Checklist for Virtual Classroom Considerations

FOR REMOTE LEARNING PLANS AND CLASS SIZE WAIVER REQUESTS

With the phased reentry guidance, classrooms will be conducted in hybrid or remote learning models. Successful teaching will require creativity and maximization of skills and available resources. Successful virtual classrooms require personalization of instruction and socio-emotional connections. **Remote Learning Plans should demonstrate careful consideration of virtual classroom elements.**

Teaching in teams may be an effective way to provide remote learning. Doubling up on teachers in a classroom may require class size waiver requests. Class size waiver requests for remote learning also requires consideration of the below-listed virtual classroom elements. Class size waivers may be requested with the submission of a waiver form.

Effectively conducting a virtual classroom, within or in excess of statutory minimums, requires planning and consideration of at least the following elements:

- ☐ **What will be the frequency and duration of the virtual classroom?**
  - ► For each virtual class where the entire class is taught
  - ► For each check-in with students
  - ► For each check-in with families
  - ► For office hours when you are available for questions and additional assistance

- ☐ **What is the level of teaching experience of the teacher/teaching team?**

- ☐ **What is the level of technology training and expertise of the teacher/teaching team?**

- ☐ **Will there be at least a second person assisting in the remote classroom, to run the technological aspects of the videoconference, to ask and answer questions in the chat box, and to help teach in breakout groups? The second person doesn't need to be a licensed teacher. The second person could be an educational assistant, a substitute teacher, a student teacher, or a classroom-experienced volunteer such as a retired teacher.**

- ☐ **What is the grade level of the students?**
  - ► Additional instructional staff will be needed to teach in small breakout groups, especially in the younger age grades where autonomy cannot be presumed, in order to keep students engaged.

- ☐ **Are student teachers available?**
  - ► Many student teachers may have a higher degree of technical knowledge than some of our master teachers. Use your cohort of student teachers to support their master teachers while also learning from them.

- ☐ **Have you created lesson plans and classroom management plans for virtual classrooms?**
  - ► Have you built in opportunities for student interactions with instructional staff and other students during the virtual class?
  - ► Think about how you would deliver the face-to-face lesson, and write it in a similar manner; you want to provide an explanation of the topic, with examples and supporting details as appropriate for a comprehensive learning experience

- ☐ **Have you planned the academic content and homework assignments for each virtual class?**
  - ► Your instructions must be detailed and explicit in an online environment. The more thought you put into your instructions, the less students will email with follow up questions. To help you, consider what questions students frequently ask in class and factor those in as you prepare your instructions.

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☐ Have you planned your assessments?
- ▶ Consider using assessments that assess multiple learning outcomes.
- ▶ Consider using assessments that increase engagement and discourage sharing of answers
- ▶ Develop detailed rubrics for all graded assessments that clearly explain what the expectations are for each assignment and how students will be assessed; consider sharing these rubrics with students if appropriate for their age

☐ Have you planned use of a whiteboard during the virtual class?

☐ Have you planned to accommodate students and families with slow or no internet connections by providing a call-in number and other accommodations?

☐ Have you planned and practiced with other educators the videoconference?
- ▶ Will you Record and archive sessions so they can be:
  - ▪ *Uploaded to modules for review and learners who missed the session*
  - ▪ *Used to review for student participation*
  - ▪ *Shared for presentation/discussion playback*

▶ Have you uploaded onto your desktop documents to share on your screen, for the virtual classroom to see?
- ▪ *Several presentations can be loaded and switched between during a session*
- ▪ *The presenter can also use the whiteboard drawing tools over any document to simulate mark up*

▶ Have you mapped out the questions you might ask orally or in the chat box to further engage students?

▶ Have you planned breakout groups (in videoconference breakout rooms)?
- ▪ *Four to six students per room is ideal*
- ▪ *Plan how to encourage students to work in together in the breakout groups*
- ▪ *Consider having groups present back to the whole class*

☐ Have you planned for the possibility of receiving and incorporating feedback to improve your virtual classroom?
- ▶ Based on feedback
- ▶ Based on student questions
- ▶ Based on your review of recordings of virtual classes (yours and peers')

Consider this graphic as you prepare your virtual classroom

RESOURCES:
There are many free online resources that address best practices for virtual learning. If these apply to grades you don't teach, they still may be modified for your purposes. Here is a short list of some of the virtual classroom best practices:

- Leading Successful Virtual Classroom Session from the Brightspace Community
- The Transition from Face-to-Face to Online Learning: Maintaining an Engaging Experience from the Brightspace Community
- Instructor Presence in the Online Environment: Fostering a Connection with Learners from the Brightspace Community
- Moving to Digital Learning Fast from the Brightspace Community
- Teaching Remotely from the Eastern Illinois University Faculty Development and Innovation Center