Fort Worth
INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

FORT WORTH ISD
FORWARD
Return to Learning

Fort Worth ISD
Virtual Instruction Overview and Frequently Asked Questions
School Year 2020-2021

Table of Contents

Virtual Instruction Overview for Parents and Community Members

Virtual instruction for the 2020-21 school year will be robust, organized, and a consistent experience for all students. The following standards will anchor its design and implementation:

- Teachers will have planned availability for students – including scheduled office hours.
- Direct instruction will be delivered by teachers – students will be able to get teacher support when needed, and students will know how and when they can interact with their teachers.
- Students will receive clear, understandable directions on a daily basis on how to use academic materials.

In accordance with the Fort Worth ISD Forward plan, PK-12 virtual instruction will employ an asynchronous, or self-paced, model of instruction supported by daily (synchronous) interactions.   Synchronous interactions will require students to engage with teachers at specific times and are designed to support a student's academic and social emotional learning needs.

For Fort Worth ISD purposes, descriptors of **asynchronous** and **synchronous** instruction are the following:

Asynchronous instruction provides students with teacher assigned lessons, tasks or assignments for students to work on at their own pace.
- All assignments, content, files and discussions are available on digital platforms accessible on a mobile device, laptop or desktop computer;
- Does not require all participants to be virtually present at the same time but does require daily engagement by the student;
- All pre-assigned work and resources are available to students through Seesaw (PK) or Google Classroom (K-12);
- Participants are not required to be virtually present at the same time, but daily engagement by students is required;
- Pre-recorded videos are the primary delivery method of direct instruction from the teacher;
- Periodic synchronous instruction activities guide, support and extend student learning of asynchronous lessons.

Synchronous instruction provides live, real time teaching with two-way teacher/student interaction.
- Supports asynchronous lessons by providing lesson guidance, supplemental instruction, and/or enrichment. Examples include guided practice, intervention, small group support, differentiated practice, specific feedback on assignments, progress checks, lesson closure, and additional social emotional learning;
- Teachers will provide live instruction, support, and guidance at scheduled, predictable, and posted "office hours";
- Requires student engagement at specific, scheduled times via video conference.

Technology, Platforms and Online Applications	Fort Worth ISD students and parents will access most lessons and lesson materials through a virtual learning system. PK students and parents will utilize Seesaw, and Kindergarten-12th grade students and parents will utilize Google Classroom. Some district resources and instructional applications will also require access through ClassLink. Students will be issued a district-owned device and "hot spot" for families in need of internet access. A training module will be provided to acquaint students and parents with the expectations of virtual learning, the use of Seesaw (PK) and Google Classroom (K-12), and tools to become a successful online learner.
Instructional Schedules	Students will be required to engage in instruction for a <u>minimum</u> of 4 hours daily. To support student learning, there will be direct instruction requirements where a student needs to engage with teachers at specific times. Teachers will also maintain identified "office hours". Office hours are designed as additional support and resource for the student and families, not to replace the instructional hours required. Teacher office hours will be planned, predictable, clearly defined, published in advance, and sufficient for student progress. Teachers will deliver direct instruction daily, and students will know how and when they can interact with teachers. Schedules for instructional time will be established at each individual campus and by grade levels to ensure we are differentiating to meet the needs of all of our learners. Campuses will create schedules in consideration of the following: • Core academic courses and electives will be offered at all grade levels. • Individual Education Plans (IEP) for students with disabilities will be followed regardless of learning environment. • Students receiving Gifted and Talented service will receive instruction from their campus teacher. • **Elementary Schools:** Instruction in literacy, math, science, and social studies will be provided daily and, at least, one Specials class in Art, Music, or PE class will be provided daily. Specific daily Specials course(s) will be determined by the campus master schedule. Students receiving specialized supports such as special education resource or dyslexia pullouts will receive services for 30 minutes, 3 times per week during the appropriate content area time. **Middle and High Schools:** Instruction will be provided daily in all courses per the student's schedule. Higher Education partners have announced they will offer most Dual Credit Courses virtually.
Instructional Delivery	PK-12 teachers will provide both recorded (asynchronous) and live (synchronous) instruction, guidance and support daily. Individual Education Plans (IEP) for students with disabilities will be followed regardless of learning environment. • **Elementary Schools:** Teachers will design on-line courses with the guidance and support of our Teaching and Learning Department, Curriculum Frameworks, and the use of District resources. Elementary School courses will be taught directly by a teacher in Google Classroom. Classroom teachers will be responsible for extensions, grading, and student interaction. • **Middle Schools:** Teachers will design on-line courses with the guidance and support of our Teaching and Learning Department, Curriculum Frameworks, and the use of District resources. Middle School courses will be taught directly by a teacher in Google Classroom. Classroom teachers will be responsible for extensions, grading, and student interaction.

