

Distance Learning Options for Districts

The Montana Digital Academy (MTDA) is committed to helping districts navigate the transition to distance learning in times of need. Depending on the circumstances and time available for training there are many different options districts can take to move learning into a distance learning model. The progression below is intended to help districts evaluate the resources and readiness of a transition.

The following options are arranged from less technology requirements and training to the most technology and training requirements:

Packets + Textbooks + Phone Calls

Benefits

- No technology required
- Materials are all available to be sent with students at the beginning of a distance learning time period

Drawbacks

- Consistent student feedback through phone calls is difficult as student to teacher ratio increases
- Student accountability is much more difficult as student work cannot be graded until students return to face-to-face instruction

Considerations

- If time is short to move to a distance model this makes the most sense

Google Classroom or Alternative + Textbooks + Phone Calls

Benefits

- Provides a digital dropbox to turn in assignments
- Immediate feedback is easier for teachers
- Provides access to digital learning tools in an organized way

Drawbacks

- Not an ideal fit for every learner
- Computer needs to be available for every student
- Internet access needs to be available for every student

Considerations

- If teacher and students have been using Google classroom or alternative previously this is a great option

Google Classroom or Alternative + Textbooks + Video Conferencing

Benefits

- Provides a digital dropbox to turn in assignments
- Immediate feedback is easier for teachers
- Provides an opportunity for teachers to connect visually with all students at one time
- Provides access to digital learning tools in an organized way

Drawbacks

- Not an ideal fit for every learner
- Computer needs to be available for every student
- Internet access needs to be available for every student

Considerations

- If you are a Google or Microsoft district you have access to Hangouts Chat or Skype in most licensing scenarios

Full Learning Management System + Digital Curriculum + Video Conferencing

Benefits

- A distance learning model created from the ground up to provide interactive learning experience to students
- Provides a digital dropbox to turn in assignments Immediate feedback is easier for teachers
- Provides an opportunity for teachers to connect visually with all students at one time

Drawbacks

- Not an ideal fit for every learner
- Computer with video camera needs to be available for every student
- Internet access needs to be available for every student

Considerations

- Minimum of a six month window to train, equip, and construct this type of learning environment from scratch