

# Staffing Approaches: Virtual Academy

Session 2 | Wednesday, November 18, 2020

As you join us on this webinar, please:

1. Mute your audio
2. Enter your name, LEA, role in the chat box
3. *Pleasantries*: Favorite holiday food



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## *A few logistical notes:*





1. Feel free to enter questions and reactions in the chat box throughout today's session
2. I will be pausing at multiple points to gauge reactions and take questions
3. We will share slides afterward

## After this session, attendees will be able to:

- Describe Virtual Academy advantages and key considerations
- Name action steps in establishing a Virtual Academy at your district this spring semester
- Walk away with more of a sense of a real district example of a Virtual Academy in action



-  Why Virtual Academy?
-  How to Establish a Virtual Academy
-  Q&A: Lubbock ISD Virtual Academy Principal
-  Next Steps & Closing

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“

Managing remote and on-campus instruction simultaneously is **challenging** and often exhausting for teachers...

...but the path to alternative staffing and scheduling models can seem complicated and **unclear**...

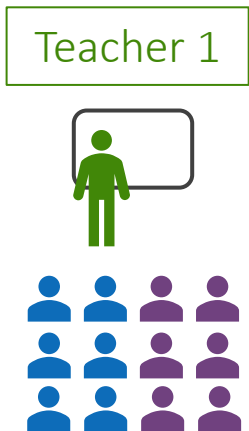
...and, ultimately, we need a strong solution that supports all students and families **now**.

”

# Recall: Four models to manage remote and on-campus learning

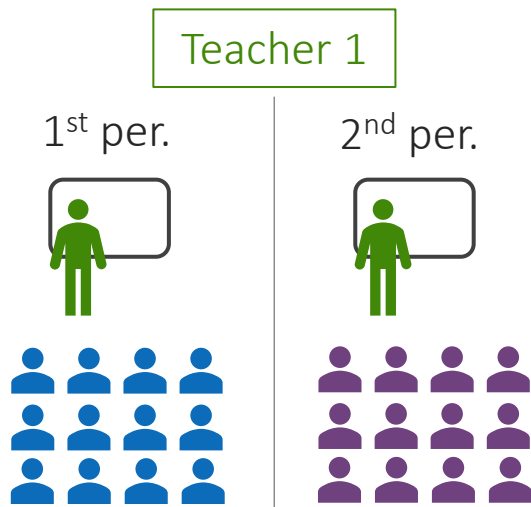
## Concurrent

Teachers deliver remote **and** on-campus instruction **in the same class period simultaneously**



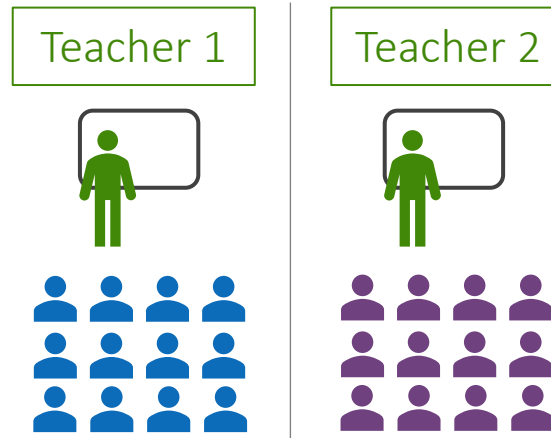
## Split Scheduling

Teachers deliver remote **and** on-campus instruction **but in separate class periods**



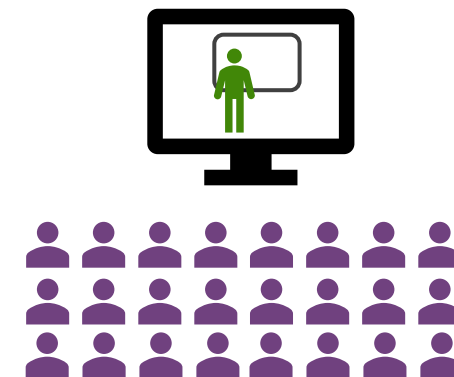
## Split Staffing

Teachers within one site are staffed to deliver **either** remote or on campus instruction, not both