	High Schools: Teachers will design on-line courses with the guidance and support of our Teaching and Learning Department, Curriculum Frameworks, and the use of District resources. Core courses and graduation requirements will be taught directly by a teacher in Google Classroom with daily teacher interaction as well. A list of campus specific courses offered will be shared by individual campuses.
Curriculum and Instructional Resources	Teachers will be supported in virtual instruction using FWISD defined curriculum and instructional materials that are fully aligned with Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) and include assessments for student progress monitoring. Instructional materials will support a coherent, logical course sequence that reinforces concepts to ensure continuity of learning and consistently reinforce concepts at appropriate times to ensure retention of knowledge. Students with disabilities and English learners will be supported with instructional materials with specifically designed resources and/or accommodations and modifications.
Student Progress	Students will be required to demonstrate engagement and progress daily. Progress will be measured through trackable student engagement in the virtual learning system (PK- Seesaw; K-12 – Google Classroom), student - teacher interactions by video conference or phone, and submission of daily assignments. Also see 'Student Attendance' section. Grades for virtual instruction will follow all District grading policies. Numeric grades will be assigned for each 6-weeks and semester basis.
Student and Family Support	Campuses will communicate with parents by Outlook district email, Blackboard, ParentLink, and phone. In addition, every district teacher will create and maintain a class Google Site that will be link through the campus fwisd.org website. General components of teacher's site will include: - Teacher Bio - Syllabus with course description and appropriate standards - Teacher schedule and contact information - Hosts weekly lesson plan uploads; Teachers will upload lesson plans and assignments/assessments weekly Students will be provided with Social Emotional Learning (SEL) strategies and academic support daily during instructional time and during daily check-ins.
Student Attendance	Per Texas Education Code, §25.092, students are required to attend at least 90% of their classes (with some exceptions) to receive credit and be promoted. Virtual Instruction attendance will count in the same manner as on-campus (face-to-face) attendance in satisfying this requirement. Virtual learning attendance is based on daily engagement, not solely the completion of assignments. To be counted "Present – Asynchronous Instruction" a student must demonstrate daily engagement in assignments. Attendance for virtual instruction will be taken daily by the classroom teacher in one of three ways. Students will be counted present on days in which they engage in one of these three methods. 1. Students engage in online learning and demonstrates progress with lessons, assignments, and teacher instruction. 2. Students directly interact with their classroom teacher and teacher confirms student engagement for a particular day. Student/teacher interaction can be through multiple methods including telephone or digital means. Students submit an assignment through the learning management system on a particular day.

Virtual Instruction Common Platform FAQ

What learning platform will be used for Virtual Instruction?
Pre-Kindergarten: Teachers and students will use the Seesaw learning platform. Kindergarten - 12th Grade: Online courses will be delivered via Google Classroom.

What is Seesaw?
Seesaw is a platform for student engagement. Teachers can empower students to create, reflect, share, and collaborate. Students "show what they know" using photos, videos, drawings, text, PDFs, and links. It's simple to get student work in one place and share with families, and nothing is shared without teacher approval.

What is Google Classroom?
Google Classroom is an application that allows distance learning for students and teachers. Teachers can create lessons online using Google Docs and Drive, which enables a student to access all course materials in one location. Teachers can use discussions, quizzes, tests, and links to resources to create an engaging environment for their students.

