Texas Education Agency

Texas Commission on Virtual Education

Meeting #1

February 23, 2022

Agenda

Chair Opening Remarks & Introductions

State of Virtual Education in Texas

Operation Connectivity

Next Steps

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State of Virtual Education in Texas

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Chair Opening Remarks

Introduction

Vision & Goals for Commission

Grounding: HB 3643 stipulations

HB 3643 requires the establishment of a Virtual Education Commission to:

- Develop recommendations to address issues related to delivery of and funding for virtual education, including alternative instructional delivery methods and methods of funding.
- Convene a commission of 13 members to discuss and develop recommendations
- Issue a report by December 31, 2022 with key findings and recommendations to guide legislature.

HB 3643

ductions: Commission Members

Chairman
Rex Gore
SBEC
Appointed by Governor

Dr. Anette Tielle
Superintendent
Appointed by Lt. Governor

Bernie Francis
Business Owner
Appointed by Governor

Dr. Danny Lovett
Executive Direction Region 5
Appointed by House

Representative
Eddie Morales
Appointed by House

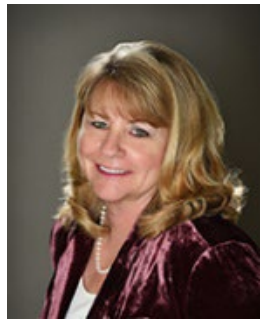
Hannah Smith
Carroll ISD DBoard
Trustee
Appointed by Governor

Josue Tamarez
Teacher
Appointed by Governor

Representative
Ken King
Appointed by House

Senator
Larry Taylor
Appointed by Lt. Governor

Representative
Matt Shaheen
Appointed by House



Pam Little
SBOE Appointment

Senator
Paul Bettencourt
Appointed by Lt. Governor

Senator
Royce West
Appointed by Lt. Governor

TEA & Office of the Governor Teams

Mike Morath
Commissioner of Education

Kelvey Oeser
Deputy Commissioner of Educator Support

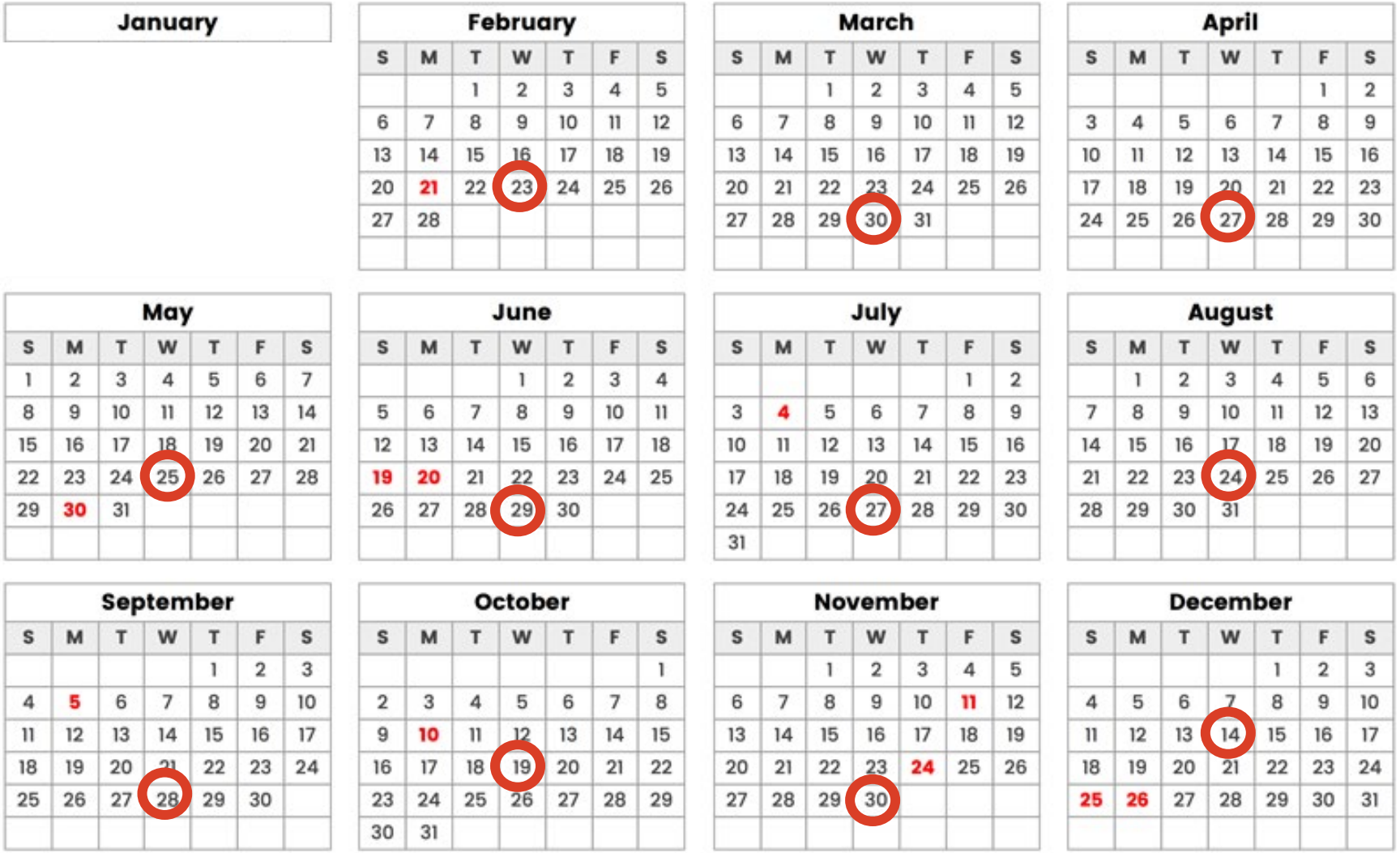
Hunter Thompson
Director of Governmental Relations