## Virtual Academy

**One virtual academy** set up to support all remote learners in the district; other students attend school on campus



On campus Student



Remote Student

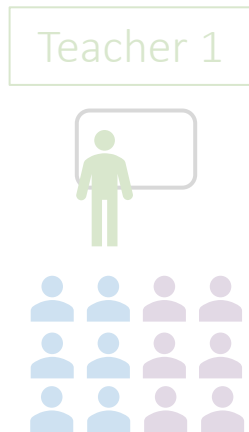


Teacher of Record

# Today we are diving into the Virtual Academy approach

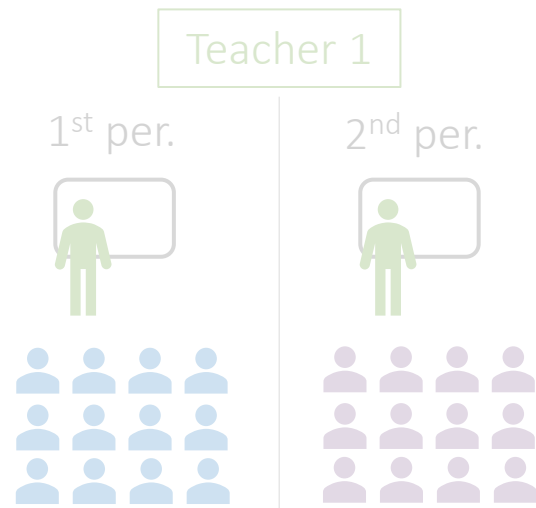
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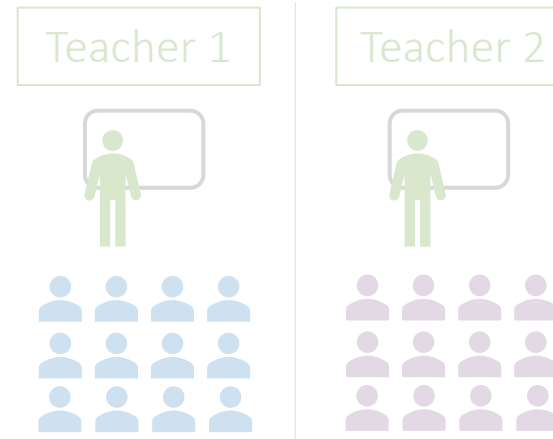
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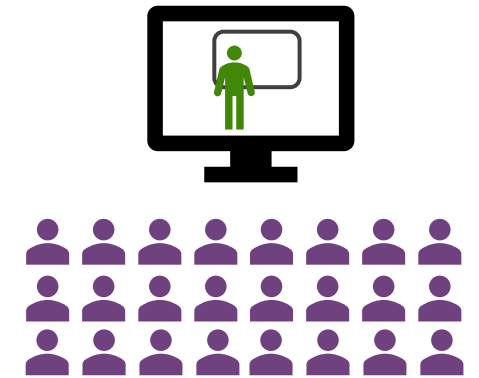
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 On campus Student

 Remote Student

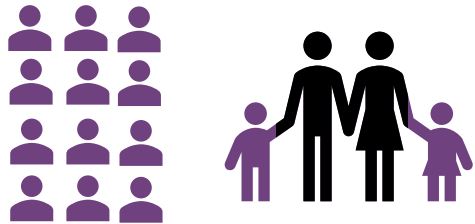
 Teacher of Record



# Multiple benefits of Virtual Academy approach

## Families & Students

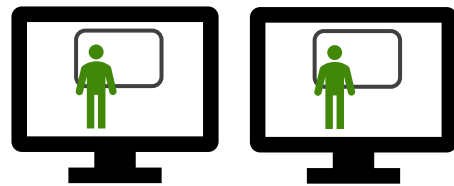
Stronger remote learning delivery with teachers specializing in remote, and greater ability for district to deliver on **families' preferences** for remote learning