Where can the virtual learning platforms be accessed?
Google Classroom and Seesaw are accessible through a web browser or mobile app (iOS and Android). The learning platforms work on laptops, Chromebooks, tablets, and mobile devices.

What video conferencing tool will be used to communicate with students?
Google Meet is the district approved communication tool to video conferences with students. Staff and students have to log in and authenticate with their district account, thus safeguarding student privacy and making it more secure. Google Meet also seamlessly integrates into Google Classroom.

How do I login to Google Classroom?
Login to Google Classroom through the FWISD ClassLink Portal at https://fwisd.org/myfwisd. Sign in to the portal using your FWISD normal computer login credentials. Click on the Google Classroom icon to access.

Where do I get the join code?
Google Classroom generates a unique code for each classroom. Students and families receive the code through FWISD student email or Blackboard ParentLink. Inside of the Google Classroom app, click on the plus sign in the upper right corner, select join class, and insert the code.

Does Google Classroom integrate with Focus?
Currently Google Classroom's gradebook does not sync with Focus SIS. However, the District is exploring the capability.

What tool will teachers use to communicate with parents?
Teachers will communicate with parents through Outlook district email and Blackboard ParentLink. In addition, every district teacher will create and maintain a class Google Site that will be linked through the campus fwisd.org website.

Where will the model video lessons that Teaching and Learning will provide during the first six weeks be housed?
The Teaching and Learning department will be uploading the instructional videos created for virtual learning to YouTube. Links to model lessons will be accessible via the district curriculum frameworks.

Can you link the instructional videos on YouTube in Google Classroom?
Yes, teachers will be able to insert or copy the YouTube link directly into Google Classroom for students to access.

Virtual Instruction Professional Learning Plan FAQ

What are the professional learning opportunities?
Professional learning over virtual instruction will be offered to all teachers. There are two required trainings.

K-12 Teachers

- Virtual Learning Best Practices (Required)
- The Fort Worth ISD Virtual Learning Format (Required)

PK Teachers

- Developmentally Appropriate Practices in the Virtual Classroom (Required)
- The Fort Worth ISD Virtual Learning Format (PK Teachers Only) (Required)

I noticed that within The Fort Worth ISD Virtual Learning Format course description, that some of the courses are bundled. I completed portions of this training in June. Do I have to repeat those portions again?
We recognize that some teachers completed some of the components of the required eCourses in June. Therefore, other training will be made available to personalize the professional learning experience. Teachers will be able to choose other options within The Fort Worth ISD Virtual Learning Format eCourse via a choice board.

Can teachers earn flex credit for completing training?
The Flex Day Initiative provides for teacher ownership in professional activities through mutually-agreed upon selection, personalization, and engagement. Teachers, in conjunction with their T-TESS Appraiser, will create a professional development plan aligned to T-TESS professional learning goals. Appraisers will approve and monitor progress of the professional development plans. Courses taken outside of the normal contract day for teachers can count for flex credit, with approval from their Appraiser. Courses taken during the week of August 10 will not count towards flex credit because those will be taken during contract days. View the Flex Day Guidance Document for specific details and guidelines.

What type of instructional support is available for teachers?
Teachers will design and deliver virtual instruction with the guidance and support of our Teaching and Learning Department, Curriculum Frameworks, and the use of District resources. They will receive job-embedded professional learning and coaching provided by Instructional Coaches and Digital Learning Specialists. In addition, Teaching and Learning will provide model lessons during the first six weeks of instruction. Each lesson will include a video modeling Tier 1 Instruction that uses a learning target per the district curriculum as well as model student practice activities. Access to model lessons will be available through the district curriculum frameworks.

I am a school leader. What professional learning is available for me?
The district will provide professional learning for school leaders. Sessions for the school leaders will explore best practices, the lesson delivery format, Google Classroom, and digital communication tools.

What type of initial support is in place for students?
Three instructional videos/trainings will be provided to help families start distance learning successfully. In addition, a repository of online support materials for students and parents will be available. As in a brick and mortar classroom, the teacher will be integral in communicating how-tos and procedures to students and parents.