Megha Kansra
Director of System Support & Innovation

Nichole Aguirre
Director of Virtual Education and Innovation

Sydni Gaitan
Office of the Governor

Commission Meeting Dates



Meeting Dates

1. February 23, 2022, 10 AM
2. March 30, 2022, 10 AM
3. April 27, 2022, 10 AM
4. May 25, 2022, 10 AM
5. June 29, 2022, 10 AM
6. July 27, 2022, 10 AM
7. August 24, 2022, 10 AM
8. September 28, 2022, 10 AM
9. October 19, 2022, 10 AM
10. November 30, 2022, 10 AM
11. December 14, 2022, 10 AM

tive Agenda Topics

- State of Virtual Education in Texas in Texas
- Texas Virtual School Network
- Policy Options and Practices
- Teacher Support
- Special Populations
- District and Charter Perspectives
- Virtual Education and Innovative Practitioners
- Enrollment, Access, and Funding
- Accountability
- 2021-2022 STAAR Data Review
- Public Testimony
- Parent and Student Voice

We will iterate and develop meeting agendas to be responsive to commission questions and needs

Agenda

Chair Opening Remarks & Introductions

State of Virtual Education in Texas

Operation Connectivity

Next Steps

Topics Covered Today

Key Definitions

Options for Virtual Education Available to LEAs Today

Senate Bill 15 Overview

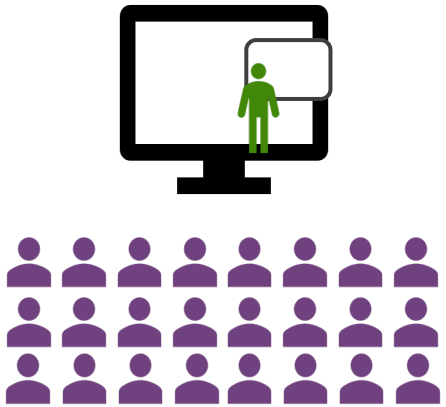
Virtual Education Data:

- School Year 2020-2021
- Texas Virtual School Network (TXVSN)

Key Definitions: Models for Virtual Learning

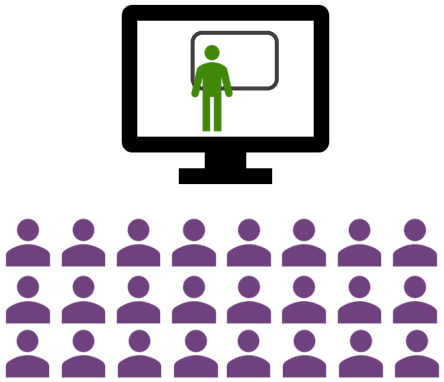
Virtual Program

One virtual program (no new CDCN / school number) set up to support all 100% remote learners in the LEA; other students attend school on campus



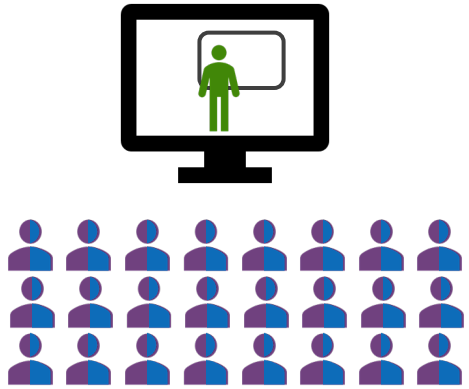
Virtual School

One virtual school (new CDCN / school number) set up to support all 100% remote learners in the LEA; other students attend school on campus



Hybrid Learning

Hybrid grade(s) or school(s) with learners who are on campus part of the week and remote for the rest of the week

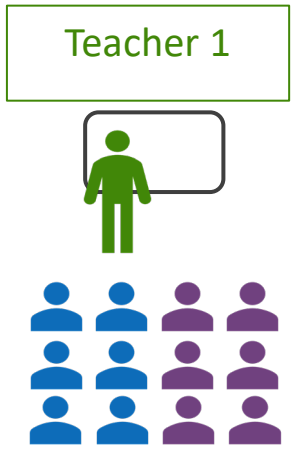


Note: **Blended Learning** is an instructional model that combines face-to-face instruction with online learning to help teachers effectively differentiate instruction for all students

Key Definitions: Virtual Staffing Models

Concurrent

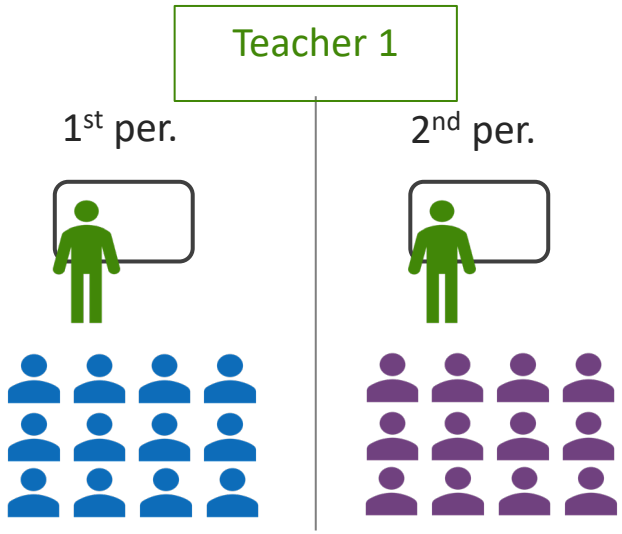
Teachers deliver remote **and** on-campus instruction **in the same class period simultaneously**