Flexibility for Families

## Teachers

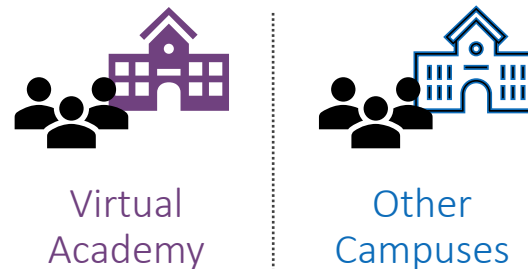
Having designated Virtual Academy teachers can **reduce complexity** and **increase sustainability** for teachers across the district



Reduce complexity for teachers

## School Leaders

With central support / leadership of a Virtual Academy, districts can **free up school leaders** to focus on safety protocols, on-campus learning







Campus Leaders are freed up

## Districts

Pooling remote learners and teachers across the district positions districts to better **manage within staffing constraints**



Manage staffing constraints

-  Why Virtual Academy?
-  How to Establish a Virtual Academy
-  Q&A: Lubbock ISD Virtual Academy Principal
-  Next Steps & Closing

# Four Implementation Steps

1

## Build the Foundation

Decide on the **structure** of your VA and put key **enablers** in place across your LEA

1 – 2 weeks

2

## Pivot with your School Communities

Engage your **families and staff** in the transition. **Recruit and assign** VA teachers

2 weeks

3

## Onboard & Launch

Launch by onboarding school communities with clear **roles and expectations**

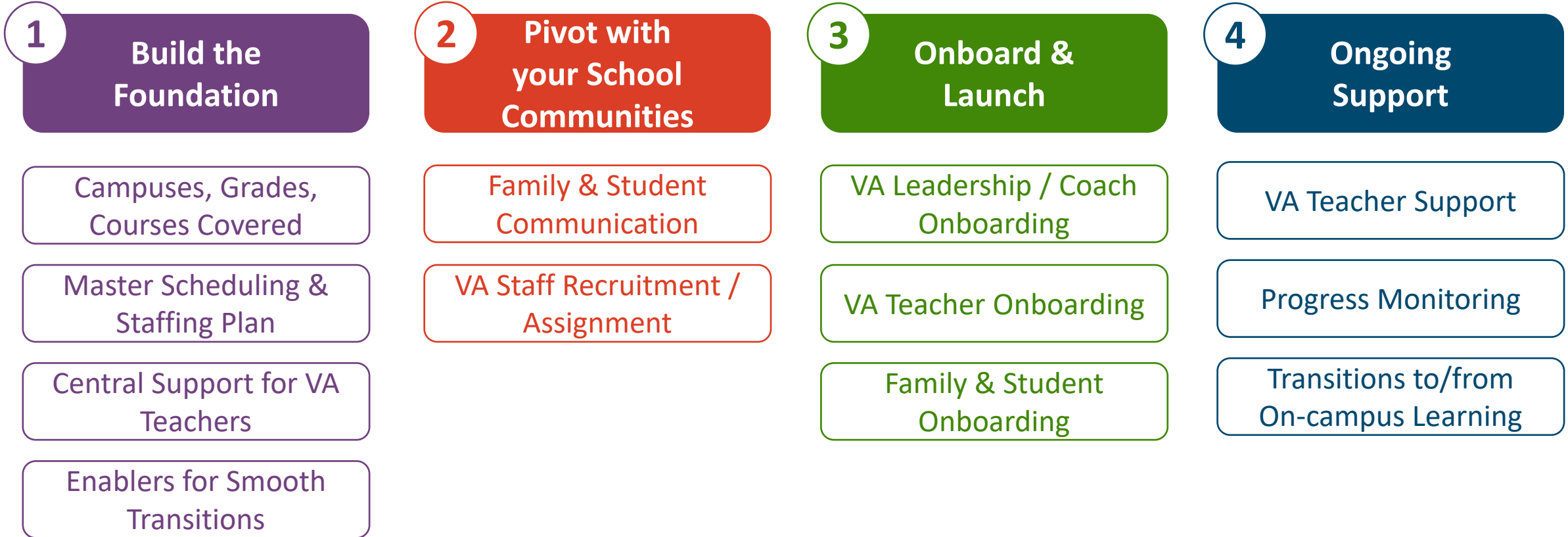
1 – 2 weeks

4

## Ongoing Support

Provide ongoing **support**, especially in **transitions** to and from on-campus learning

# Detail: Four Implementation Steps



# 1 Build the Foundation: Estimate Staffing Needs

1

## Build the Foundation

Campuses, Grades,  
Courses Covered

Master Scheduling &  
Staffing Plan

Central Support for VA  
Teachers

Enablers for Smooth  
Transitions

Determine...

