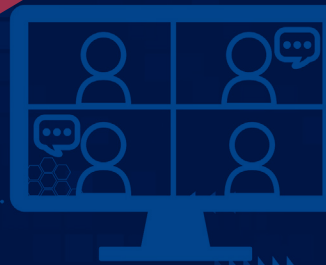


# Standards for Remote Learning Grades 9-12

February 2022



Connecticut  
State  
Department  
of Education



# Contents

Acknowledgments .....	ii
Scope and Applicability of these Standards .....	1
Background and Overview .....	1
Definition of Remote Learning .....	3
Standards for Remote Learning .....	3
Remote Learning Philosophy .....	4
Domains and Standards .....	5
Essential Terminology .....	19
References, Select Research, and Resources .....	21

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## Scope and Applicability of these Standards

The standards and related guidelines have been prepared in accordance with Public Act 21-2 to provide local and regional boards of education with a set of standards and guidelines to design and implement remote learning environments.

Sec. 391 of PA 21-2 (c) For the school year commencing July 1, 2022, and each school year thereafter, a local or regional board of education may authorize remote learning to students in grades nine to twelve, inclusive, provided such board (1) provides such instruction in compliance with the standards developed pursuant to subsection (b) of this section, and (2) adopts a policy regarding the requirements for student attendance during [virtual] remote learning, which shall (A) be in compliance with the Department of Education’s guidance on student attendance during [virtual] remote learning, and (B) count the attendance of any student who spends not less than one-half of the school day during such instruction engaged in (i) virtual classes, (ii) virtual meetings, (iii) activities on time-logged electronic systems, and (iv) the completion and submission of assignments.

Districts may offer a remote learning program that varies in scope from just one or more courses offered remotely, to an entire high school program or pathway that can be accessed remotely. **However, the CSDE strongly recommends that districts start small with their remote learning programs (e.g., offer a few courses remotely, offer remote learning for upperclassmen only), maintain a robust and comprehensive in-person high school program of studies, and consider expanding their remote learning program after multiple years of experience.**

## Background and Overview

Section 391 of Public Act 21-2ss required the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) to develop standards for remote learning not later than January 1, 2022. The CSDE developed an initial version of the standards in December 2021 and has since then been engaged in a robust feedback process with a wide variety of stakeholders. In accordance with Section 391, these standards shall not be deemed to be regulations, as defined in section 4-166 of the general statutes.

The process to define standards for remote learning for grades 9-12 requires reflecting on the practices of local remote learning models that yielded challenges and successes. Redefining education continues to progressively move Connecticut forward, combining traditional educational practices and tools with those nontraditional parts of our learning and teaching in a pandemic/disruption that were most successful<sup>1</sup>.

The purpose of this document is to provide the required standard level of design for remote learning environments for learners in grades 9-12 offered by local and regional boards of education beginning July 1, 2022. The CSDE is committed to ensuring all learners have access to multiple and varied opportunities, both in-person and virtual, to learning. To succeed in remote learning environments students need reliable access to<sup>2</sup>:

- High-quality instruction aligned to rigorous grade-level standards daily
- High-quality instruction with integrated technology daily
- Differentiated/personalized supports based upon the student’s individualized needs
- Caring adults
- Technology, including reliable internet
- Healthy food and nutrition
- Health and wellness resources (physical and mental)
- Transportation to access the school facilities, resources, and extracurriculars

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1, 2 [Connecticut’s Framework for Accelerating Educational Opportunity and Access](#)

A requirement of the number of credits that can be earned are outlined in subsection (c) of Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.) 10-221a:

(c) Commencing with classes graduating in 2023, and for each graduating class thereafter, no local or regional board of education shall permit any student to graduate from high school or grant a diploma to any student who has not satisfactorily completed a minimum of twenty-five credits, including not fewer than:

- (1) Nine credits in the humanities, including civics and the arts;
- (2) nine credits in science, technology, engineering and mathematics;
- (3) one credit in physical education and wellness;
- (4) one credit in health and safety education, as described in section 10-16b;
- (5) one credit in world languages, subject to the provisions of subsection (g) of this section; and
- (6) a one credit mastery-based diploma assessment.

Additionally, subsection (f) of C.G.S. 10-221a outlines that the determination of eligible credits shall be at the discretion of the local or regional board of education, provided the primary focus of the curriculum of eligible credits corresponds directly to the subject matter of the specified course requirements and aligns with the subject matter content standards adopted by the State Board of Education (SBE).

For purposes of this section, a credit shall consist of not less than the equivalent of a 40-minute class period for each school day of a school year except for a credit or part of a credit toward high school graduation earned (1) at an institution accredited by the Board of Regents for Higher Education or Office of Higher Education or regionally accredited, (2) through online coursework that is in accordance with a policy adopted pursuant to subsection (g) of this section, or (3) through a demonstration of mastery based on competency and performance standards, in accordance with guidelines adopted by the State Board of Education.