*Currently not permitted under SB 15

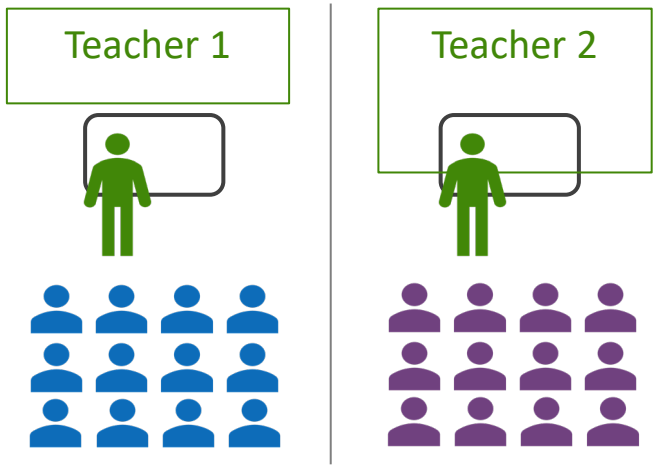
Split Scheduling

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



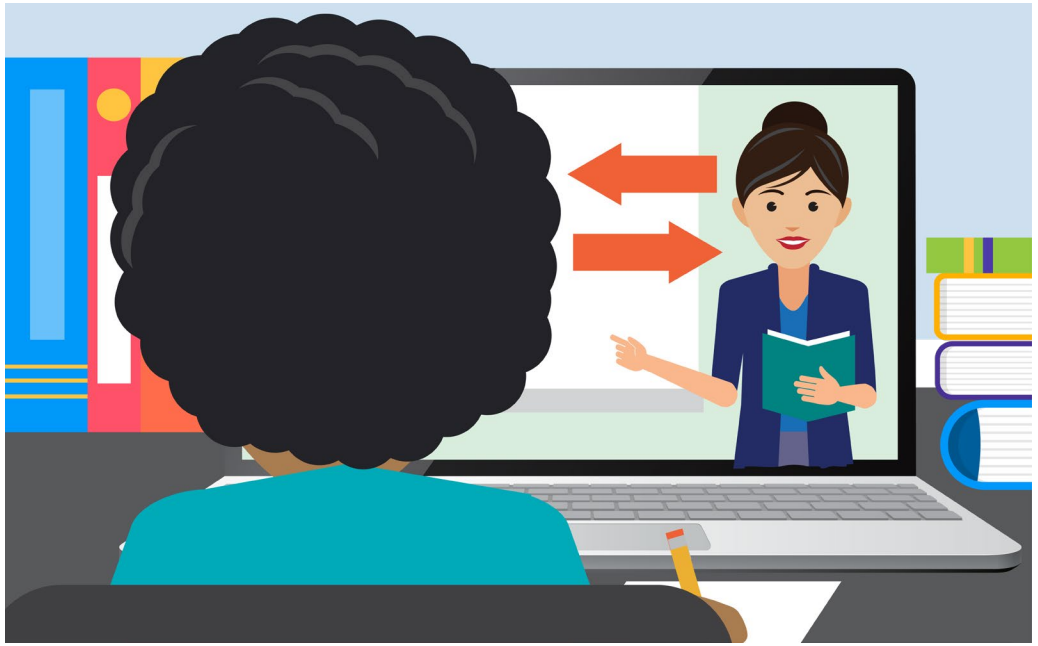
Split Staffing

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

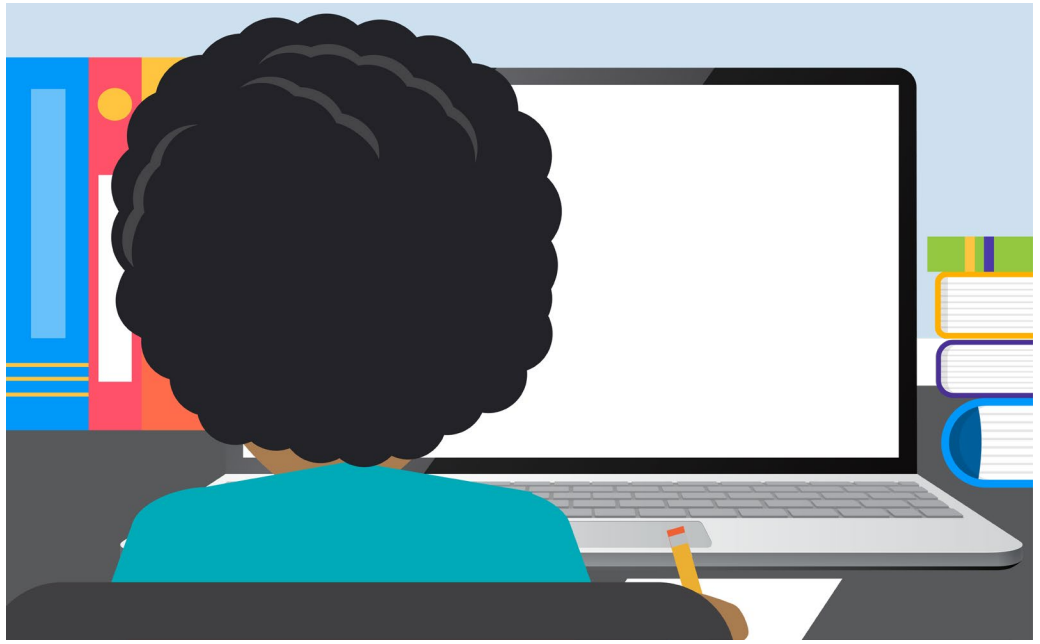


Key Definitions: Instructional Delivery Modes

- **Synchronous Instruction:** Two-way, real-time/live, virtual instruction between teachers and students when students are not on campus**.**

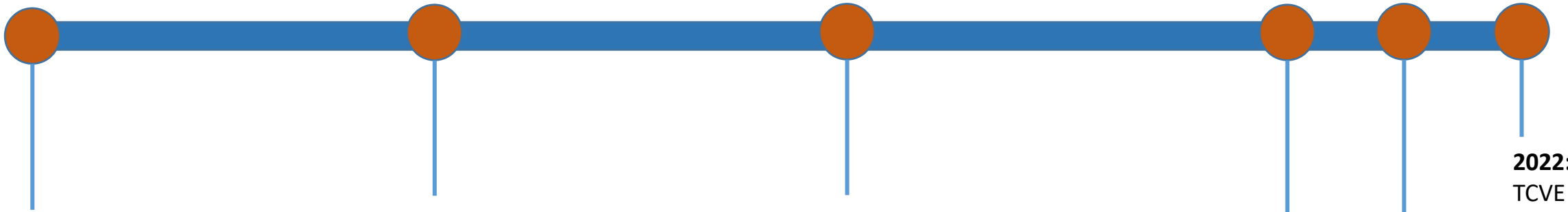


- **Asynchronous Instruction:** Instruction that does not require having the instructor and student engaged at the same time.



