



## Introduction

Key themes that should frame continuous learning in your classroom:

- Focus on essential learning
- Emphasize relationships and connectivity in this new learning environment
- Prioritize socio-emotional wellness equally to academic engagement
- Recognize that decisions impact and must support all students
- Be flexible and ready to adapt or pivot as needs arise
- Encourage patience and support and extend grace to all

## Student Support\*

*\*From the NMPED Implementation Guide for Your Continuous Learning Plan*

### General Recommendations

- 1) Establish office hours for teacher availability/check-ins. Consider online platforms for communities with access and conference calls for communities with limited access. Ensure families and students have access to counselors as well as teachers.
- 2) Use common platforms (suggested or already in use) across a district to alleviate any confusion for parents and students.
- 3) Determine whether students are completing work online or traditionally (e.g., submitting photos of work, delivery of completed packets).
- 4) When planning lessons, consider that students may have: a. Multiple classes b. Other responsibilities c. Personal or family illness d. Limited access to devices and internet, etc.

### Questions to consider for every grade band and content area

- 1) How might the makeup of each family impact the way they engage with continuous learning (culture, race, family structure, location - urban/rural, financial resources, social-emotional support, etc.)?
- 2) How can we provide culturally and linguistically relevant resources and instruction for each particular student and family?
- 3) How can we see this family and their student's learning through a trauma-informed lens, particularly given the health crisis?
- 4) In what ways can we allow families to individualize continuous learning?

## Educator Support\*

*\*From the School Closure Planning Document from the Learning Technology Center*

- **Inject some normalcy into your session.**
  - Post a short “good morning” video to let the students see you, or use a check-in question of the day with your picture.
  - Include Do Nows/Warm Ups that you would normally use in class. These are still a good way to get brains going, and then, students can share their work or comment on their thinking.
  - Create classroom norms and share those each time the class meets virtually.
  
- **Use a platform that you and students are familiar with.**
  - Use programs your students are already familiar with and have installed. This is a stressful time for students and families, and we want to foster learning experiences.
  - Remember that some parents are not as tech-savvy as others, so if students need adult assistance to do something on a computer, it will have to fit in with the family schedule.
  
- **Keep goals short and simple**
  - Create goals for the class as a group, and have students write their own individual learning goals. This will help motivate students to stay on track to reach their goals.
  - If continuous learning is new to most students, a good place to start is having a goal around just responding to a welcome post.
  - If it’s related to a specific content area, make it a SMART goal. (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-sensitive).
  
- **Keep your sessions short**
  - Many families may have one internet capable device, which may limit how much time students can use the device. In a family with multiple siblings and with parents working at home, internet time and time with a device may be shared by the whole family.
  - It is important not to overwhelm our students with work. It is unrealistic to think that students can complete a full day of instruction and a full day of homework online
  - NMPED recommended guidelines for maximum student commitment in terms of direct instruction each day are as follows:
    - Pre-K : 30 minutes
    - Grades K-1: 45 minutes
    - Grades 2-3: 60 minutes
    - Grades 4-5: 90 minutes
    - Grades 6-12: 30 minutes per teacher (3 hours max in a day)
    - The guidelines above are meant for any delivery model -- packets, on-line, hybrid, etc. Additional reading time or storytelling is always encouraged. Teachers may find that they have to adjust after their first week.
  
- **Empower learners to take charge of their own learning.**
  - Create a daily checklist of exactly what students should do each day, with an estimate of how long it should take. This helps provide structure and organization.

