Plan for **Reimagining CT Classrooms for Continuous Learning**

Connecticut State Department of Education
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CSDE

Contents

Introduction

State and local agencies immediately engaged in conversations to ensure continuity of learning across all schools, classrooms and communities. Educators, parents, students, political organizations and statewide advocacy came together to develop plans, provide resources and tools to ensure all learners continue their educational experience from a distance.

The purpose of this document is to provide a framework for developing local Continuous Learning Plans to support the reopening of all schools that will provide continuity of learning.

The term "continuous learning" means establishing and maintaining connections with students and families to provide learning materials and supports using a variety of communication channels and modalities (e.g., email, phone, printed learning materials, and available online platforms).

Continuity of learning, academic growth and student connectedness are critical components of student well-being. Routines and connections with educators provide required stability, security, and structure that can keep our children happy, active, engaged, and healthy. Therefore, the CSDE strongly encourages all school systems to develop and implement Continuous Learning Plans in partnership with teachers, families, and local education boards. The following framework provides school systems with design principles as recommendations for how to assess capacity, analyze available instructional and technology resources, develop an approach to providing distance learning opportunities, and implement a distance learning plan. Each school system must make local decisions in line with their needs, and several already have plans in place.

The purpose of this plan is to provide the design principles for continuous learning required when in school (onsite) and out of school (remote). You will notice examples curated from colleagues nationwide as a model for how to plan when required to teach and learn during an unplanned closure. And, the same examples can be used to reimagine your day-to-day operations in schools and classrooms to assure an accelerated response to a closing.

We have the opportunity to unleash our imaginations and rewrite the rules for how we learn and teach. If we ensure onsite blended learning experiences that are learner connected, learner led, learner focused, and learner demonstrated, then we will have designed a future of learning that develops the portrait of a college-, career-, and life-ready learner.

Reimagining CT Classrooms: Design Principles

As we reimagine CT classrooms for onsite and remote blended learning, consider the following design principles as guidance to structure, support and shape a meaningful and worthwhile learning environment for all learners. In the development of a district continuous learning plan considerable thought and care must be devoted to the design, facilitation and direction of the learning and teaching environment, instructional day, relationships with educational partners to accelerate learning and advance equity.

★ **Principle 1: Focus on Families**

Learning plans must consider the parents as a true partner in facilitating the learning. Implementing a learning plan that works for students and families minimizes frustration and empowers families to engage in the learning process in novel and routine ways. Be thoughtful about the expectations placed upon families during blended and extended remote learning times.

★ **Principle 2: Focus on Quality**

Teachers and students will have the greatest success when plans build from the instructional plan that was in place for the academic year. Rather than turning to new instructional materials, school systems should use and leverage existing standards-based curriculum resources (both offline and online). Feedback from families indicates that long lists of websites and additional resources may be overwhelming.

★ **Principle 3: Focus on Mastery**

Mastery-based learning focuses on the individual student, providing each with the ability to progress at their own pace. Those who can master given material more quickly advance right away instead of waiting for others to catch up — giving them a chance to move even further along than in traditional systems. Teachers should articulate learning competencies as a combined set of state or national standards, district identified competencies within and across grades and content aligned to the portrait or vision of the graduate.

★ **Principle 4: Focus on Equity**

- Take time to ensure your most vulnerable students and their families are supported during all models of learning.
- Ensure access to devices and connectivity.
- High-quality content.
- Integrate digital tools and resources that are mobile-friendly and can be accessed offline.
- Increase frequency of contact with learners and families.
- Minimize the amount of synchronous learning sessions. Consider the makeup of each family and how it can impact the way they engage with continuous learning.
- Incorporate challenge-based, project-based learning and student-driven inquiry projects.
- Create a team of community partners to provide access and support.
- Provide culturally and linguistically relevant resources for each student and family.

⭐ **Principle 5: Focus on Consistency**

- Identify essential outcomes/needs/competencies in content areas at a district level.
- Cross-curricular planning to assist in the students' ability to manage work and new responsibilities at home.
- Create projects/choice boards/playlists that give students and families' flexibility to complete the work and tap interest/motivation.
- Common platforms (suggested or already in use) across a district to alleviate any confusion for parents/ students whether students are completing work online or traditionally.
- All districts, buildings, and grade levels need to include non-technology-based options.
- Single-delivery method consistency in expectations, timelines, and communication from the district to teachers, parents, and students.
- Consider ways to focus on relationships and connections, not just content.