Note: LEAs may choose to offer a combination of synchronous and asynchronous instruction experiences

Texas has undergone 20+ years of virtual education policy evolution



2001: Senate Bill 975 authorized **pilot program** for LEAs to provide electronic courses to students

2007: Senate Bill 1788 established **Texas Virtual School Network (TXVSN)** out of SB 975 pilot

2013: House Bill 1926 opened TXVSN course provider eligibility to non-LEA entities and establishes **"moratorium" on future TXVSN full-time schools**

2020: Remote Learning Emergency Framework established by TEA via disaster-based authority for SY20-21 only

2021: Senate Bill 15 passed, providing ADA for remote learning meeting key criteria

2022: TCVE launched

Today, multiple remote learning options are available for Texas districts and charters

LEA Remote Learning Options	ADA Funding	
	Full	Partial
Remote Conferencing Short-term option for students who typically have a medical need to be remote	X	
Senate Bill 15 Local Remote Learning Program Full time virtual or hybrid instruction meeting requirements set forth by SB 15	X	
TXVSN Network Full-Time Schools Full-time virtual schools (currently "capped" at 7 providers)	X	
Texas Tech University Online & UT Online High School Two Universities authorized by State law to offer online special purpose LEAs	X	
TXVSN Catalog Courses Individual virtual courses provided by approved catalog course providers	X	
Other Remote Courses/Programs Ad hoc programs providing remote courses for credit	X	
Non-SB 15 Full-Time Remote/Hybrid Learning Virtual learning provided outside of above options, eligible for certain FSP Allotment Funding but not full ADA funding		X

Note: We will dive into many of the above options further over the course of the Commission

FYI: Remote Conferencing is another available option for remote learning

These two requirements must be met:

- The student is unable to attend school because of a **temporary medical condition**, and
- The total amount of remote conferencing instruction **does not exceed more than 20 instructional days** over the entirety of the school year.

In addition, one of the following requirements also must be met:

- The student's temporary medical condition is **documented by a physician** licensed to practice in the United States. The documentation must include a statement from the physician that the student is to remain confined to their home or to a hospital
- The student has a **positive test** result for a communicable condition listed in 25 TAC §97.7, or
- The student has been identified as having been in **close contact** with COVID-19.

The question of whether to create incentives for higher quality short-term remote instruction than, say, homework packets is different from the question of the best way to support virtual/hybrid learning as a specifically planned learning environment, and is perhaps worthy of discussion by the commission.

SB 15 Overview

Senate Bill 15 (SB 15) was signed into law on September 9, 2021.

Local educational agencies (LEAs) may now receive full ADA funding for students who attend local remote learning programs that meet the requirements set by SB 15.

In effect through <u>September 1, 2023</u>.

What does SB 15 (87th) allow?

Modality	• Synchronous instruction • Asynchronous instruction • Combination of synchronous and asynchronous instruction
Grades	• K-12
Retroactive funding	• For LEAs who met all requirements of SB 15 in SY21-22, retroactive funding prior to bill passage for remote learning delivered
Additional flexibilities	• Hybrid learning: Mix of on-campus and remote instruction is allowable • Ability to contract with another LEA

LEAs must meet key requirements in order to receive funding under SB 15 (87th)

LEA Eligibility

- C or higher performance rating

Program Requirements

- At least one STAAR-assessed grade level, *or* complete high school program
- Provide families an on-campus option
- Administer assessments to remote students in same manner as on-campus students

Teacher Requirements

- Professional development on virtual instruction
- No concurrent instruction

LEAs may only enroll up to 10% of their total enrollment in a local remote learning program

Who counts toward the 10% cap?

- Any student who enrolled for even a portion of the year in local remote instruction under SB 15 (87th)
- Any student receiving remote instruction NOT under the local remote program who received more than 50% of instructional days via remote learning. This can include:
  - Medically fragile
  - Placed in a remote learning setting by an admission, review, and dismissal committee
  - Receiving accommodations under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
  - Served via remote conferencing

LEAs will receive local remote learning program evaluation ratings

- Local remote learning program A-F evaluation ratings
- Publicly posted
- Counts as enrolled students who spent at least half of their instructional days receiving remote instruction

For a student to count toward ADA under SB 15, certain eligibility requirements must be met

Based on student information from the preceding school year, if a student received remote instruction for a majority of their instructional days in the previous school year, they also must have:

- Achieved satisfactory achievement or higher on each STAAR assessment administered.
- Had a number of unexcused absences that is 10 percent or fewer out of all instructional days.
- Earned a grade of C or higher in the foundation curriculum courses taken virtually or remotely in the preceding school year.

If a student did *not* receive a majority of their instructional time in the preceding school year via remote instruction, then the criteria noted above do not apply to determine student eligibility for remote learning. However, criteria noted in the next section apply to all students.

Based on student information from the current school year:

- The student is enrolled in a school district or open-enrollment charter school.
- The student has reasonable access to in-person services at a LEA or school facility.
- The student has fewer than 10 unexcused absences over a six-month period.

SB 15 is in early implementation stages

We plan to return to SB 15 in more detail in a later Commission meeting, when more implementation data will be available

Today, we have data to share from two significantly different virtual education contexts

SY20-21 Pandemic-Era Virtual Education

Brief timespan. 1 year of data, disrupted at various points by the pandemic

Covers majority of state. First time a majority of LEAs delivered remote learning; 2.3M students

Emergency response. LEAs set up virtual learning quickly, with varying quality

Low choice. Many students and families temporarily selected virtual learning out of pandemic fear/concern, and lacked a spectrum of model choices

Learning curve. Parents, students, teachers, and leaders unaccustomed to virtual learning

Concurrent instruction. Most virtual students were in classrooms simultaneously with in-person students

TXVSN Historical Data

Longer timespan. 10+ years of data

Limited scope. 7 full-time schools supporting 33,000 students overall

Intentionally planned schools. TXVSN schools required planning, course approval, and authorization

High choice. 100% of students and families opted into TXVSN enrollment

Adaptation to virtual education. For those enrolled or teaching in TXVSN for more than one year, established routines, systems, and culture for virtual learning

Non-concurrent instruction. 100% virtual classrooms

We will start with SY20-21 pandemic-era virtual education, bearing in mind limitations of this data

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Data Methodology

Percentage at Meets Grade Level or Above: The percentage of individual student assessments that met or exceeded the “Meets Grade Level” standard for the STAAR test

Classification as “majority remote” or “majority in-person”: Students with 50% or more attendance days coded as “remote” were classified as a remote student in calculations. Other students were coded as “in-person”