- Be mindful of parents working from home and the possibility there is only one computer that is shared by all. It is important to have flexible deadlines for work completion, which means students will need to be tracking their assignments. Use tools to help them accomplish this.
- Encourage students to share their ideas for learning. You could have them come up with their own way to demonstrate understanding or application of skills related to a specific topic, such as writing a poem about irrational numbers, building a model of an historical event, or developing an interpretive dance to show how atoms behave in a liquid.
- **Connect learning to experiences that are meaningful and valuable.**
  - Be open to taking appropriate risks in trying new tasks, activities, and ways to engage students. This unprecedented situation allows you to insert some creativity into your teaching. This is an opportunity to have students collect data from their environment, analyze various aspects, and reflect on what their analysis means.
  - These learning experiences offer authentic opportunities to focus on key concepts, knowledge, and skills. They emphasize interaction and creativity and involve a balance of on-screen and off-screen tasks that help connect to previous learning and the current curriculum.
  - Process and product learning may be easier to track than traditional assignments.
- **Consider modifying your lecture format.**
  - Give your students the material in a variety of ways. Linking to articles, videos, and infographics that are already out there is an easy way to help them interact more deeply with course concepts.
  - If you must deliver information directly from you to them, [try creating short, informal videos](#). Phone recorded videos are perfectly fine for this. In fact, an informal approach can help students stay connected and interested.
- **Beware of adding extra writing.**
  - Often, instructors just translate student attendance, participation, and discussion requirements into written response requirements (for example, chapter summaries). This increases both their workload and yours in ways that don't always benefit learning because this type of assignment may not align to your instructional objective and may overload students across the content areas.
  - Allow students to [participate through other formats to deepen their learning](#) and keep them more dynamically engaged with the material. Asking them to post a video response, lead a discussion thread, or share some extended learning on social media are all ways you can foster deeper interaction with course concepts and create more meaningful student learning.
- **Be ready to give up some control and trust your students.**
  - Give your students choices. When it comes to assignments, projects, readings, and other materials, giving the students options can increase their sense of responsibility and intrinsic motivation.
  - Have the students lead.
    - Ask students to respond to a discussion prompt you create or have them generate their own threads of discussion based on their ideas and questions that have come up as they've explored course materials.

- Have students evaluate and give feedback on peers' presentations and projects. It inspires the students to be more innovative and thoughtful in their work. We tend to be more motivated to perform well for a group of our peers than for a single instructor.
- **Stay connected. Monitor morale and workload of students, adjust if necessary.**
  - Use quick check-in videos: 3 to 5 minute videos including reminders, key vocabulary for the week, updates on course materials, shout-outs to specific students who are doing a good job, and highlights of particularly interesting discussion threads help the students know that you are present in the course and following their work.
  - Have real time office hours for students in the discussion forum. Each week, specify a time that you will be in your "Office Hour" discussion thread, so they can find you there and ask their questions in real time. When they know they can have immediate access to you for at least an hour a week, students are less likely to ding you with constant messaging for help.
  - Offer video chat to your students who need to speak with you privately.
  - Use the same method of communication to parents so they know where to expect information from.
- **Protect your time.**
  - Just because you could be available to your students 24/7, doesn't mean you have to or that you should be. Be clear about your schedule, when you will be available to answer questions and what the students can expect in terms of response time. Then, stick with what you have said!
  - It is recommended that you maintain open communication direct to parents so that they don't have to rely on their child to provide information from your class. Communicating consistent "Office Hours" to parents will help them reach you and send a clear message that you are available consistently. Many parents are feeling the day-to-day frustration of learning to participate actively in their child's education, and so, knowing you are there to support will ease familial tension and best support learning for each student.
  - To avoid getting emails of work being turned in; use a platform to collect those (i.e. Google Classroom, Padlet, Flipgrid). Check in with your site administrator or district to determine their recommended platform.
- **Supporting Special Populations Students**
  - As you plan, what is the goal and what are the barriers students need to overcome?
  - Consider using [the Universal Design Principles](#) to create flexible paths for student learning. Work with support staff prior to lesson to help develop the UDL strategies that address IEP goals, modifications, and accommodations.
    - **Multiple representations:** present information in multiple media with varied supports. (graphics, animation, highlight critical features, active background knowledge, and vocabulary support)
    - **Action and Representation:** provide students choice about how to respond, provide models and give timely feedback
    - **Engagement:** Provide a choice for students who have a wide variety of interests. Be flexible.

## Advice from the Field:

[If I Had it to do Over Again/Things I Wish I Knew About Going Online Quickly](#) (crowdsourced advice and tips from overseas teachers affected)

[What Teachers in China Have Learned the Last Month](#) (article)

[Transitioning to Online Learning: Pro Tips on What You Need to Know](#) (article)

## Additional Resources:

Please, first consult your district-adopted core instructional materials and the vendor for those materials to inquire about the resources they may be able to provide for distance learning. [Here is a list of additional resources \(print and digital\) for distance learning being offered in support of core instructional materials that are on the NM adopted multiple list.](#)

CCSSO runs the High-Quality Instructional Materials and Professional Development (IMPD) Network that currently supports eight states, including New Mexico. Its purpose is to significantly increase the number of districts selecting high-quality, standards aligned instructional materials and to increase the number of pre-service and in-service teachers receiving professional development grounded in the use of those materials. Through the work of these network states to identify and leverage high-quality instructional materials, CCSSO is sharing recommendations for high-quality materials to be used for remote learning due to COVID-19 school closures. [Click here to download the list.](#)

## Suggested Planning Tool:

The planning tool below provides a suggestion for organizing a virtual learning session with students.