Combined with State Board of Education approved educational standards, the Connecticut Remote Learning Standards will support district implementation of being learner connected, learner focused, learner led, and learner demonstrated as defined by the CSDE Learner Framework<sup>3</sup>. These standards are organized to support the local design and operation of remote learning environments to accelerate learning, advance equitable access, and develop powerful pathways to college and career choices.

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3 [ReimaginingCTClassrooms.pdf](#)

## Definition of Remote Learning

Section 387 of [Public Act 21-2ss](#) defines remote learning as instruction by means of one or more internet-based software platforms as part of a remote learning model.

To uphold the definition of remote learning as defined in this legislation, all remote learning programming must:

- articulate clear educational goals;
- clearly organize course offerings in a way that stakeholders can easily navigate;
- integrate quality instructional materials to enable and enrich student learning;
- regularly evaluate technology that supports the learning goals and enhances the learning experience;
- contain content that aligns with appropriate learning standards and includes provisions for both intervention and accelerated learning opportunities;
- provide opportunities for student-to-student and student-to-teacher interactions that support active learning;
- provide a variety of activities that include options for in-depth learning through authentic problem-solving and experience;
- integrate research-based Universal Design for Learning (UDL); and
- comply with the Connecticut State Department of Education Standards for Remote Learning.

## Standards for Remote Learning

The Connecticut Standards for Remote Learning are informed by local data, evidence, input, and review of national research. Related guidance comes from Connecticut State Board of Education approved educational standards for content, programs, and effective integration of technology and evidence-based practices. The purpose of the Standards for Remote Learning is to assist local and regional boards of education, all public-school districts, and independent agencies in the development of their local remote learning programs.

The following standards are interdependent by design and align with the Virtual Learning Leadership Alliance (VLLA) and Quality Matters (QM) National Standards for Quality Online Teaching, National Standards for Quality Online Courses, and National Standards for Quality Online Programs.

The Connecticut Standards for Remote Learning are organized into eight domains. Each domain is followed by a set of standards curated from the three sets of national standards for online environments, Connecticut State Board of Education approved standards, CSDE [Social, Emotional and Intellectual Habits for All Students K-3](#) and [Culturally Responsive Education](#) position statements. **Bolded standards** indicate priority for designing and implementing a remote learning environment. Standards not bolded are important to supporting the overall design of a remote learning environment and provide supplemental knowledge and outcomes for the teacher, student, and program.

## Remote Learning Philosophy

A well-designed remote learning environment has the potential to provide Connecticut students an opportunity to access high quality and high impact learning experiences that develop their capacity to be college, career, and life ready. To reach these outcomes, it is critical that the process is collaborative, with each stakeholder understanding and committing to their new role in a remote learning environment. If the district is to be successful in reimagining from where educators and students teach and learn, the following competencies by role should be articulated to each in designing remote learning environments for each learner.

### Role of Parents/Guardians and Families

- Engage in two-way communication 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 an in-person 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.
- Actively participate in student learning to assist their school with ensuring student participation and completion of courses.

### Role of Students

- Collaborate with teacher and peers in all learning spaces (physical and virtual).
- Engage in each learning session for enrolled core content that aligns to all assignments.
- Attend each learning session as provided by the teacher(s).
- Actively participate in the teaching and learning process.
- Continuously reflect on their own progress of their daily learning plan/schedules while adjusting for the next day.
- Articulate when they need help.
- Complete independent assignments, assessments, and tasks and submit each for feedback.

### Role of Administrators

- Conduct virtual walkthroughs and classroom check-ins to monitor and assist teachers and gather evidence of student engagement, ownership, and agency of learning.
- 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 remote learning as a highly effective instructional model to support all learners.
- Provide supports to parents and families with limited English to facilitate two-way communication.

### Role of Educators

- Facilitate the teaching and learning process with students.
- 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, and/or skill-level and in new formats and structures.
- Develop and deliver targeted instruction for multiple purposes.
- Reduce barriers to content and learning by integrating digital tools and resources.
- Provide online office hour sessions for live feedback, discussion, and support.
- For teachers of special populations, counselors, and support staff:
  - Schedule individual check-ins with students who need supplemental, differentiated supports, and engagement.
  - Participate in select live lessons and teacher office hours to support students in real time.

# Domains and Standards

## Domain 1: Professional Responsibility and Community Building

The local and regional board of education has the responsibility of ensuring that each student enrolled in a remote learning environment has access to all resources (physical, digital, human) to support academic, social, emotional, mental, and physical growth. At a minimum this should include access to all textbooks, materials, equipment, and supplies along with support services to students and families with specific needs or other documented accommodations. Access also includes extracurriculars like competitive and intramural sports and athletics, arts programs, musical performance groups, and electives that may require a blended approach in providing access online and in person.

Each school district shall provide in each school year no less than one hundred and eighty days of actual school sessions, 900 hours of actual schoolwork for grades 9-12, provided school districts shall not count more than seven hours of actual schoolwork in any school day towards the total required for the school year.