In school year 2020-21, the TEA released a virtual learning framework

In-Person Instruction

All LEAs required to provide an in-person option for every student

Remote Instruction

Synchronous Instruction

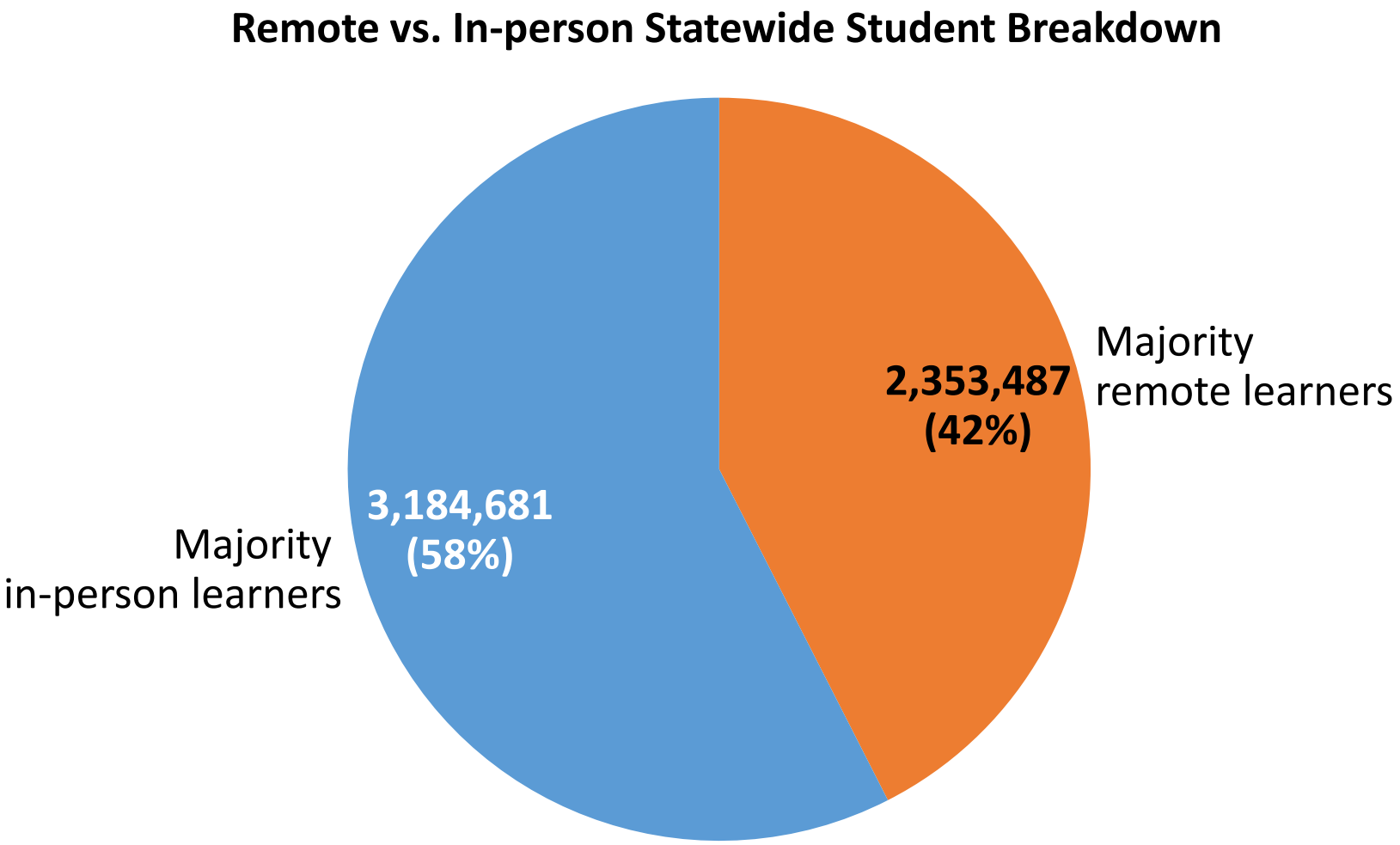
- LEAs submitted an attestation that outlines LEAs plan for providing remote synchronous instruction
- Daily student engagement checks for ADA funding

Asynchronous Instruction
(or a combination of sync/asynch)

- TEA Asynchronous plan submission, approval, and posting required
- Daily student engagement checks for ADA funding

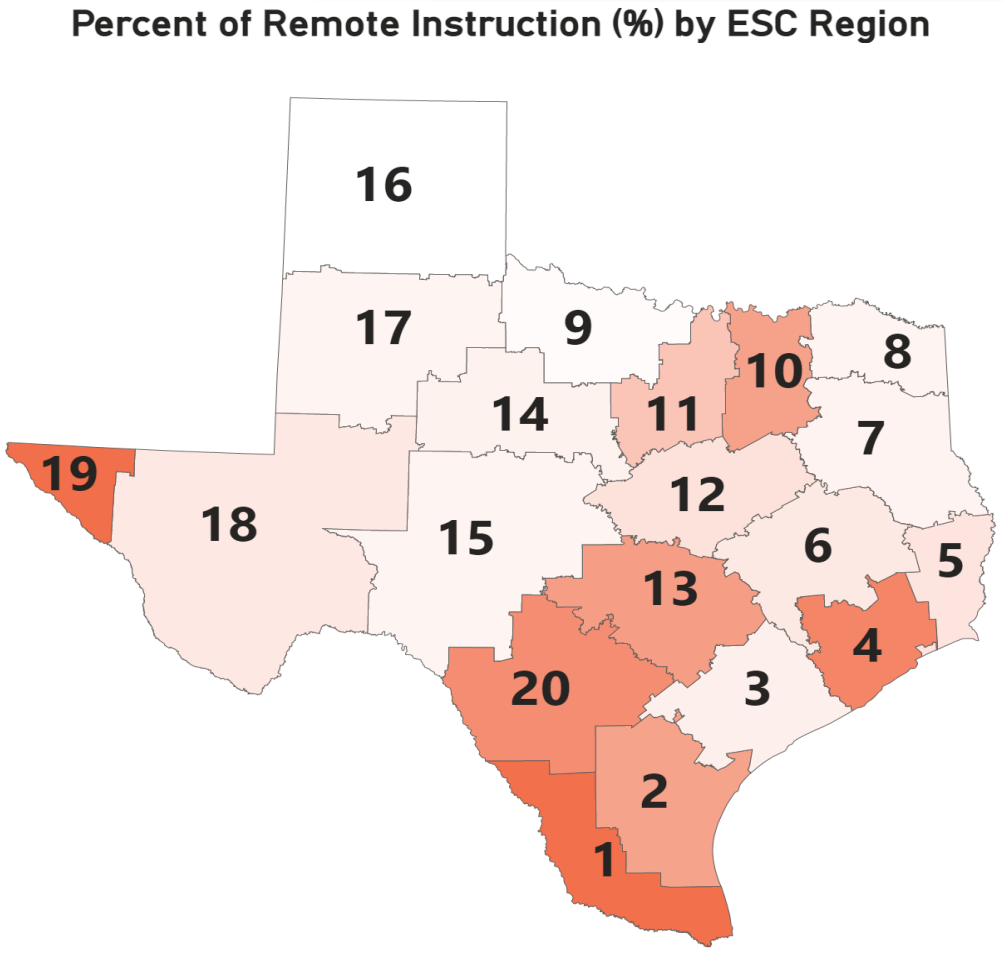
Key resources: TEA SY20-21 Attendance and Enrollment FAQ; TEA Synchronous & Asynchronous Instruction Guidance and Plan Requirements