Will Fort Worth ISD provide technology devices to students participating in virtual learning?
All 6th-12th grade students have access to a Chromebook. During spring 2020, the district surveyed families to identify additional technology needs. The families of PreK-5th grade were provided with a Chromebook based on need. Parents can let the school know of any additional needs.

How can students participate in virtual learning if there is no internet access at home?
Currently, the district provides hotspots to students without internet access at home. During online registration, there will be an opportunity for families to indicate a need. Fort Worth ISD is continuing to investigate the best way to assist families in accessing online learning platforms and lessons via the internet.

Non-Core Courses FAQ

Elementary School

What will specials (PE, Art, Music) look like for virtual elementary students?
Elementary PE students will receive one lesson per week that will provide daily activity Monday through Friday from the campus certified PE teacher.

Elementary Art & Music students will receive one music and one art lesson per week from the campus certified Art and/or Music teacher.

Middle School

How many courses will virtual students be enrolled in?
Students will be enrolled in the same number of courses they would have taken in-person.

Will virtual students be able to enroll in the same courses they selected this spring?
Yes, they will be enrolled in the same courses they selected this spring.

Can virtual students participate in extracurricular activities?
Yes, virtual students can participate in extracurricular activities outside of the school day.

Is Fort Worth ISD offering any hybrid courses for middle school students?
No, Fort Worth ISD is not offering hybrid courses.

If a student would like to participate in Career and Technical Education (CTE) courses can they enroll in virtual learning?
Yes, they can enroll in CTE courses. The hands-on activities may vary from the traditional activities performed in class due to safety and the equipment required.

If a student would like to participate in PE, Health, and/or Athletic courses, can they enroll in virtual learning?
Yes, they can enroll in PE, Health, and/or Athletic courses. The participation component of the course may vary from the traditional activities performed in class due to safety and the equipment required.

If a student would like to participate in Fine Arts courses, can they enroll in virtual instruction?
Yes, they can enroll in Fine Arts courses. The hands-on activities may vary from the traditional activities performed in class due to safety and the equipment required.

Will a student enrolled as a virtual learner in a performing arts class still perform?
Yes, the curriculum and course requirements remain the same. In this case there will be a performance element even if the student is enrolled virtually.

Will virtual students enrolled in a performing arts ensemble be able to compete in district and region auditions for honor ensembles?
Yes, students may participate in district/region auditions. They will need to communicate with their campus director so that they can be entered correctly for each audition.

High School

How many courses will virtual students be enrolled in?
Students will be enrolled in the same number of courses they would have taken in-person.

Will virtual students be able to enroll in the same courses they selected this spring?
Yes, they will be enrolled in the same courses they selected this spring.

Is Fort Worth ISD offering any hybrid courses?
No, Fort Worth ISD is not offering hybrid courses.

Can virtual students participate in extracurricular activities?
Yes, virtual students can participate in extracurricular activities outside of the school day.

If a student would like to participate in Career and Technical Education (CTE) Courses, can they enroll in virtual learning?
Yes, students can enroll in CTE courses in their chosen pathway. The hands-on activities may vary from the traditional activities performed in class due to the equipment required.

If a student would like to participate in PE, Health, and/or Athletic courses, can they enroll in virtual learning?
Yes, they can enroll in PE, Health, and/or Athletic courses. The participation component of the course may vary from the traditional activities performed in class due to safety and the equipment required.

If a student would like to participate in Fine Arts courses, can they enroll in virtual instruction?
Yes, they can enroll in Fine Arts courses. The hands-on activities may vary from the traditional activities performed in class due to the equipment required.

If a student participates in any summer or school year outside Marching Band rehearsals will they be able to participate in any potential marching band performance?
Yes - if they are consistent with the program policies and director for proper preparation to play and perform.

If a student is enrolled in an elective course, are they able to take this course virtually?
Yes, high school elective courses will be offered virtually.

Will a student enrolled as a virtual learner in a performing arts class still perform?
Yes, The curriculum and course requirements remain the same. In this case there will be a performance element even if the student is enrolled virtually.

Will virtual students enrolled in a performing arts ensemble be able to compete in district and region auditions for TMEA All State ensembles?
Yes, students may participate in district/region/area auditions. They will need to communicate with their campus director so that they can be entered correctly for each audition.