The CSDE recommends that remote learning environments are designed to align with the SBE adopted [Position Statement on Culturally Responsive Education](#). In collaboration with the local and regional board of education, school districts are expected to create an environment of value and support for the meaningful discussions of individuals' cultural contributions and assets through all schools; remote learning environments should be considered in this expectation<sup>4</sup>.

All Connecticut certified educators, including those that are assigned to remote learning environments are reminded of the Connecticut Code of Professional Responsibility<sup>5</sup>. The responsibilities to the student, profession, and community extend to remote learning environments.

Any educator assigned as the online teacher in remote learning environments should demonstrate professional responsibilities in keeping with the research-based practices of online instruction<sup>6</sup>. Developing relationships with the individual learner and family is critical to the success of remote learning experiences and student achievement. Online instruction should be designed as inclusive for all learners, including students with disabilities, multilingual learners, and students from low-income families. Local and regional boards of education should uphold existing policies, procedures, and curricula that assist teachers and administrators in creating learning environments of culturally responsive education that affirm the students' identity and their sense of belonging and provide them access to learning and the opportunity to grow.

### Standards

- **Standard 1.1: Local policies clearly state learner eligibility requirements for the program and are communicated to stakeholders.**
- **Standard 1.2: Students demonstrate daily attendance through synchronous and asynchronous learning models.**
- **Standard 1.3: Ongoing internal evaluations are conducted to regularly collect and analyze data based on student engagement and outcome program metrics.**
- Standard 1.4: Program faculty and staff work with students and families to personalize programs and adhere to accommodations as dictated by local policies and laws.
- **Standard 1.5: All learners including students with disabilities, multilingual learners, and students from low-income families are ensured equitable access to the program.**
- **Standard 1.6: Learners are offered an orientation prior to the start of the online course, which includes lessons aligned with the SBE approved standards for Digital Citizenship, Internet Safety, and Media Literacy Guidelines and Recommended Actions.**
- Standard 1.7: The online teacher meets the professional teaching standards or has academic credentials in the field in which they are teaching.

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4 [Adoption of Position Statement on Culturally Responsive Education \(ct.gov\)](#)

5 [Connecticut Code of Professional Responsibility for Teachers](#)

6 [National Standards for Online Teaching](#)



- Standard 1.8: The online teacher is a reflective practitioner that engages in the practice of looking back to determine personal areas for growth.
- Standard 1.9: The online teacher continuously pursues knowledge and skills related to online learning and pedagogy.
- Standard 1.10: The online teacher serves as an ambassador of knowledge to stakeholders.
- Standard 1.11: The online teacher demonstrates knowledge of the role of online learning in preparing learners to participate as global citizens.
- Standard 1.12: The online teacher demonstrates an understanding of effective time management strategies.
- Standard 1.13: The online teacher models digital citizenship.
- Standard 1.14: The online teacher maintains accurate records of relevant information and communications in the appropriate format.
- Standard 1.15: The online teacher can explain his or her responsibilities in carrying out local or national law or mandates related to accessibility.
- **Standard 1.16: Courses offered through the program meet content copyright law and fair use guidelines.**

### Related Guidance

- Establish clear enrollment criteria and process as a collaborative decision that involves the assent of the student, the parent/guardian, the educator, the administrator, and where appropriate, as determined by the planning and placement team (PPT).
- Districts with a remote learning program should establish a process whereby a student, parent/guardian, or educator can nominate a student for the remote learning program.
- Enrollment in a remote learning program should not be the unilateral decision of any one party.
- No student should be required to take an entire course remotely.
- Establish the remote learning environment as a school of choice that provides a fully online educational option for students.
- For any student enrolled in a local or regional board of education approved environment/program, remote learning shall be considered an actual school session, provided such environment/program is conducted in compliance with these standards.
- Any remote learning environment shall align with the local or regional board of education approved school calendar.
- Remote learning environments can parallel the general program of studies and local high school master schedule allowing for flexibility in accessing resources or courses on campus.
- Create and communicate staff, student and family handbooks outlining all policies and procedures
- Establish exiting/withdrawal criteria and process, so that at any point a student decides to return to learning in person and on school campus, the student can be allowed within a reasonable amount of time to maintain continuity of learning.
- Withdrawing from a remote learning course should be coordinated by the assigned mentor or school counselor with the student and family.
- Initiation of a withdrawal process with mentor or counselor should include consultation with the student and family.
- Establish and communicate a transition process and system of support to ensure continuity of learning and earning credit for works submitted. This may include students continuing to submit work through a digital platform until the withdrawal is processed.
- Districts can use the [CSDE Observation, Feedback and Support: Educator Performance and Practice](#) guide to support teacher evaluation of remote teaching and learning.

## Domain 2: Digital Citizenship and Social-Emotional Learning and Personal Skills

A remote learning environment requires a commitment to developing student digital citizenship skills and core competencies of social and emotional learning to participate fully in learning communities and make smart choices online and in life.