In SY20-21, 2.3M students, ~42% of students in the state learned virtually for the majority of their instructional days



- 29% of these students tested.

Urban areas and areas closer to the Rio Grande had higher percentages of remote learners

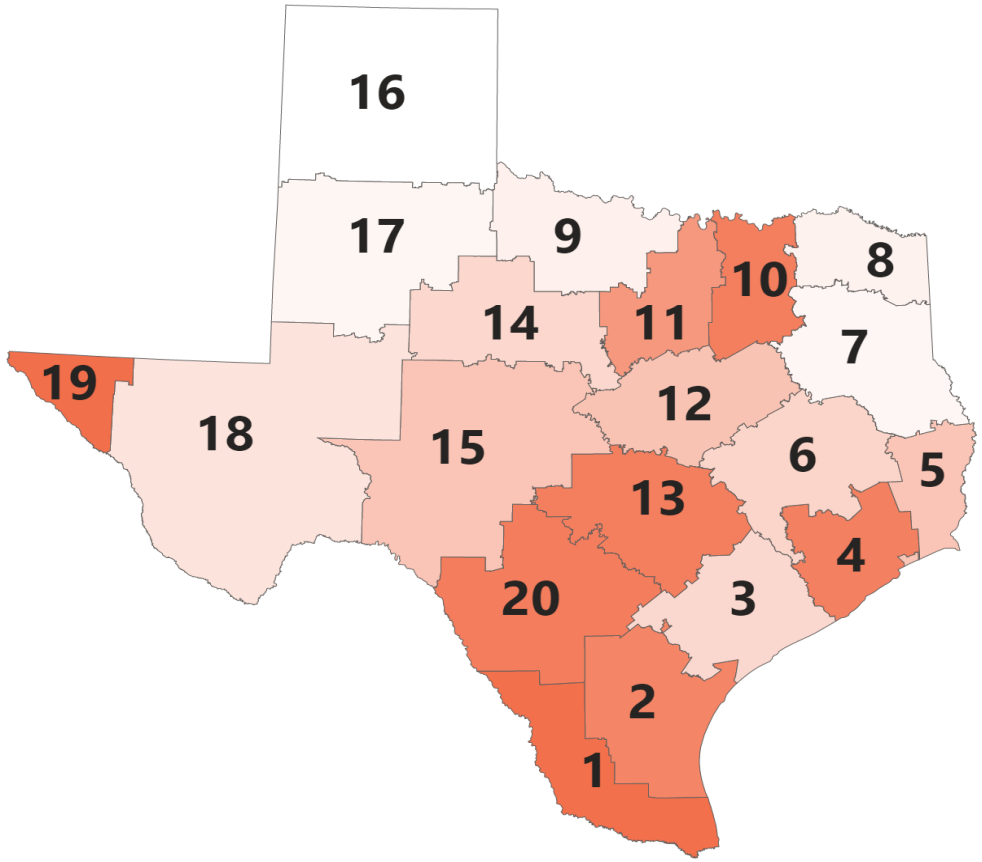


State: 42.4% Percentage of Remote Instruction (%) or 2,353,487 remote students (N)

Region	Percentage of Remote Instruction (%)	Remote Students (N)
19	75.9%	158,048
1	74.3%	384,728
4	36.9%	515,156
20	34.6%	254,078
13	29.9%	224,579
10	28.7%	397,599
2	28.5%	39,709
11	18.6%	223,019
12	10.1%	44,936
5	9.4%	17,810
18	8.2%	8,457
6	8.1%	31,274
3	6.3%	7,938
14	5.5%	12,355
7	5.1%	8,733
8	4.8%	4,116
17	4.8%	4,953
15	4.5%	10,465
9	2.7%	2,846
16	1.7%	2,688

Students in urban areas and areas closer to the Rio Grande also spent the highest average percentage of *days* learning virtually

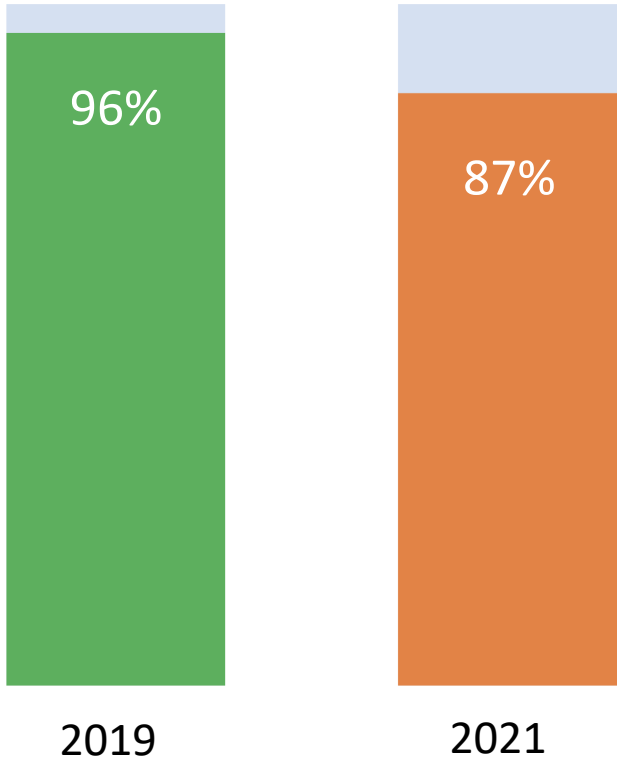
Average Virtual Attendance (%) Per Region