⭐ **Principle 6: Focus on Simplicity**

Intentionally plan for an appropriate amount of active instruction per day based on the age of children. Give families and staff specific advice about when and how to use recommended materials. Consistent days and times for teacher-student phone calls, virtual learning sessions, and online conferences will simplify routines.

Reimagining CT Classrooms: Role of Partners/Stakeholders

We all have one thing in common: we want all Connecticut students to have an opportunity to access high quality and high impact learning experiences that develop their capacity to be college, career and life ready. In the development of a continuous learning plan, districts will need to consider the role of the parent, learner, educators, and administrators if the district is to be successful in reimagining classrooms, learning and teaching. The following competencies by role provide guidance on what to develop, expect and support as partners in reimagining CT classrooms for all learners.

★ **Role of the Parent**

- Collaborate as partners with teachers and administrators in the education of their child in a blended.
- learning environment on campus and remotely.
- Provide feedback to the administrators and teachers as to their learner's experience, progress, and growth.
- Establish routines in the home that are like a school day.
- Identify workspaces in the home for students to engage in learning. Developing a rotational schedule in shared workspaces is helpful.
- Engage students in self-reflection of their learning, so that they own their learning and determine how best to work at home and demonstrate growth.

★ **Role of the Student**

- Collaborate with teacher and peers in all learning spaces (physical and virtual).
- Students engage in determined virtual learning session each for identified core content that aligns to independent assignments that they then complete on their own time. Students are expected to attend, or view learning sessions/content as provided by the teacher(s).
- Students are active participant in the teaching and learning process.
- Students continuously reflect on their own progress of their daily learning plan/schedules adjusting for the next day. Students articulate when they need help.
- Students complete the assigned independent assignments, assessments and tasks and submit each for feedback.

★ **Role of the Administrator**

- Prioritize and monitor assisting teachers and observing evidence of student engagement, ownership and agency of learning through virtual "walkthroughs" and classroom check-ins.
- Seek feedback and check understanding of teachers, parents and students surrounding blended learning strategies.
- Empower learners to be active participants in the learning process.
- Provide feedback to teachers and students.
- Champion the implementation of Blended Learning not only in your building, but as a highly effective instructional model to support all learners.

★ **Role of the Teacher**

- Facilitate the teaching and learning process with students by providing both digital and paper and pencil learning opportunities.
- Support learners in their ability to collaborate by integrating digital tools and resources.
- Use multiple data sources to group students in purposeful ways based on interest, need, or skill-level and in new formats and structure e.g. virtual spaces.
- Develops and delivers targeted instruction for multiple purposes.
- Reduces barriers to content and learning by integrating digital tools and resources.
- Virtual office hour sessions are also provided for live feedback, discussion and support.
- Special population teachers, counselors, and support staff schedule individual check in with students who need additional supports and engagement. Each also participate in select live lessons and teacher office hours to support students in real time.

Reimagining CT Classrooms: Learner Framework

The existing educational design requires attention on the learner framework[1]. All students have realized and developed skills to own their learning in remote settings. To develop the outcomes of the Learner Framework, it will be important to recognize and nurture the ongoing development of these skills upon returning to school and classrooms. To empower teachers and their students, the reimagining of classrooms can be supported by a learner framework that is:

- **Learner Connected**
- **Learner Focused**
- **Learner Led**
- **Learner Demonstrated**