Which **campuses, grades, and courses** will your VA cover?

What student-to-teacher **ratio** is feasible on campus vs. remotely?



How many VA **staff** do we need to recruit to meet needs across grades and courses?

Key Inputs:

- # families requesting remote
- # certified staff across courses
- Asynchronous / synchronous time allotments
- Which courses can be effectively delivered virtually
- Class size waivers
- Campus space constraints
- Aide / para support

# Build the Foundation: A Word on Certification Assignment Flexibility

## Possible Scenarios and Options

*TEA Resource on Certification Assignment Flexibility:*

<https://tea.texas.gov/sites/default/files/covid/20-21-Certification-Assignment-Flexibility.pdf>

| District Situation Concern   | Option(s)   | District Next Steps  |
|--|---|--|
| I have a certified 7-12 math teacher who I need to teach two sections of physics.      | Temporary Classroom Assignment Permit (TCAP)  | Complete form via ECOS entity access and maintain documentation locally.   |
| I have a certified EC-4 Generalist, who I need to teach 5 <sup>th</sup> grade all day. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Emergency Permit</li> <li>2. Teacher Certification Waiver</li> <li>3. Take and pass appropriate certification exam and apply for certification by exam</li> </ol> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete emergency permit form via ECOS entity access and maintain documentation locally.</li> <li>• For teacher certification waiver, login to TEAL account, access Waiver application and submit request online for agency review and processing.</li> <li>• For additional certification by examination, take and pass required test and submit online application and \$78 fee for issuance of new certificate area.</li> </ul> |
| I need a health teacher to teach three sections of Biology.                            | Temporary Classroom Assignment Permit (TCAP)  | Complete form via ECOS entity access and maintain documentation locally.   |