The Connecticut State Department of Education believes that the social-emotional development of all learners contributes to their academic and career success. Together we can help students understand and respect themselves and others, acquire effective interpersonal skills, understand safety and resilience skills, and develop into contributing members of society.

Social-emotional development of the core competencies of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making contributes to academic and career success by helping students understand and respect themselves and others, acquire effective interpersonal skills, understand safety and resilience skills, and develop into contributing members of society.

The online teacher in remote learning environments should create a positive online learning climate of warmth and mutual respect. All districts and schools should develop practices that foster understanding and respect for cultural diversity and celebrate the contributions of diverse groups.

### Standards

- **Standard 2.1: The online teacher facilitates learning experiences that model and promote digital citizenship.**
- Standard 2.2: The online teacher establishes standards for learner behavior that are designed to ensure academic integrity and appropriate use of the internet that adhere to program-level policies.
- **Standard 2.3: The online teacher models and complies with intellectual property policies and fair-use standards and reinforces their use with learners.**
- Standard 2.4: The online teacher implements policies, including federal, state, and program-level policies (where applicable), designed to protect learners in the classroom and follows district, program, and classroom acceptable use policies (AUPs).
- Standard 2.5: Minimum computer skills expected of the learner are clearly stated and aligned to remote learning environment expectations.
- **Standard 2.6: Digital literacy and communication skills are incorporated and taught as an integral part of the curriculum.**
- Standard 2.7: Supplemental learning resources and related instructional materials are available to support and enrich learning and are aligned to the specific content being delivered.
- **Standard 2.8: The online teacher employs learner-centered instructional strategies and current practices that leverage technology for learner collaboration.**
- Standard 2.9: The online teacher creates expectations for appropriate interaction among learners, including establishing netiquette requirements, modeling implementation, and enforcing the requirements.
- Standard 2.10: The online teacher develops a community among culturally diverse learners by providing opportunities for interaction that are conducive to active learning.
- **Standards 2.11: The online teacher promotes learner-learner interaction in online groups to foster collaboration and promote higher-order thinking skills such as analysis, synthesis, and/or evaluation.**
- Standard 2.12: The online teacher is able to meet the learning needs of all learners, regardless of cultural background and perspective.

## Related Guidance

- Districts should establish policies and procedures that require the online teacher to model, guide, and encourage legal, ethical, and safe behavior related to technology use<sup>7</sup> in alignment with SBE approved National Library Standards and the International Society for Technology Education (ISTE) Standards for Students.
- Districts should ensure all students have access to the most effective instructional and behavioral practices and interventions.
- Districts and educators need to create an environment ensuring that all students feel emotionally and physically safe.
- Educators should implement research-based and culturally competent/responsive curriculums that support student engagement and social-emotional well-being, involve students as decision makers and problem solvers, and promote the acquisition of prosocial behaviors.
- Educators should facilitate interactions and collaboration to build a supportive online community that fosters active learning (additional guidance can be found in domain 5).
- Educators can use announcements and feedback as a model of information literacy and digital literacy skills.
- Educators should develop reinforcement activities that support behavioral and social development (i.e., self-awareness, self-regulation, decision-making, respect for others), which can be co-taught with social workers, psychologists, school counselors, health educators, school nurses or others, as deemed appropriate online and on campus when requested. Adults in remote learning environments should take care to model the behaviors they are teaching when they interact with each other and with students<sup>8</sup>.
- Districts should assign a remote learning environment mentor or coordinator.

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7 [National Standards for Online Teaching](#)

8 [Topical Brief 3: Addressing the Needs of the Whole Child: Social, Emotional, Behavioral, and Physical Health, as well as Academic Achievement, in Connecticut's SRBI Process](#)

## Domain 3: Online Curriculum and Instruction

Curriculum and instructional design of an online course in a remote learning environment will require the online teacher to support learning and facilitate presence (teacher, social, and learner) with digital pedagogy<sup>9</sup> as explained in standard 3.1 below. The overall design of the course curricula is made clear to the learner at the beginning of the course. The online course incorporates instructional materials, activities, resources, and assessments that are aligned to content standards, engage all learners, and support the achievement of academic goals.

A quality online program will adopt and implement instructional design methods that enable effective online instruction for both institutionally developed courses as well as licensed content from other sources.