The purpose of this learner framework is to support how CT educators reimagine the role of the student in the teaching and learning process when onsite and remote. The four components within will support the required redesign of the school day when onsite or remote. When in practice, schools can realize success in implementing a blended learning environment to accelerate learning and advance equity.
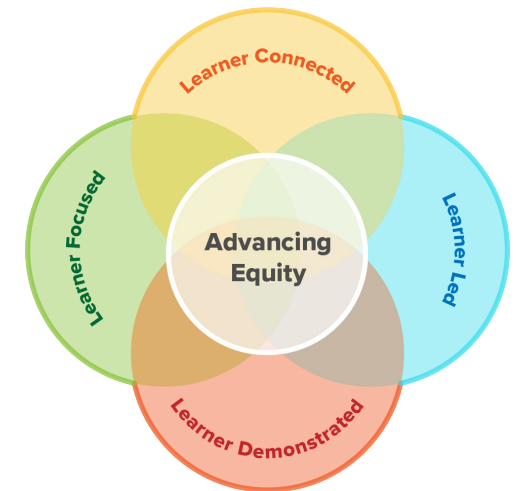
☆ Learner Connected

Learning transcends location in relevant and innovative ways, connected to families, educators, communities and other identified student networks to provide a strong web of care. The networks that surround young people shape their career ambitions and pathways, regardless of students' aptitude in particular disciplines.

Learners:

- Network to cultivate and increase relationships
- Collaborate with teachers, peers and experts in the field
- Are engaged in accelerated learning experiences to develop
- Academic Skills and Knowledge
- Social, Emotional Health coping skills
- Community Civic Engagement skills
- Workplace skill development
- Global collaboration and communication skills

⭐ Learner Focused

Learners are empowered to develop and reflect on their understanding of their needs, strengths, and interests.

Learners:

Deepen understanding of personal and academic needs, strengths, passions and interests, their physical and mental health, social and emotional needs and 21st Century and beyond executive functioning skills

⭐ Learner Led

Learners are empowered to take ownership of their learning.

Learners:

- Articulate goals, strengths, needs, interest
- Partner with parents and teachers in goal setting and develop a pathway for learning
- Assess monitor and reflection progress
- Advocate for their learning and needed support from teachers, technology and other resources

⭐ Learner Demonstrated

Learners can progress at their own pace based on demonstrated mastery.

Learners:

- Engage in challenging learning experiences based on prior knowledge and learning needs
- Engage in productive struggle
- Progress at a pace that fits learning needs
- Advance or go deeper after demonstrating mastery
- Demonstrate evidence of learning in multiple ways
- Recognize the importance of mastering a skill over traditional measures for demonstrating mastery

Reimagining CT Classrooms for Onsite or Remote Blended Learning

If schools are to support a future ready learner framework, the implementation of varied, blended learning models is required. Blended Learning Environments is an educational design defined as learning[3] that combines online digital tools, resources and media with technology and classroom methods, with some element of student control over time, place, path or pace. Blended Learning can take place on site, on campus, in a single classroom or in remote settings. A Blended Learning environment that provides face-to-face and online learning opportunities. The blended learning environment is designed to provide teachers with the resources necessary to both innovate and differentiate instruction according to the needs and strengths of each student.

Research-based blended learning models can include:

1. Station Rotation
2. Lab Rotation
3. Individual Rotation
4. Flipped Classroom
5. Flex
6. A La Carte
7. Enriched Virtual

* Adapted from Clayton Christensen Institute, 2020

Before implementing a blended learning environment, district and building administrators will need to explain why this model is appropriate for onsite and extended remote learning and teaching. It is recommended that district and building leaders assess the level of readiness for implementing a blended learning model and develop a plan for implementation.

Five success factors for implementation include:

⭐ **Success Factor #1**: Create a culture of learning and teaching that supports an infrastructure for blended learning environments

⭐ **Success Factor #2**: Establish a district platform or learning management system for communicating and accessing learning resources whether onsite or remote

⭐ **Success Factor #3:** Establish data review cycles and protocol to monitor progress and modify learning plan or experiences

★ **Success factor #4**: Create learning experiences with district standards-based curriculum as the lead designer for high quality, high impact instruction. This will ensure continuity of learning in the event of unplanned extended remote learning is required

★ **Success Factor #5:** All learners develop digital citizenship skills to participate fully in their communities and make smart choices online and in life.