Time	Learning sequence	Materials
5 min.	Norms, objectives, and engagement activity	Slides or platform for students to do a quick response
10-15 min.	Content (keep it short and provide choice to meet the needs of all learners)	Video clips, graphics, slides
5 min.	Review (formative assessments)	Google form or picture of the answer
5 min.	Wrap up and next steps	Task assigned (think of things students do not need to be online for)

## Guidelines for Student Learning and Instructional Time Based on Age\*

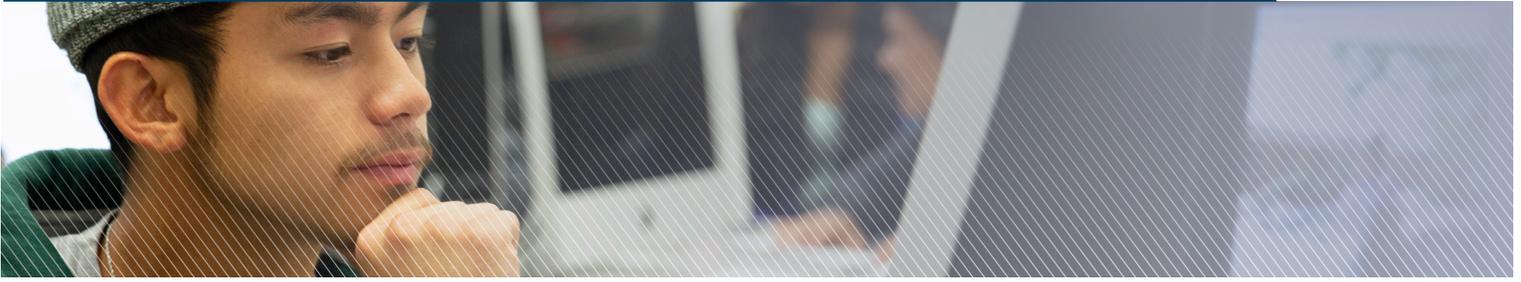
\*Taken from the NMPED Implementation Guide for Your Continuous Learning Plan

Elementary	
Pre-K	<p><b>Daily Learning Time: 30 minutes of direct instruction. Additional storytelling and play is always encouraged.</b></p> <p>Daily Learning time can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5-minute increments of direct instruction</li> <li>• Hands-on activities</li> <li>• Imaginative play</li> <li>• Creative arts</li> <li>• Music and movement</li> <li>• Outdoor exploration</li> <li>• Fine/gross motor activities</li> <li>• Storytelling</li> </ul> <p>Sample Schedule:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5 minutes: Daily Routines/traditions (review daily schedule, engage in connection activities, review the calendar/date, etc. - teachers can provide ideas that overlap with familiar school routines)</li> <li>• 5 minutes: Story time (video from teacher or read to by caregiver)</li> <li>• 5 minutes: Brain break (music and movement - ideas provided by teacher)</li> <li>• 5 minutes: Introduce new content (video from teacher or instructed by caregiver)</li> <li>• 10 minutes: Hands-on activity related to content or story (activities provided by teacher)</li> </ul> <p>Extra Suggestions for Extending Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 30-60 minutes of outdoor play</li> <li>• 10-20 minutes of reading with family (books of their choice)</li> <li>• 90+ minutes of imaginative play</li> </ul>
K-1	<p><b>Daily Learning Time: 5-10 minute time spans, a total of 45 minutes. Additional storytelling and play is always encouraged.</b></p> <p>Daily learning time can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading Foundations</li> <li>• Online or written math work and puzzles (use manipulatives and items at home!)</li> <li>• Hands-on learning activities that encourage cross-content science learning such as gardening, tracking and observing the weather</li> <li>• P.E., art, music, etc.</li> <li>• Social-emotional learning</li> <li>• Storytelling</li> </ul>