Region ID	Average % of Days that Students Stayed Virtual
19	79.2%
1	77.4%
20	46.9%
13	43.1%
10	42.5%
4	42.1%
2	40.5%
11	35.3%
12	22.8%
5	22.4%
15	22.3%
6	17.8%
14	17.1%
3	16.7%
18	13.7%
9	9.8%
8	9.3%
17	8.3%
7	8.2%
16	5.6%

Despite challenges due to COVID-19, a large majority of Texas students took STAAR in SY20-21

Spring Participation in STAAR[1]



In 2019, Spring STAAR participation was **96%**, compared to **87%** in 2021.

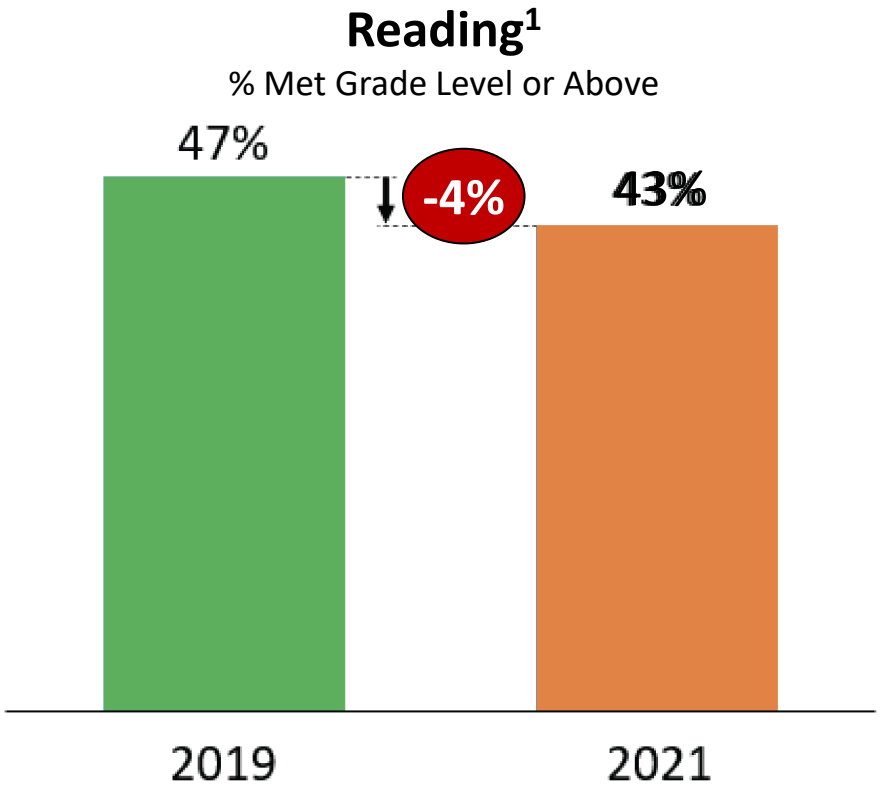
The high level of participation – even among students who remained remote most of the year – allows for statewide performance comparisons with prior years.

When we have STAAR data, we can **better target support to Texas kids**, accelerating their academic growth this summer and next year.

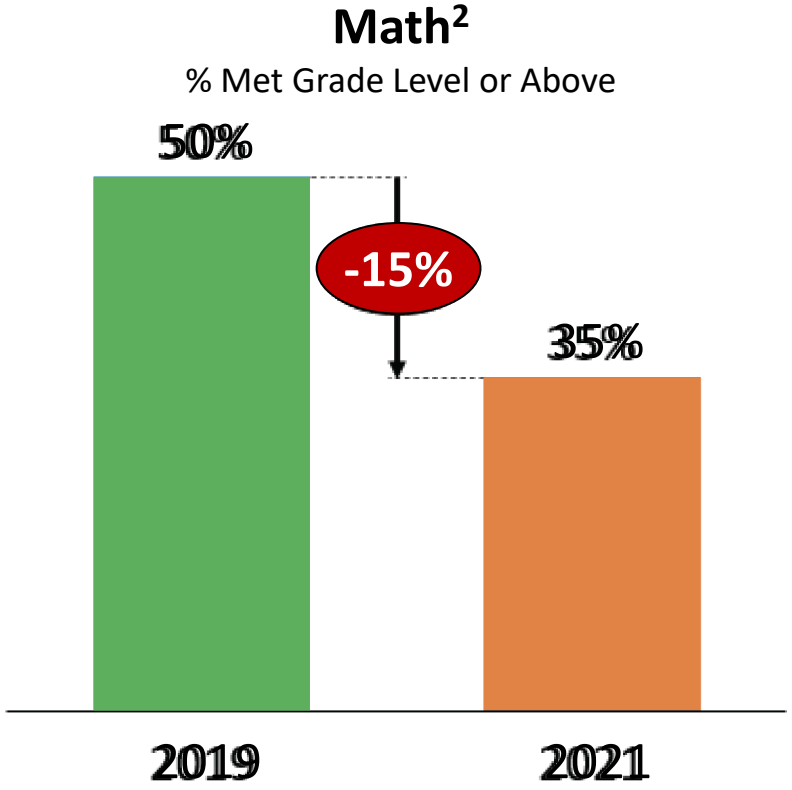
1. Participation = total number of completed Spring STAAR test / total number of Spring STAAR tests eligible to be completed. 7.7M STAAR tests were completed in 2021. STAAR tests include 3-8 Mathematics, 3-8 Reading, 5 & 8 Science, 5 Social Studies, Algebra I, English I, English II, Biology, and U.S. History. Results for grades 3-5 combine assessments given in Spanish and English. Participation does not include TELPAS, TELPAS Alternate, or STAAR Alternate 2. Note: Spring 2021 STAAR results are for learning and recovery planning only – no SSI grade promotion requirements or ratings for districts or campuses. There is no 2020 STAAR data because of cancellation of STAAR in spring 2020. | Source: Spring 2019 and Spring 2021 STAAR Data

STAAR performance showed a decrease in academic performance with a larger decline in math than reading

The percentage of students that met grade level or above in reading declined by **4%**.