### Standards

- **Standard 3.1: The online teacher uses digital pedagogical tools that support communication, productivity, collaboration, analysis, presentation, research, content delivery, interaction, differentiation, and required specialized instruction for students with IEPs as determined by PPTs.**
- Standard 3.2: A course overview and syllabus are included in the online course.
- Standard 3.3: The instructor's biographical information and information on how to communicate with the instructor are provided to learners and other stakeholders.
- **Standard 3.4: Learner expectations and policies are clearly stated and readily accessible within the introductory material of the course.**
- Standard 3.5: The online course provides a clear description or link to the technical support offered and how to obtain it.
- **Standard 3.6: The online course design includes activities that guide learners toward promoting ownership of their learning and self-monitoring.**
- **Standard 3.7: The online course's content and learning activities promote the achievement of the stated learning objectives or competencies.**
- **Standard 3.8: The online course is organized by units and lessons that fall into a logical sequence in alignment with SBE approved educational standards. Instruction is guided by evidence-based practices.**
- Standard 3.9: The online course content is appropriate to the reading level of the intended learners.
- Standard 3.10: The online course content provides accessibility supports for differentiation, accommodations, and modifications to content based upon the individualized needs of the intended learners.
- Standard 3.11: The online course design includes introductory assignments or activities to engage learners within the first week of the course and throughout.
- Standard 3.12: The online course materials (e.g., textbooks, primary source documents, open education resources (OER) that support course content standards are accurate, current, and culturally responsive in matching the diversity and needs of the learners.

### Related Guidance

- Districts can use quality OER that have been developed by education organizations such as colleges, universities, or other openly licensed courses that can be considered to support local and regional boards of education's online curriculum and instruction.
- Districts can use the [Universal Design for Learning \(UDL\)](#) framework to design flexible learning pathways that meet all learners' needs, regardless of variability in remote learning environments.
- Districts should ensure the course materials include support services essential to learner and instructor success.
- Districts should provide training and professional learning to all staff to ensure they can employ support services throughout the course.

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9 [National Standards for Online Teaching](#)

- Districts and educators should ensure course instructions articulate or link to relevant information and services<sup>10</sup>.
- Educators should clearly state goals and what success looks like through course syllabi and program communications.
- Districts should establish a review process for vetting both print and digital instructional materials according to clearly defined high quality instructional materials criteria.
- Districts should ensure materials include captions or provide for ASL interpretation.
- Districts can use the [UDL](#) framework and Connecticut State Board of Education Approved [Culturally Responsive Education](#) position statement to define criteria for high-quality instructional materials.

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<sup>10</sup> [Quality Online Courses - National Standards for Quality Online Learning \(nsqol.org\)](#)

## Domain 4: Online Teaching and Learning

Planning the instructional time each day throughout the sequence of the courses, the online teacher will need to support learning and facilitate presence (teacher, social, and learner) with digital pedagogy<sup>11</sup> as outlined in the standards below. All expectations and requirements for learning should be communicated in a timely manner to students and families.

The online teacher curates and creates instructional materials, tools, strategies, and resources to engage all learners and ensure achievement of academic goals.

### Standards

- **Standard 4.1: The online teacher uses digital pedagogical tools that support communication, productivity, collaboration, analysis, presentation, research, content delivery, interaction, differentiation, accommodations, and modifications to content based upon the individualized needs of the intended learners.**
- Standard 4.2: The online teacher incorporates discipline-specific technologies, tools, and resources to meet individualized learner needs.
- **Standard 4.3: The online teacher uses different types of tools to interact in online courses to nurture learner relationships, encourage learner interaction, and monitor and motivate learner engagement.**
- Standard 4.4: The online teacher demonstrates basic troubleshooting skills and addresses basic technical issues as they arise.
- **Standard 4.5: The online teacher models and supports safe digital learning spaces for all learners (e.g., data ownership and privacy expectations, digital identity curation) creating a culture of respect.**
- Standard 4.6: The online teacher designs learning experiences that use technology to efficiently engage learners.
- **Standard 4.7: The online teacher uses a formative approach to lesson design integrating content that is current, accurate, relevant, and unbiased.**
- Standard 4.8: The online teacher incorporates diverse media into online learning modules.
- **Standard 4.9: The online teacher can incorporate subject-specific and developmentally appropriate digital learning resources into online learning modules.**
- Standard 4.10: The online teacher continuously reviews and aligns all course content with applicable course objectives and standards.
- Standard 4.11: The online teacher creates, selects, and organizes appropriate assignments and assessments to align curricular content with associated standards-based learning goals.

### Related Guidance

- Concurrent teaching, wherein a teacher is simultaneously teaching two groups of students – one in-person, and another remote – is generally not recommended.
- Local and regional boards of education should determine the necessary system of support available daily to the teacher, student, and family.
- Districts should provide training and professional learning to all staff to ensure they can use digital pedagogical tools to support learners.
- Educators can participate in small student learning groups to collect evidence of learner progress, needs, and strengths.
- Educators can start a discussion board with content and include announcements and support for self-regulation of learning online.
- Educators should model how digital information can be used in both negative and positive ways.
- Educators should use digital tools to monitor individuals who may not be participating in the learning community and plan to intervene and provide assistance where needed.

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<sup>11</sup> [Quality Online Teaching - National Standards for Quality Online Learning \(nsqol.org\)](https://www.nsqol.org/)

## Domain 5: Online Learner Engagement

The online teacher promotes learner success through interactions with learners and other stakeholders and by facilitating meaningful learner engagement in learning activities<sup>12</sup>.