# 1 Build the Foundation: Estimate Staffing Needs

1

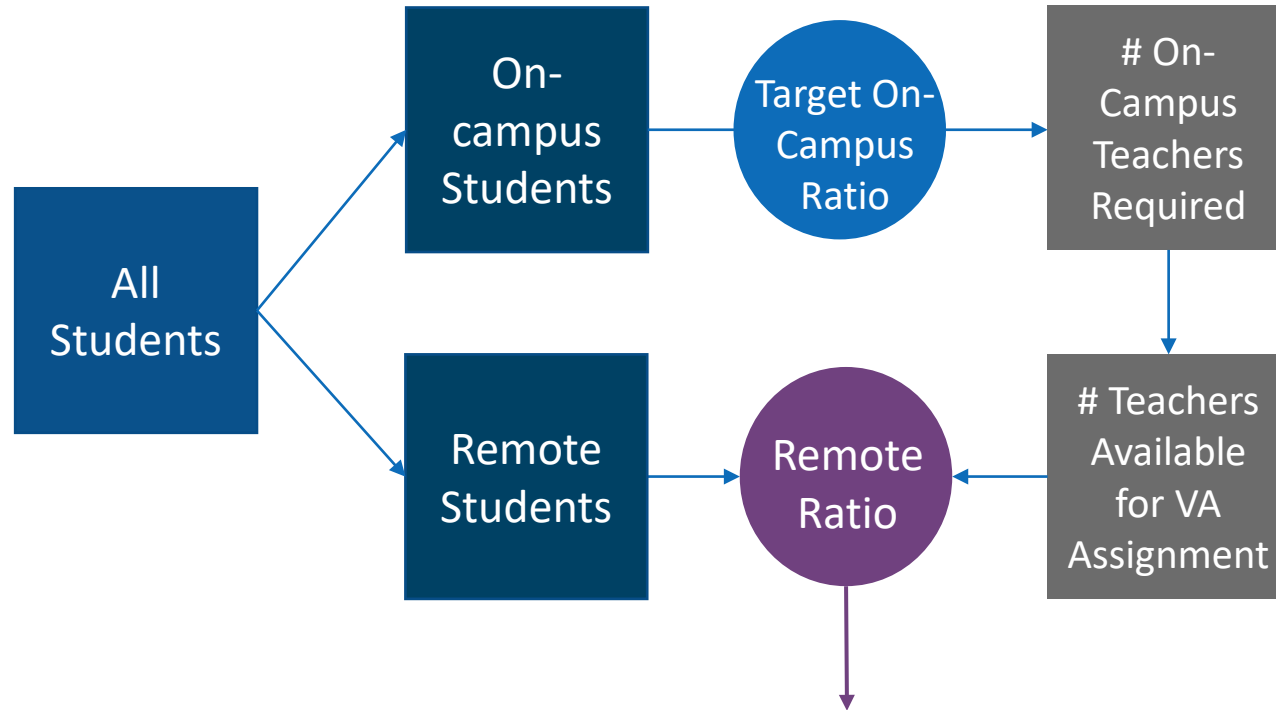
## Build the Foundation

Campuses, Grades,  
Courses Covered

Master Scheduling &  
Staffing Plan

Central Support for VA  
Teachers

Enablers for Smooth  
Transitions



If calculated remote teacher-to-student ratio is too high, consider:

- Adding aides / paraprofessional support
- Team teaching / co-teaching models
- A/B rotating synchronous models

# 1 Build the Foundation: Set up supports

1

## Build the Foundation

Campuses, Grades,  
Courses Covered

Master Scheduling &  
Staffing Plan

Central Support for VA  
Teachers

Enablers for Smooth  
Transitions

Determine...

Will you provide a **central VA principal?**

Will you reallocate central staff or coaches to be **dedicated to supporting VA teachers?**

Who will primarily **coach and assess** VA teachers?

Key Inputs:

- Teacher remote instruction strengths and support needs
- Capacity of campus instructional leaders and coaches to support remote teachers



# 1 Build the Foundation: Set up key enablers

1

## Build the Foundation

Campuses, Grades,  
Courses Covered

Master Scheduling &  
Staffing Plan

Central Support for VA  
Teachers

Enablers for Smooth  
Transitions

Put in place as many of these key enablers as possible, to support smooth transitions to/from on-campus learning:

- Common scope & sequence
- Common teacher collaboration time
- Staff & family engagement plan
  - Plan for “before” / “during” / “after” transition
  - Standard modality preference surveying cadence
- Common learning management system
- Common curriculum

\*Red text denotes highly recommended key enablers

# 1 Build the Foundation: Set up key enablers

1

## Build the Foundation

Campuses, Grades,  
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Central Support for VA  
Teachers

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Transitions

Two ideas to **minimize student-teacher assignment changes**:

1. When bigger batches of students transfer from remote to on-campus (or vice versa), consider **transitioning teachers** with them to maximally keep assignments intact
2. Consistent **pairs or teams** of remote and on-campus teachers that students fluidly move between. Teachers in these pairs / teams can proactively build relationships with students likely to transfer to their classrooms

## 2 Pivot: Communicate with families and students

### 2 Pivot with your School Communities

Family & Student Communication

VA Staff Recruitment / Assignment

To ensure a smooth launch, communicate the...