Grading

What type of grading policies will be in place for virtual learners?
Students enrolled in in-person and virtual learning will follow the same grading policies. Students will earn numeric grades.**2019 - 2020 Secondary Guide to Grade Reporting** (2019 - 2020 Secondary Guide to Grade Reporting The 2020 - 2021 Secondary Guide to Grade Reporting is forthcoming.

Attendance

Will there be an attendance requirement for virtual learners?
Yes, daily attendance will be required. Additional details are forthcoming.

Special Education Guidance and FAQ

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the district continues to seek guidance from the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the Texas Education Agency (TEA), as well as federal, state, and local regulatory entities. The current plan will be updated accordingly as new guidance is published. Updated guidance from the district can be accessed [here](#).

Tarrant County Public Health officials have determined that the first six weeks of classes will take place virtually. Therefore, face-to-face instruction will not resume until September 28, 2020.

General Guidance

- Student Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) will be followed regardless of learning environment such that students with disabilities receive a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). The district will ensure that, to the greatest extent possible, each student with a disability can be provided the Special Education and related services identified in the student's IEP.

- If the IEP cannot be implemented in a virtual environment, an Admission, Review, & Dismissal Committee (ARD) will need to convene to determine the levels of supports to be addressed during virtual learning. If a Contingency Plan was previously adopted due to the initial COVID-19 closure, it remains in effect.

- Pursuant with guidelines published by TEA, neither state nor federal law provide flexibility to LEAs in times of emergency regarding their obligation to provide FAPE to students receiving Special Education services. Although evaluation timelines pause in situations where the district is closed and not in session, if the district is offering educational services, the 45 school-day timeline requirements of Texas Education Code §29.004 apply.

- Students receiving related services (e.g., Speech therapy, Occupational therapy, Music therapy, Physical therapy, Psychological services, and Dyslexia services) will have access to these via teletherapy or other virtual modalities.

Virtual Instructional Support

- Special Education services will be provided through a combination of synchronous (direct) and asynchronous (indirect) virtual models. Students will have access to grade level content while receiving Special Education support and related services identified ARD Committee.

- Some courses and lessons will be delivered in real-time with two-way communication between teachers and students through the computer or other electronic devices (i.e., synchronous instruction). While other courses and lessons will be designed as a curricular experience where students engage in the learning materials on their own time, interacting intermittently with the teacher via computer or other electronic devices (i.e., asynchronous instruction).

- During virtual learning, direct services may be supported through video conferences, telephone calls, homework packets, internet-based lessons, and other distance-based learning approaches (e.g., Google Classroom/Zoom). Supports provided during virtual learning will be based on the individual needs the student, in the same way supports are determined for a student participating in face-to-face instruction (i.e., as outlined by the student's IEP and FIE).

- FWISD Curriculum Framework will continue to be utilized to facilitate student learning and engagement. The work will also match –or even exceed – the daily minimums of four hours a day.

10

- Students receiving inclusion and resource will have accommodated and modified virtual learning assignments, in collaboration with General Education. Students receiving services within Resource Classrooms will utilize the curriculum framework, including vertically aligned and scaffolded lessons as required using high-quality intensive instruction. Students in Specialized Support Classrooms will be utilizing "Unique Learning System (ULS) and News-2-You (n2y)" which is individualized to their learning. Parents of students who receive SEAS support will be provided with direct access to an online platform.

- FWISD will institute a Collaborative Model of inclusion support to facilitate virtual learning. This model is comprised of multiple teaching modalities offering differentiated support including Parallel Teaching, Station Teaching, and Alternative Teaching.

- Virtual office hours will be established and set up through Google Classroom/Zoom for assistance and content support.

- Per Texas Education Code (TEC), §25.092, students must attend 90% of the days a course is offered (with some exceptions) in order to be awarded credit for the course and/or to be promoted to the next grade.

- Grading policies for remote work will be the same as those that were used for on-campus learning before COVID-19. Special Education students enrolled in virtual instruction will follow all appropriate FWISD school grading policies.