<p>2-4</p>	<p>Daily Learning Time: 10-15 minute time spans, <b>a total of 60 minutes. Additional storytelling and play is always encouraged.</b></p> <p>Daily learning time can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading</li> <li>• Writing – use creative prompts and target <i>small</i> writing tasks</li> <li>• Mathematics written or online work – use manipulatives</li> <li>• Small research projects or hands-on learning activities that encourage cross-content science learning or social studies</li> <li>• P.E., art, music, etc.</li> <li>• Social-emotional learning</li> </ul>
<p>5-6</p>	<p>Daily Learning Time: 20 minute time spans, <b>a total of 90 minutes</b></p> <p>Daily learning time can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading</li> <li>• Writing – use creative prompts and target <i>small</i> writing tasks</li> <li>• Mathematics written or online work – use manipulatives</li> <li>• Small research projects or hands-on learning activities that encourage cross-content science learning or social studies</li> <li>• P.E., art, music, etc.</li> <li>• Socio-emotional learning</li> </ul>
<p><b>Secondary</b></p>	
<p>Middle and High School</p>	<p>Daily Learning Time: <b>3 total hours a day</b></p> <p>Recommended Time:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 30 minutes for each class - middle school</li> <li>• 30 minutes for each class - high school</li> </ul> <p>Daily learning time can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading and reflection</li> <li>• Writing tasks</li> <li>• Recorded lectures</li> <li>• Online or written mathematics</li> <li>• Content-loaded tablets with text and activities</li> <li>• Discussion boards</li> <li>• Online resources</li> <li>• Content-based activities</li> <li>• Project-based or service-learning projects</li> </ul>

Specials	
Visual Arts, Music, PE, Health, Computer Science, World Languages, etc.	<p>The time allotted for special/electives will vary greatly by school district and level. <i>Suggested time frames for specials should be considered part of the total continuous learning load for all classes.</i></p> <p>Consideration should be given for the portion of the school day/year this class might normally represent. Encouraging daily student physical activity will be critical, while also providing opportunities for meaningful activities in other electives/specials.</p> <p>Students are accustomed to daily, structured movement (such as Physical Education) as well as unstructured movement (such as recess).</p>

# Distance Learning During the COVID-19 Pandemic



A flood of people from pre-school teachers to college professors to workforce trainers are researching best practices for learning at distance in response to the COVID-19 school closings. There is a lot of research in this area and good evidence that high-quality learning can happen in distance learning environments. However, all of that research took place in different context than today's. Distance learning during a global pandemic has no precedent. It is a context with no perfectly-aligned research to guide our way. To support the world's educators and students learning at distance during COVID-19 isolation, here are five principles for educators to consider.

## 1 Change the learning goals and the learning process

It is unreasonable to expect educators and students today to maintain their old normal, even if they were distance learners before. Student's lives are completely different from how they were just a month ago, and what they can accomplish is different as well. Determine reasonable learning goals for your students to achieve (and for you to facilitate) in the current situation and then design a process in which students can meet those goals and you can assess their progress.

## 2 Design learning activities for the distance learning environment

Avoid the all-too-common and time-consuming pitfall of trying to recreate every in-person learning activity in the distance learning environment. The distance learning environment has its own unique benefits that can't be leveraged if we see in-person learning as the best choice and distance learning as a poor second. Focus on providing distance learning experiences that maximize learner engagement and minimize roadblocks.

## 3 Prepare for students' upcoming challenges

Learners are likely to experience stress, if not trauma, in the upcoming months — from food insecurity to housing loss to family deaths. It is essential that educators connect with students, respond with empathy, and have a list of community resources for students at the ready.

## 4 Investigate institutional policies

Learners and their families are also likely to be confused about what their educational institutions are expecting of them. They are asking, "Do my courses count toward graduation?" and "Does my child *have* to join the group conference calls?" and "Where can I pick up assignments?" If you're passionate about any of these organizational policies, get involved in helping those decisions get made (and revised, as the case may be).

## 5 Model a growth mindset

When your distance learning plans don't work out (and, in all likelihood, at least some of them won't), it is an opportunity to show students how a successful adult responds to failure. The example of how one can productively respond to challenge and disappointment is a valuable gift you can give your students.

And most importantly, when you or your students fail to live up to expectations, generously dole out all the extra grace you can find, because right now, everyone needs it.

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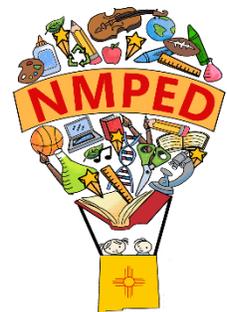
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- Early Childhood Bureau
- Instructional Materials Bureau
- Literacy and Humanities Bureau
- Math and Science Bureau

Here is a [link to additional resources](#) that PED provided to educators and families via an instructional support toolkit during temporary closure.



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