**WHY:** Lay out the rationale for a mid-year switch:

- Better support for students
- Delivering on family preferences for virtual instruction
- Teacher sustainability

**WHEN:** Clearly explain when transition will happen, and when students will know who their VA teachers are

**HOW:** Share the tools (e.g., LMS) and process (e.g., teacher-student matching) for how VA will launch

## 2 Pivot: Recruit your VA staff

### 2 Pivot with your School Communities

Family & Student Communication

VA Staff Recruitment / Assignment

# Teachers Interested is greater than # Seats

**Application process** including reflection on candidates' remote student engagement / achievement data

# Teachers Interested is less than # Seats

**School leader referral** of teachers, including evidence of candidates' capacity to deliver strong remote learning

## 3 Onboard & Launch

3

### Onboard & Launch

VA Leadership / Coach Onboarding

VA Teacher Onboarding

Family & Student Onboarding

#### Consider...

- Clear **roles** and dedicated **time** to support VA teachers
- Preparation to lead **VA teacher onboarding**
- Preparation to lead **family / student onboarding**
- Connections with **campus leaders** to manage transitions
- Central **systems** to set VA up for success (e.g., LMS)

## 3 Onboard & Launch

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### Onboard & Launch

VA Leadership / Coach  
Onboarding

VA Teacher Onboarding

Family & Student  
Onboarding

#### Be ready with...

- **Student assignments** and relevant student data
- Central **systems** for Virtual Academy (e.g., LMS)
- Key **scope & sequence** and/or curriculum shifts
- Virtual instruction “look-fors” and **expectations**
- Clarity on **coaching** and support structures (e.g., PLCs)
- **Action items** to be ready for Virtual Academy Day One

## 3 Onboard & Launch

3

### Onboard & Launch

VA Leadership / Coach Onboarding

VA Teacher Onboarding

Family & Student Onboarding

#### Be ready with...

- **Teacher assignments, schedules** and rationale
- Central **systems** for Virtual Academy (e.g., LMS)
- Clear expectations for **transitions** to/from on-campus:
  - How to request a transition
  - Teacher switches *will* happen
  - How teachers will transition student relationships with care

# 3 Onboard & Launch

3

## Onboard & Launch

VA Leadership / Coach Onboarding

VA Teacher Onboarding

Family & Student Onboarding

### ***LEA Example: Forney ISD Virtual Academy Hub***

#### Student Virtual Commitment Reminder

- Virtual Academy students need to make a major commitment and must interact with the content, discussion boards, and other course materials daily.
- All students must keep the computer camera on during online lessons, check-ins, and assessments.
- Adhere to the code of conduct of your school and behave with integrity and honesty while participating in an online class.
- Read and acknowledge the district Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) regarding technology and the internet.
- Students may be required to login for classes at assigned times.
- Students may be required to come on campus for testing.
- Complete coursework on time.
- Ensure that you have the means to access the online courses on your own at all times.
- Ensure that all tests and work is done by your student without the aid of others.

**Clear student expectations laid out for parents / guardians**



3

## Onboard & Launch

VA Leadership / Coach Onboarding

VA Teacher Onboarding

Family & Student Onboarding

### LEA Example: Forney ISD Virtual Academy Hub

Parent Academy (Tech Resources)

Home

Canvas

Clever (K-4)

Seesaw (K-4)