- Student engagement will be tracked daily to ensure students are progressing. Academic progress will be measured via daily data collection, teacher/student interactions; and the completion and submission of assignments. Fort Worth ISD will measure the academic progress of all students. The data will be used to continuously improve instruction.

IEPs, FIEs, and ARDs

- Service providers will monitor the student to ensure progress on the General Education curriculum as well as on their IEP goals. Additional ARD meetings may be necessary if a student begins to struggle and cannot remediate while participating in virtual learning and/or once the student returns to school to in-person instruction.

- Requirements related to the legal timelines for initial and annual ARD meetings still apply. The ARD Committee may meet by video or teleconference; however, all required members must be in attendance. Parents may choose to participate via video conferencing or telephonically. ARD meetings shall be scheduled at a mutually agreed upon time in collaboration with parents and campus staff including administrator(s) and teachers. The ARD Committee will address all elements of an annual, including Instructional and Related Services.

If a student is enrolled in the virtual learning environment and an evaluation requires an in-person assessment or observation (34 C.F.R. §300.310(a)), evaluators should collect as much assessment data as possible virtually. Evaluators will then complete the written report with all available assessment data. The report will either indicate that: Sufficient data exists for disability determination(s); or Current data is inconclusive and additional data is required for disability determination(s). Subsequent ARDs related to FIEs must follow legal timelines. In some cases, the district may work with the family to determine a mutually agreed upon location to complete an in-person evaluation, even if the student is enrolled in the virtual learning environment

Section 504 Guidance

Fort Worth ISD will ensure that each student with a disability that substantially impacts a major life activity will be provided a §504 plan, if appropriate, as determined by the §504 Committee. Service plans will be implemented both virtually and/or in person.

The guidance is as follows:

- Fort Worth ISD is committed to meeting the unique needs of students with disabilities by ensuring §504 committees convene to discuss needs, review progress, and prioritize critical areas of support to make individualized recommendations for students.

- §504 amendment meetings will be held for all students who choose virtual learning to determine what accommodations and services can be implemented and address any changes that need to be made to assist the student.

- Meetings will be held for students with complex plans, health plans, related service plans or for those who struggled during the COVID-19 closure in the 2019-2020 school year or by request.

- To ensure seamless services throughout the year, the §504 committee will document accommodations that can be implemented both virtually and in person in the event there is a disruption in services.

- Campus §504 procedures will be followed for all students. Teachers will receive a copy of students §504 plans with accommodations from the §504 case managers (counselor) and will be part of any §504 meetings to determine student accommodations.

- The regular compliance calendar will be followed for evaluations, re-evaluations and annual reviews.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the district continues to seek guidance from the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the Texas Education Agency (TEA), as well as federal, state, and local regulatory entities. The current plan will be updated accordingly as new guidance is published.

Dyslexia Guidance

Fort Worth ISD will ensure that, to the greatest extent possible, each student with dyslexia will receive instruction according to The Dyslexia Handbook, Rev. 2018, published by the Texas Education Agency.

Virtual Dyslexia instruction as follows:

- Dyslexia teacher preference is synchronous instruction; however, recorded sessions and additional online resources will be provided for supplemental practice and when introducing a new skill.
- Delivery of dyslexia services includes district designated resources aligned with TEA's Dyslexia Handbook, Rev. 2018.
- Services will be provided through the district approved learning management system (Google Classroom/Zoom) to design appropriate lessons, assignments, and assessments.
- Lessons provided will include opportunity for student response (i.e. See Saw, Flipgrid) to assist with measuring progress.
- Learners will use materials provided for interactive instruction and practice at home (i.e. alphabet strips, letter blocks, letter ARC, reading trackers, coding sheets, handwriting practice, etc.)
- Virtual office hours will be established and set up through Google Classroom/Zoom for assistance and content support.
- Dyslexia teachers will use individual student learning plans to document services and supports provided.
- Dyslexia teachers will support Section 504 accommodation plans and IEPs.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the district continues to seek guidance from the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the Texas Education Agency (TEA), as well as federal, state, and local regulatory entities. The current plan will be updated accordingly as new guidance is published.