> ✓ **The CSDE recommends:**
>
> - Districts Leaders participate in professional learning to deepen understanding and capacity for creating a blended learning environment
> - Districts research blended learning models and determine the appropriate model for implementation across district or school wide when onsite or extended remote
> - Use district curriculum over digital tools and technology programs to determine need and procurement
> - Access CT Learning Hub for digital tools, resources, lesson planning templates and professional learning to support the implementation of blended learning environments
> - Reference CSDE Sensible Assessment Practices to support data review protocols for planning instruction in a blended learning environment

Reimagining CT Classrooms:
Planning for Synchronous and Asynchronous Learning

Assuring continuity of learning will require teaching and learning to look, feel and sound different. As districts develop reimagined instructional models, a discussion around expectations for synchronous and asynchronous learning should be transparent. Included is a description of each type of learning to deepen understanding and support professional discussions. Classroom learning by nature is synchronous. At the same time, assignments, tasks, projects by nature is asynchronous. Certainly, in an online, virtual space teaching and learning look, feel and sound different.

Synchronous learning is when classes **occur on set schedules and time frames**. Students and instructors are online at the same time in synchronous classes since lectures, discussions, and presentations take place at specific hours. When blended or remote, all students must be online at that exact time in order to participate in the class.

Asynchronous classes let students **complete their work assigned on their own time**. Students are given a time frame — it's usually a one-week window — during which they need to connect to their class daily or as determined by the teacher. When asynchronous, students can access assignments and content at any time of the day (or night).

Synchronous	Asynchronous
Takes place in real-time with groups of learners each week	Learner-centered approach
Can be done online through webinars, discussion threads, virtual classrooms, videoconferencing	Can be done online through assigned course content, pre-recorded webinars, videos, discussion threads
Real-time collaboration can take place	Learners complete assignments and coursework independently and at their own pace
Learners receive immediate feedback	Teacher-student contact is limited
Teacher-student contact occurs often	Empowers independence, self-discipline and self-regulation of learning
Class takes place anywhere	Class takes place anywhere
Communication can take place regularly with teachers	Communication can take place regularly with teachers
Students can develop networks and connections with classmates	Students can develop networks and connections with classmates
Prior to remote and distance learning, teaching and learning is delivered face to face teaching (on site/on campus)	Prior to remote and distance learning, students engaged in asynchronous learning when completing projects assigned to complete at home over an extended period.

✓ **The CSDE recommends:**

- Districts should plan learning using a 50/50 rule; 50% synchronous and 50% asynchronous in a week of instruction

- Schools/Teachers determine the mode — synchronous or asynchronous-that best supports the learning outcomes/targets

- Determine group size for synchronous learning as follows:

  - Group of 2–4 to promote engagement and participation

  - Group of 3–6 to promote collaboration and discussion

Reimagining CT Classrooms: Promising Practices

Promising practices in education are existing practices that possess a high level of widely- agreed effectiveness. The following recommended practices have been tested, reviewed and refined to ensure all learners benefit from their consistent implementation.

The CSDE Recommends implementing one or more of the promising practice listed to for coherence and continuous learning:

- Establish office hours: Teacher availability/ check-ins
- Use common platforms (suggested or already in use) across a district to alleviate any confusion for parents and students
- Plan for the 50/50 Rule for synchronous and asynchronous teaching in a week
- Plan and implement more explicit teaching, especially in earlier grades
- Create and teach through recorded video. Students require increased opportunities to see their teachers explaining the concepts, over random presenters on YouTube and other prerecorded video platforms
- Use videos to explain the assignments to support understanding and completion
- Create assignments should focus on essential work a with articulated learning targets
- Determine whether students are completing work online or traditionally

- Plan for wellness breaks during the day or week to support connectedness, and wellbeing. It is best to have a consistent schedule for wellness breaks or check ins to support a healthy rhythm to the learning cycle
- Choose and implement a standard platform for delivering content to minimize confusion and maximize engagement
- Articulate clear learning targets. This will help communicate the purpose or why of the assignment. Determine whether students are completing work online or traditionally
- Teams should meet regularly to review the learning load/demand on students. This will provide for consistency across content and teachers, as well as knowledge of the impact on individual students and families
- Post work and assignments at a mutually agreed upon time daily. This will ensure students will establish a routine or self-designed schedule for checking in
- Establish office hours: Teacher availability/ check-ins
- Keep variables in mind when you plan your lessons considering students may have:
  - Multiple classes
  - Other responsibilities
  - Personal or family illness
  - Limited access to devices and internet

Reimagining CT Classrooms: Planning the Instructional Time

Whether onsite or remote, the optimal amount of time spent learning each day is determined by the need for learning, practicing, applying, exploring and demonstrating knowledge. Time will vary depending on student strengths and needs. When remote, it is important to consider family needs. Teachers should provide experiences and activities for the day or week of learning within a specified timeframe. All requirements for learning should be communicated in a timely manner to students and families through the district identified learning management systems or other forms of communication.