Skyward

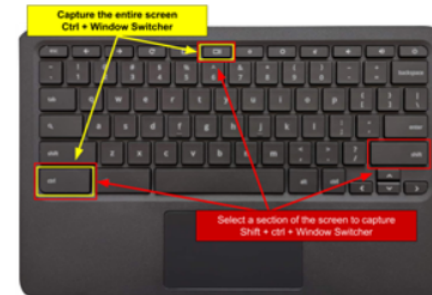
FAQs

Help Desk

### Technology Tip of the Week

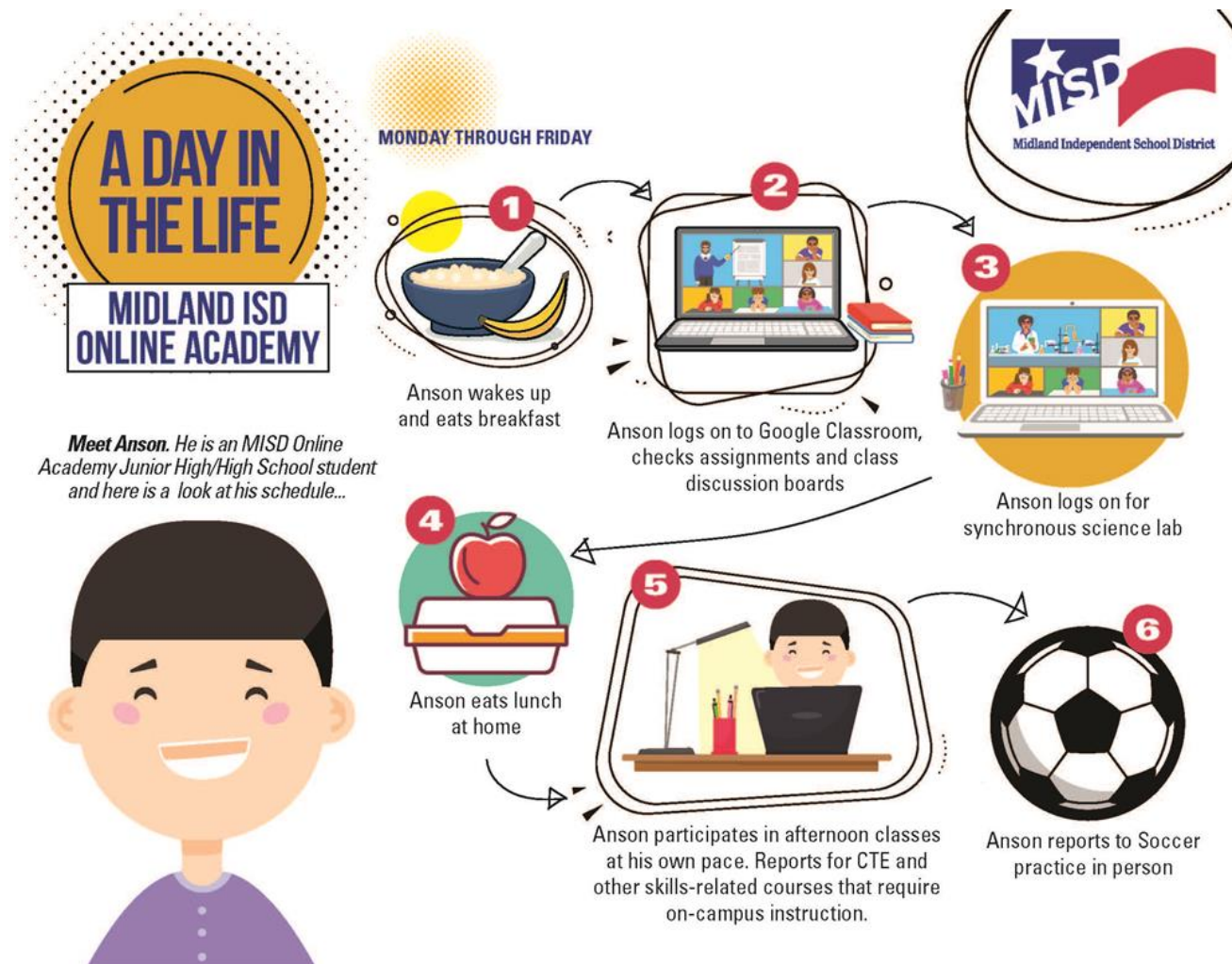
How to take a screenshot on a Chromebook

It is sometimes handy to take a screenshot on your Chrome Window Switcher key. To capture a specific limited area of then use the on-screen guides to select the area you want.



Concrete support for parents

# Midland ISD “Day in the Life” Example



# 4 Ongoing Support

4

## Ongoing Support

VA Teacher Support

Progress Monitoring

Transitions to/from  
On-campus Learning





Consider...