### Standards

- Standard 5.1: The online teacher uses different types of tools to interact in online courses to nurture learner relationships, encourage learner interaction, and monitor and motivate learner engagement.
- Standard 5.2: The online teacher uses digital tools to identify patterns in learner engagement and performance that will inform improvements to achieve individual learner growth.
- **Standard 5.3: The online teacher develops learner agency to initiate, manage, and maintain their own learning.**
- Standard 5.4: The online teacher enables a learner-customized pace and/or path through instruction aligned with learners' individual goals, learning trajectories, and interests.
- **Standard 5.5: The online teacher establishes relationships through timely and encouraging communication, using various formats.**
- Standard 5.6: The online teacher helps learners reach content mastery through instruction and quality feedback using various formats.
- Standard 5.7: The online teacher ensures that learners have necessary course resources and the information needed to navigate the learning platform and perform required tasks in a timely manner.
- **Standard 5.8: The online teacher communicates frequently with stakeholders (parents/families, students, school staff) regarding learner progress and strategies for supporting learner engagement.**
- **Standard 5.9: The online course provides regular opportunities for learner-learner interaction with opportunities to model and use social and emotional intellectual habits and skills outlined in the CSDE Learner Framework.**
- Standard 5.10: The online course design provides opportunities for learner-instructor interaction, including opportunities for regular feedback about learner progress
- Standard 5.11: Online course instructional materials and resources present content in an effective, engaging, and appropriate manner.
- **Standard 5.12: Courses offered through the learning management system or selected program include opportunities for both asynchronous and synchronous learning.**
- Standard 5.13: Documentation and other support materials are available to support effective online course facilitation.

### Related Guidance

- Design remote learning environments as a responsive and differentiated online environment.
- Create engaging content and clear instruction.
- Leverage local digital tools to create a centralized hub for two-way communication.
- Integrate technologies to create a digital lounge, collaboration space, or discussion threads for student-student and teacher-student interaction.
- Set norms or clear expectations for respectful participation, interactions, and dress code. Provide a space for students to co-design agreements lifting the student voice.
- Make time for relationship-building collaboration and small group work to foster a sense of community.
- Be present by providing online office hours or actively participating in discussion threads to provide guidance and encouragement.

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<sup>12</sup> [Quality Online Teaching - National Standards for Quality Online Learning \(nsqol.org\)](https://www.nsqol.org/)

- Build in polls, guided questions in discussions, or breaks for brainstorms to support active engagement.
- Use the learning management system (LMS) data dashboard with learners to support goal setting, self-management, and progress monitoring.
- Provide opportunities for learners to choose how to complete assignments to demonstrate mastery of the skill.
- Guide learners through content at different paces or in a different order based on need and interest.



## Domain 6: Online Assessment

The online teacher creates and/or implements assessments in online learning environments in ways that ensure the validity and reliability of the instruments and procedures. The teacher measures learner progress through assessments, projects, and assignments that meet standards-based learning goals, and evaluates learner understanding of how these assessments measure achievement of the learning objectives<sup>13</sup>.

### Standards

- **Standard 6.1: Grading policies and practices are clearly defined in accordance with course content learning expectations.**
- Standard 6.2: Course documentation and other support materials are available to support effective online course facilitation.
- **Standard 6.3: The chosen program uses multiple methods to assess the degree to which stated learning goals are met. This includes assessment practices that provide the learner with the flexibility to demonstrate mastery of content in a variety of ways.**
- Standard 6.4: Assessments are aligned to stated course-, unit-, or lesson-level learning objectives or competencies.
- Standard 6.5: The program provides standards for timely, effective feedback as an integral role of assessment within each course.
- **Standard 6.6: The online teacher chooses appropriate assessment tools, which allow students the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of the content, including opportunities for self-assessment. The online teacher shares rubrics that clearly define expectations for varied levels of proficiency.**
- Standard 6.7: The online teacher employs pedagogy and content knowledge to develop and/or effectively implement assessments in ways that ensure the validity and reliability of the instruments and procedures.
- **Standard 6.8: The online teacher uses strategies to ensure learner academic integrity and the security of learner assessment data.**
- Standard 6.9: Teachers incorporate a process of continual self-assessment, using learning analytics to inform changes in pedagogy and instructional practices.
- **Standard 6.10: The online teacher implements a variety of assessments that accurately measure learner proficiency. Formative assessments are included that provide data for targeted remediation or intervention when needed.**
- **Standard 6.11: The online teacher evaluates learner readiness and progress using formative and summative assessments and learner feedback throughout the course.**
- Standard 6.12: The online teacher assures alignment between the assignments, assessments, and standards-based learning goals.
- Standard 6.13: The online teacher customizes instruction to personalize the learning experience based on performance and assessment data and learner need.
- Standard 6.14: The remote learning environment and identified programs ensure academic integrity of course assignments and assessments to increase student accountability.