To reimagine CT classrooms, districts should plan to provide students with learning opportunities aligned to state and national standards, which move everyone closer to demonstrating mastery. Onsite and remote learning plans must include forward movement along standards aligned learning progressions or through grade level outcomes, as well as acceleration and reinforcement of prior learning and necessary intervention.

It is important to set reasonable expectations for remote and at-home learning. As families work through extended remote learning, the routines of learning can provide some stability and joy. To support planning for the instructional day, consider the following questions and guidance:

1. What are the essential learning targets and skills and ideas students need to engage with while at home?

2. What routines will provide helpful structure? Keep it clear, simple and consistent. Be mindful to not overwhelm your staff and families with too many resources. Provide specific advice about when and how to use the materials you recommend. Maintaining Teacher-to-student relationships is critical for connecting and engaging learners, delivering feedback, and demonstrating learning. The simplest solutions can be the most powerful, e.g., teacher-to-student phone calls.

3. Plan for consistency and flexibility. Suggest day-by-day schedules with recommended durations for activities (e.g., 10 minutes of math fluency) and clear and consistent routines.

4. When synchronous learning is part of the plan, provide flexibility (e.g., web-based video, recordings), and keep it short and structured, as well live daily contact between teachers and students (and/or caregiver).

5. Prioritize the most important staff actions (PLCs, common planning) and consider what instructional routines need to be supported by a teacher directly (e.g., student discussion or feedback), determine what can be done independently, and how non-instructional staff can also help support families.

6. Consider the needs of all students, including English Language Learners and students with IEPs, and plan ways for counselors, special education, and language support teachers to collaborate virtually and engage with their students regularly. Create multiple and varied opportunities for students, families, and staff to connect with one another and provide feedback.

7. As social distancing and extended remote, distance learning continues, provide opportunities for caregivers, students, and staff to engage with others socially, share their learning, and solve problems together. In addition, invite all stakeholders to share feedback on distance learning plans throughout the process.

Adapted from TNTP https://tntp.org/blog/post/resources-for-learning-at-home-when-schools-close

> ✓ **The CSDE recommends:**
>
> Districts and schools should develop a daily schedule to include age-appropriate engagement expectations for students; live daily contact between teachers and students (and/or caregiver); direct instruction (either synchronously or asynchronously); independent student work; opportunity for questions and feedback during teacher office hours.

Sample Weekly Schedule for Teachers

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Office Hours	**Office Hours**	**Office Hours**	**Office Hours**	**Office Hours**
Support struggling students; provide clarity on assignments	Support struggling students; provide clarity on assignments	Support struggling students; provide clarity on assignments	Support struggling students; provide clarity on assignments	Support struggling students; provide clarity on assignments
Check-in with students by phone or virtually	Check-in with students by phone or virtually	Check-in with students by phone or virtually	Check-in with students by phone or virtually	Check-in with students by phone or virtually
Facilitate virtual class session				
Connect with colleagues		Connect with colleagues	Plan next week: Use student work and engagement to inform instructional decisions.	Prepare and deliver a Friday memo or newsletter including: next week's schedule, next week's office hours,
				Student recognitions
		Faculty meeting	Meet with support services, e.g., coach, central services	School culture and community experiences
				Mindfulness strategies
				Links to daily self-management resources

To ensure consistency in meeting the needs of learners, determine the schedule for weekly instruction, using the recommended time guidelines. The weekly schedule should become predictable to support a consistent environment of learning for students at home. Families have found that it is helpful to receive a weekly schedule in advance.

