inclusiveness and respect for diversity.
- Designing lessons that allow students to exhibit empathy for diverse ideas.
- Providing support to encourage a growth mindset.

RESOURCE	DESCRIPTION AND ACCESS
Library of Congress	The Library of Congress is the nation's oldest federal cultural institution, and it serves as the research arm of Congress. It is also the largest library in the world.
Library of Virginia	The Library of Virginia is dedicated to providing relevant and useful educational material on Virginia's history, culture, and people to the Commonwealth's educators, students, and lifelong learners of any age. Our educational outreach programs help cultivate public understanding of the history of the Library, including our mission, collections, programs, and services through events and workshops, web-based content, and tours of our facility.

IT SUPPORT

Providing support to remote work and instruction presents some public school divisions with a new set of obstacles. Supporting on-premise devices is much easier than times such as pandemics that require remote support.

School divisions should consider support protocols for:
- teachers;
- students;
- parents/guardians/caregivers; and
- school division leadership.

Considerations for each group should include:
- how technology support is requested;
- division policies should determine permission for division personnel to work on student-owned devices should be considered;
- tools required by technicians, such as remote access to troubleshoot devices;
- support hours - around the clock or during "school hours";
- management of usernames and passwords;
- provision of Single Sign-On badges, QR Codes, or credentials to parents/guardians/caregivers; and
- student privacy - providing guidance on how to maintain privacy to all groups.

CHECKOUT OF DIVISION'S EQUIPMENT

- Provide protocols for peripherals to be checked out to teachers and students (especially students with special needs).
- Provide protocols for device "check-out" to students and teachers.

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INTERNET CONNECTIVITY

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, school divisions are encouraged to reach out to their local Internet Service Providers and mobile wireless carriers to find out more about their promotional offers or initiatives to provide Internet service to all residents. Schools should also be aware of any Federal Communications Commission (FCC) waivers or public announcements that may impact school networks, services, or equipment.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOL PREPARATION OF INTERNET ACCESS OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL

- School divisions that have an education equity plan should ensure that digital equity is an integral part of that plan. Leadership makes a difference. School division superintendents should immediately form a school division "broadband leadership team" (or BLT) that champions an urgent need to provide Internet access outside of school for students in need now and into the future.

- The division BLT should collaborate with their local government, community stakeholders, and Internet Service Providers, to collect and review data on household and community connectivity. Based on this data, schools and community leaders should work together to identify solutions and take action. These solutions are often a multiprong approach because each locality is different in terms of topography and demographics. School divisions can:

  - Apply for the Virginia Telecommunications Initiative (VATI) state grants available through the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), to offset the cost of building fiber networks in areas of the locality currently not served or underserved.
  - Implement 1:1 computing device programs and plan for how students without Internet access at home can access content on the device (e.g., Google offline content).
  - Work with mobile wireless carriers to identify areas of the locality where mobile hotspots for students would be an effective solution.
  - Work with small businesses and other community stakeholders to map locations in the locality where students could go to access safe Wi-Fi. Schools should form agreements or MOUs with businesses that agree to student Wi-Fi access.
  - Develop a web page on the school division website that is dedicated to providing information on where students and parents can go to access safe Wi-Fi, mobile wireless carrier offerings, Internet Service Provider offerings, and availability of devices.
  - Partner with the Prince William County Public Schools, Virginia STAR program, to provide refurbished computers for families.
  - Purchase mobile hotspots and make them available for check out. The school BLT should form partnerships with the local library, adult education programs, and other community organizations, to share information and resources for families on hotspot availability and digital literacy training.
  - Deploy Wi-Fi on buses as a potential option to safely park in areas where the community can access the Wi-Fi signal coming from the bus.
  - Participate in VDOE digital equity events to learn more about strategies for addressing digital equity issues. These events are usually held in conjunction with the larger Education Equity Summer Institute typically held in July.

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