### Related Guidance

- Districts should establish assessment practices that are learner-centered and provide multiple and varied opportunities to demonstrate learning.
- Districts should develop policies that require the student to return to the school campus to participate in summative assessments or demonstrations of learning.

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13 [National Standards for Online Teaching](#)

- Educators should ensure the online learning program values positive learner outcome and takes a comprehensive, integrated approach to measuring and monitoring progress toward defined learning objectives<sup>14</sup>.
- Educators should utilize a variety of assessment strategies throughout the course geared toward learning and engagement and provide learners with feedback on their progress.
- Educators can connect the learning goals and criteria to the assessment.
- Educators can engage students in the assessment process by providing real-time feedback.
- Educators can leverage technologies and assess through peer reviews, self-scoring rubrics, and use of anchor or models of student work.

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14 [Quality Online Programs - National Standards for Quality Online Learning \(nsqol.org\)](https://www.nsqol.org/)

## Domain 7: Flexible Pathways to Learning

The CSDE has a longstanding commitment to developing flexible student-centered pathways to learning and graduation to ensure college and career readiness and postsecondary life. This commitment begins with C.G.S. 10-221a subsection g stating that credit can be earned toward meeting the high school graduation requirements upon the successful demonstration of mastery of the subject matter content described in this section achieved through educational experiences and opportunities that provide flexible and multiple pathways to learning. Remote learning environments can now provide an alternate opportunity to access rigorous, flexible learning opportunities that prepare students for college, careers, and civic life. Paths to completion are flexible to meet student needs and interests. Remote learning environments have the potential to support learning as real world application not constrained by time and place. Instruction can be designed around the learner supporting a belief that all students are ready and able to succeed in a global environment.

To support and/or provide flexible pathways, the remote learning environment must align to the following standards:

### Standards

- **Standard 7.1: The online course provides learners with multiple learning paths as appropriate, based on learner needs, that engage learners in a variety of ways.**
- **Standard 7.2: The online teacher utilized multiple sources of data to provide timely intervention and/or acceleration.**
- Standard 7.3: The program provides guidance services and academic advising to support learners and parents/guardians from the decision-making process through graduation for all educational goals to be met.

Alignment with standards outlined in Domains 1-6 and 8 can support the local design of flexible pathways for learners.

### Related Guidance

- Remote learning environments can parallel the general program of studies and local high school master schedule allowing for flexibility in accessing resources or courses on campus.
- Remote learning environments can be leveraged to provide access and opportunity in support of the following situations:
  - Access to challenging curriculum
  - Access to electives not otherwise offered in the local program of studies
  - Accessing foundational courses to develop prerequisite skills
  - Accumulating credits, e.g., initial credit or credit recovery
  - Early graduation, e.g., midyear graduation
  - Scaling mastery-based learning
  - Whole school personal learning experiences aligned with local portrait of the learner or districtwide strategic vision
  - Individual personal learning experiences based on strength, need, interest or course sequence
- Graduation is determined by student mastery and success on explicit, measurable learning outcomes.

## Domain 8: Equitable Access, Accessibility, and Usability

The online teacher models a commitment to personalizing instruction based on the learner's diverse academic, social, emotional, and linguistic needs. The course design reflects a commitment to accessibility so that all learners can access all content and activities and to usability so that all learners can easily navigate and interact with all course components.

The online course materials, activities, and assessments are designed to ensure that all learners have access to the same information and can engage in the same interactions and within the same time frame. Allowing for flexible scheduling or pacing to ensure all learners can demonstrate their learning in a differentiated manner and/or as set forth in their individualized education program (IEP) or Section 504 Plan is preferred. Assistive technology and other communication devices can engage students and provide for alternate modes for interacting. The course, developed with universal domains in mind, addresses Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) by following WCAG 2.0 AA (Web Content Accessibility Guidelines) standards.

A remote learning environment can serve all learners when universally designed for accessibility and usability.

### Standards

- **Standard 8.1: The online teacher and support staff, where applicable, monitor and interpret learner progress and provide reasonable additional supports to all learners, paying particular attention to learners with identified disabilities or who represent traditionally underserved groups.**
- **Standard 8.2: The online teacher reviews individualized education programs (IEPs), Section 504 Plans, and general education interventions and implements required accommodations, modifications, and supports to address learner needs.**
- **Standard 8.3: The online teacher reviews language proficiency records and integrates scaffolds and accessibility supports into instruction to assure access for multilingual learners (or to address the linguistic and academic needs of multilingual learners).**
- **Standard 8.4: The online teacher uses data (quantitative and qualitative) to identify and refer learners who need additional supports.**
- Standard 8.5: The online teacher creates accessible formats of course materials, if needed, to meet the needs of diverse learners and accommodate alternative means of access.
- Standard 8.6: The online teacher recommends assistive technologies where appropriate to meet mandated needs and address learner preferences.
- Standard 8.7: The online teacher provides additional opportunities for personalized learner growth or enrichment.
- Standard 8.8: The online teacher supports and provides a forum for sharing the varied talents and skills that learners bring to the online environment.
- Standard 8.9: Online course navigation is logical, consistent, and efficient from the learner's point of view.
- Standard 8.10: The online course design facilitates readability and provides accessible course materials and activities to meet the needs of diverse learners.
- Standard 8.11: The online course content and supporting materials reflect a culturally diverse perspective that is free of bias.
- Standard 8.12: The online course multimedia is easy to use.
- Standard 8.13: Vendor accessibility statements are provided for all technologies required in the course.
- **Standard 8.14: The program provides academic services and academic advising to address learners' academic, multilingual, and developmental needs.**
- **Standard 8.15: The program provides accessibility support services that comply with multilingual/English learners and special education policies and procedures.**
- Standard 8.16: The program provides access to the learning management system(s), as well as all appropriate learning and assessment content.