Additional Teacher Work Week Scenarios:

1. Monday, Tuesday Instruction, Wellness/Support Wednesday, Thursday, Friday Instruction
2. Monday–Friday Instruction, Friday Flex Day

Reimagining CT Classrooms for Special Populations

ELs, special populations and students with disabilities may be particularly impacted. Access should be considered broadly and include:

1. Access to technology
2. Access to academic skills necessary to engage with content
3. Access to executive skills necessary to participate in remote learning
4. Cognitive needs that may impact access to remote learning
5. Access to multilingual communication to support engaging with virtual curriculum (e.g. verbal/written communication skills)
6. Behavior and social/emotional supports required to access remote curriculum.
7. Embedded accessibility tools are embedded in them to help students and families access the content.
8. Multilingual tutorials on platforms for families when providing materials. As a reminder, it is the right of parents/ guardians to receive information in a language that they understand.
9. ELs should receive instructional supports both as a part of their Tier One instructional program AND through their supplemental language instructional program (i.e. ESL, bilingual). Explicitly note embedded accessibility tools and instructional supports in lesson planning.

Additional guiding questions to support the continuity of learning for ELs include, but are not limited to:

1. How can we provide grade level, content area instructional resources for continuous learning that have embedded accessibility tools?
2. How can we offer instructional resources and information about them that is comprehensible for families that speak languages other than English?
3. How can general education and content area teachers be supported to ensure that they are embedding accessibility tools, differentiation and effective strategies for ELs in their classes?

> ✓ **The CSDE recommends:**
> - Redefining success for students in special populations to move learners toward a mastery-based model to ensure success in college, careers and life.
> - Employ CSDE Sensible Assessment Solutions to determine an understanding of the learner strengths and needs and develop a learning plan that targets and accelerate mastery.

Reimagining CT Classrooms: Academic Resources

The purpose of the Academic Resources is to support planning and delivery of learning with a list of resources and links to information that support school systems as they make plans for continuous learning using current Tier 1 and high-quality instructional materials. The goal for school systems is to create continuous learning plans that align with their current instruction as much as possible.

CSDE Resource Volumes

Volume 1: Includes content specific resources to support student learning organized by both discipline and grade band.
(Published March 17, 2020)

Volume 2: Expanded content specific resources and general resources to support remote learning.
(Published March 31, 2020)

Volume 3: Resources around student data privacy, grading practices, assessment, and professional learning.
(Published April 14, 2020)

Volume 4: Instruction for Three-tiered model of SRBI, SRBI resources, and MTSS-behavioral resources.
(Published May 1, 2020)

Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)

CSDE Academic Resources for Tiered Instruction

CT Learning Hub — *Coming June 30, 2020*

The CT Learning Hub will provide high quality, high impact resources from experts in the field for academic content, social, emotional health and well-being, multilingual resources to support ELs, provide accessibility and universal tools for access and professional learning for all learners; parents and educators.

Reimagining CT Classrooms: Professional Learning and Supports

CSDE Professional Support Series for Districts

CT Learning Hub — *Coming June 30, 2020*

The CT Learning Hub will provide high quality, high impact resources from experts in the field for academic content, social, emotional health and well-being, multilingual resources to support ELs, provide accessibility and universal tools for access and professional learning for all learners; parents and educators.

Additional professional learning resources will be made available in partnership with teaching and learning organizations to support districts in their quest to reimagine classrooms for continuous learning that accelerates mastery and advances equity.

Conclusion

This guidance for reimagining CT classrooms for continuous learning when onsite or remote is designed to support districts in their planning and implementation of blended learning environments to ease students back, accelerate learning, and advance equity by:

- engaging families, students, educators and administrators in the design process for reimagining CT classrooms
- implementing a learner centered framework to support differentiated and personalized learning
- creating blended learning environments
- implementing
- implementing a mastery-based model for demonstrating learning

Contact

If you have questions or require technical assistance, email Irene Parisi at Irene.Parisi@ct.gov or call 860-713-6823.

Reimagining CT Classroom: A Glossary

Asynchronous Learning[4]: Students **complete their work assigned on their own time**. Students are given a timeframe — usually a one-week window – during which they need to connect to their class daily or as determined by the teacher. When asynchronous, students can access assignments and content at any time of the day (or night). Prior to remote and distance learning, students engaged in asynchronous learning when completing projects assigned to complete at home over an extended period.