Virtual  
Walkthroughs  
& Action  
Coaching

VA Leadership  
Data Meetings

Remote Family,  
Student,  
Teacher Surveys

Transition plan  
for 100%  
remote  
*(if ever needed)*

-  Why Virtual Academy?
-  How to Establish a Virtual Academy
-  **Q&A: Lubbock ISD Virtual Academy Principal**
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# Recall: Lubbock ISD Case Study



**Lubbock ISD**

~27,000 students

|                                     |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| <b>Staffing Approach(es)</b>        | <b>Virtual Academy</b>  |
| <b>Rationale &amp; Key Benefits</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Managing <b>ratio</b> of 70% on-campus vs. 30% remote overall</li> <li>• Virtual teacher “reserve” ready to <b>accommodate flips to remote</b></li> </ul>  |
| <b>Key Enablers</b>                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Virtual Academy Principal</b> highly adept in technology usage and remote learning, able to train teachers and <b>free up campus principals</b> to focus on safety protocols, on-campus learning</li> <li>• <b>Teacher buy-in</b> to teach virtually (application and special request)</li> <li>• Clear <b>routines and structures</b> for instruction, including consistent whole → small group routines</li> <li>• <b>Proactive family engagement</b>, setting expectations about mid-year teacher and schedule switches, including Town Halls</li> </ul> |



**Cary Fulgham**

Virtual School Administrator  
Lubbock ISD Virtual School

## Background:

- Math, Social Studies, ESL teacher
- EC-12 Certified Principal
- Google Certified Trainer
- Apple Teacher
- 10 years with Lubbock ISD

## Q&A: Cary Fulgham, Lubbock Virtual School Principal





Describe your leadership role at Lubbock Virtual School. What are your responsibilities? How do you support virtual teachers?

Describe the remote-to-on-campus transition process for students at Lubbock. What supports did the Lubbock team put in place to support smooth transitions?

For districts looking to set up a virtual school for the spring semester:

- What steps would you recommend they take in the next two weeks?
- What words of advice would you offer?

*Open up to group chat Q&A*

-  Why Virtual Academy?
-  How to Establish a Virtual Academy
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# What's Next: Staffing Approaches Series

| Session Topic                                | Date & Time                               | Session Objectives  |
|--|---|---|
| Webinar #1: Staffing Approaches Introduction | Tue, Nov 10 <sup>th</sup><br>9-10 am      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide overview of <b>four staffing approaches</b></li> <li>• Share <b>key action steps</b> to take to select an approach</li> </ul>                        |
| Webinar #2: Virtual Academy                  | Wed, Nov 18 <sup>th</sup><br>2-3 pm       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share key components of a <b>virtual academy</b></li> <li>• Share <b>implementation actions</b> to take to stand up a virtual academy this spring</li> </ul> |
| Webinar #3: Split Staffing                   | Fri, Nov 20 <sup>th</sup><br>12-1 pm      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share <b>implementation actions</b> to take to move to a split staffing model in the spring</li> </ul>   |
| Webinar #4: Split Scheduling                 | Thurs, Dec 3 <sup>rd</sup><br>11-11:30 am | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share <b>master scheduling</b> approach and key considerations for setting up split scheduling</li> </ul>  |

Access prior webinar material and sign up for future webinars through our **Strong Start Page** under “Strong Start Implementation Supports: <https://tea.texas.gov/texas-schools/health-safety-discipline/covid/strong-start-resources>

We will keep developing and posting additional supports to meet your staffing needs including:

- Sample schedules
- Sample plans from districts

*Chat Q:* What additional support needs do you have as you consider and/or transition to a Virtual Academy approach?

# Additional Resource: Ongoing Virtual Instruction Strategies Series

1

## Student Engagement

*Strategies that apply to all grade levels and content areas to encourage and sustain student engagement during remote instruction.*

2

## Concurrent Instruction

*Strategies that demonstrate different models that can be set up to maximize concurrent instruction for both in-person and remote students.*

3

## Checks for Understanding

*Strategies that will help teachers collect formative data throughout the lesson to ensure virtual instruction is effectively meeting objectives.*

4

## Differentiation

*Strategies that will allow students to receive differentiated instruction in the remote learning environment that meets their individualized needs.*

After each session has occurred, you can locate the session recording and presentation materials [here](#).

Type into the chat box any closing reflections:

- What new learning or “aha” are you taking back to your team?
- What questions and continued support needs do you have with respect to Virtual Academy setup?

And before you leave, please fill out our survey (link in chat)!