- Standard 8.17: The program establishes standards for timely, effective technical support for learners.
- Standard 8.18: The program ensures that all students have the necessary device and connectivity to fully access the course materials.

### Related Guidance

- Districts should establish the level of readiness for creating and implementing a remote learning environment. It is reasonable to begin small and plan to scale.
- Districts can design remote learning environments to provide:
  - A single course offering
  - One or more enrichment programs of studies
  - An alternating day schedule to blend remote and in-person learning
  - A collaborative environment with surrounding districts or schools
- Districts should ensure any student enrolled in a remote learning course or set of courses be afforded every opportunity to access the school facilities, resources and extracurriculars at any point in time or for any given need. These may include:
  - Athletics: competitive or intramurals
  - Academic advising: Counseling, enrichment, gifted and talented, tutoring
  - Clubs: content-based, social/civic action, arts, technology
  - Performance Electives: art, choral music, band, orchestra, ensemble groups
  - Pivot Labs: science or other academic lab experiences to provide a supplemental/companion hands-on experience to the online course
- Districts should establish a process for students enrolled in a remote learning environment with access to any device or system that allows each to perform a task.
- Districts should establish a process for students enrolled in a remote learning environment to access a variety of remote and in-person support services. These may include:
  - Supplemental aides and services
  - Specially designed instruction
  - Related services
  - Academic support or enrichment
  - Instructional materials captioned or provide for ASL interpretation

## Essential Terminology

**asynchronous learning:** 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 that results in an evaluation or inference. Demonstrations of learning are aligned to the benchmarks and standards that allow students to show what they know through products, performance, and evidence 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 provides face-to-face and online learning opportunities. The blended learning environment is designed to provide teachers with the resources necessary both to 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.

**diagnostic assessment:** An assessment that is administered before a unit of instruction to a small group of students or one-on-one and not a large-scale survey. Grain size of content assessed is small. Suitable for identifying student strengths and weaknesses. Useful to teachers so they can differentiate/personalize instruction and decide what to teach to whom.

**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

**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, and 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.

**formative assessment practices:** Not a single test but a series of effective teaching practices — inseparable from instruction. Practices include clarifying the purpose of the learning, providing exemplars so students know what good work looks like, using activities that engage students, eliciting evidence of their learning, providing feedback that helps learners to know what they need to do to continue learning, using students as learning resources for one another, and increasing student ownership of their learning.

**mastery-based learning:** 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:** 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:** Public Act 21-2 defines remote learning as instruction by means of one or more Internet-based software platforms as part of a remote learning model.

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.

**screeener assessment:** A short assessment that is administered to all students to screen them for being at risk of not mastering a skill in the future, e.g., screening for future reading difficulties or for being advanced in one or more areas.

**summative assessment:** Administered to all students at the end of instruction to check for learning. Summative assessments can vary in grain size, e.g., the state summative assessment, teacher-made final exams, and several commercially available benchmark assessments sample the entire content domain for a grade, while unit-level summative assessments might cover the content for a much narrower set of standards.

**synchronous learning:** Face-to-face teaching (on site/on campus). Classes and learning occur on set schedules and timeframes. 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 to participate in the class.

**Universal Design for Learning:** Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is a framework to improve and optimize teaching and learning for all people based on scientific insights into how humans learn.

## References, Select Research, and Resources

[Connecticut Computer Science Teacher Association \(CSTA\) K-12 Standards and the International Society for Technology Education \(ISTE\) Standards for Students.](#)

Connecticut State Board of Education [Culturally\\_Responsive\\_Ed.pdf \(ct.gov\)](#) position statement

Connecticut Standards and ISTE Intersection: [CS-ISTE\\_Intersection.jpg \(1427×682\)](#)

[National Standards for Online Teaching](#)

[National Standards for Online Courses](#)

[National Standards for Online Programs](#)

[Plan for Reimagining Connecticut Classrooms for Continuous Learning](#)

[Sensible Assessment Practices for 2020-21 and Beyond](#)

[Universal Design for Learning \(UDL\)](#)