Assessment: **The process of assessing student learning includes multiple means for demonstrating learning which results in an evaluation or inference.** Demonstrations of learning are aligned to the benchmarks and standards that allow students to show you what they know through products, performance and evidences of learning, skill development and content understanding.

Blended Learning: Learning that combines online digital tools, resources and media with technology and classroom methods, with some element of student control over time, place, path or pace. Blended Learning can take place on site, on campus, in a single classroom or in remote settings. A Blended Learning environment that provides face-to-face and online learning opportunities. The blended learning environment is designed to provide teachers with the resources necessary to both innovate and differentiate instruction according to the needs and strengths of each student.

Continuous Learning: Learning that continues regardless of time, space and location to ensure continuity and minimize learning gaps during extended school closures.

Curriculum: Curriculum is different from state and national academic standards in that standards define what students are expected to learn by subject and grade. The curriculum combines how teachers will teach to develop skills, content knowledge and assess students' ability to transfer learning. Curriculum is the central roadmap for communicating essential learning outcomes for mastery by the end of a grade or grade band. The structure and organization of curriculum is guided by a curriculum framework that must include standards aligned concepts, skills, high impact instructional methods, high quality materials and multiple means of assessment aligned to standards.

Differentiated Learning (DI): The process of modifying or delineating some aspect of instruction: the content, process, product, and/or learning environment to address the needs of the learners by the teacher. DI differs from personalized learning as it is a facilitated process that moves the learner to the center of the planning.

Digital Learning: Digital learning is any instructional practice (onsite/on campus or remote) that effectively uses technology to strengthen a student's learning experience. It emphasizes high-quality, high-impact instruction and provides access to challenging content, feedback through formative assessment, opportunities for learning anytime and anywhere, advancing equity through personalized or individualized instruction to ensure all students reach their full potential to succeed in college and a career. A digital learning environment includes the use of tools and applications to promote online or blended learning.

Distance Learning: The education of students who may not be physically present at a school. Instruction and courses are delivered via the Internet (or other forms of digital technologies that may evolve from the Internet without face-to-face interaction between student and instructor.

Educational Standards: The learning goals for what students should know and be able to do at each grade level. Educational standards are not a curriculum. Educational standards are adopted by the Connecticut State Board of Education to guide the development of high-quality curriculum and high impact instruction. Local communities and educators customize and personalize the development of curriculum aligned to the approved educational standards, district needs and portrait of the learner.

Evidence of Learning: Student artifacts, assignments, projects that students use to demonstrate that they have made progress or mastered certain knowledge or skills. Evidence of learning may be compiled in a portfolio that can be in hard copy or a digital file, to include formative and summative test scores over time.

Mastery-Based Learning[5]: Systems of instruction, assessment grading, and academic reporting that are based on students demonstrating that they have learned the knowledge and skills they are expected to learn as they progress through their education. In public schools, mastery-based systems use state learning standards to determine academic expectations and define "mastery" in a given course, subject area, or grade level.

Personalized Learning[6]: The term *personalized* learning, or personalization, refers to a diverse variety of educational programs, learning experiences, instructional approaches, and academic-support strategies that are intended to address the distinct learning needs, interests, aspirations, or cultural backgrounds of individual students.

Remote Learning: Students and educators are not physically present in a traditional classroom environment. Instruction is relayed through technology, such as a learning management system with embedded tools like discussion boards, video conferencing, online assessments and teacher/administrator dashboards to monitor progress from remote locations.

Synchronous Learning[7]: Face to face teaching (on site/on campus). Classes and learning occur on set schedules and time frames. Students and teachers are online at the same time in synchronous classes. When blended or remote, all students must be online at that exact time in order to participate in the class.

Endnotes

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2. https://www.christenseninstitute.org/blog/the-next-decade-of-disruption-in-education-unlocking-networks/

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5. https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Mastery-Based-Learning/What-is-Mastery-Based-Learning/Related-Resources

6. https://portal.ct.gov/DAS/CTEdTech/Commission-for-Educational-Technology/Initiatives/Personalized-Learning

7. https://www.edglossary.org/synchronous-learning/