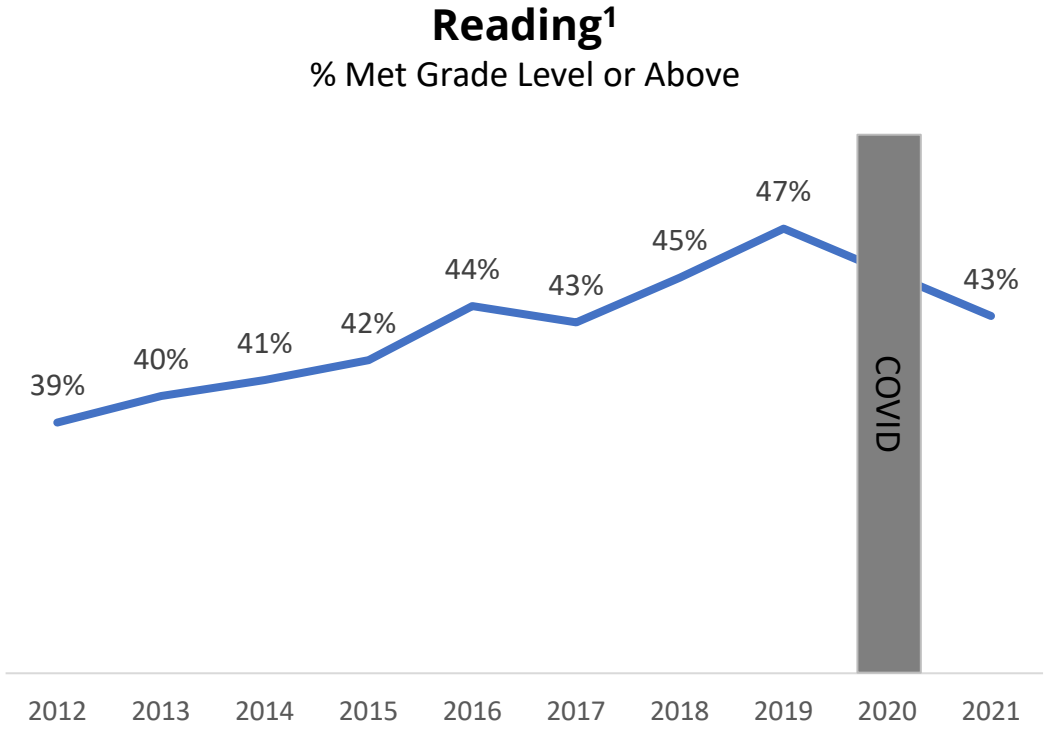
The percentage of students that met grade level or above in math decreased by **15%**.



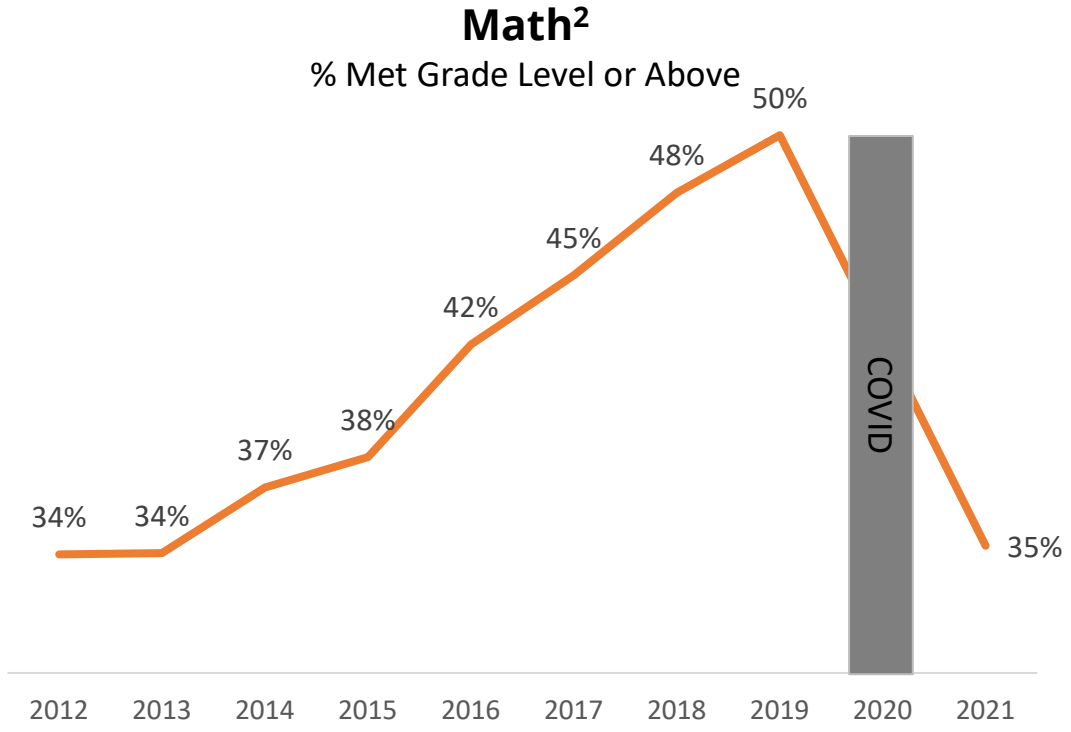
1. Includes STAAR 3-8 Reading, English I and English II EOC Assessments; 2.7M tested students in 2019 and 2.4M in 2021 2. Includes STAAR 3-8 Mathematics, Algebra I EOC Assessment; 3.3M tested students in 2019 and 2.9M in 2021. Note: Results for grades 3-5 combine assessments given in Spanish and English. Participation in STAAR math and reading assessments in 2021 was 86%. Spring 2021 STAAR results are for learning and recovery planning only – no SSI grade promotion requirements or ratings for districts or campuses. There is no 2020 STAAR data because of cancellation of STAAR in spring 2020. | Source: Spring 2019 and Spring 2021 STAAR Data

The negative impact of COVID-19 erased years of improvement in reading and math

Reading results had steadily improved since 2012, with COVID-19 dropping Texas back to 2016 rates.

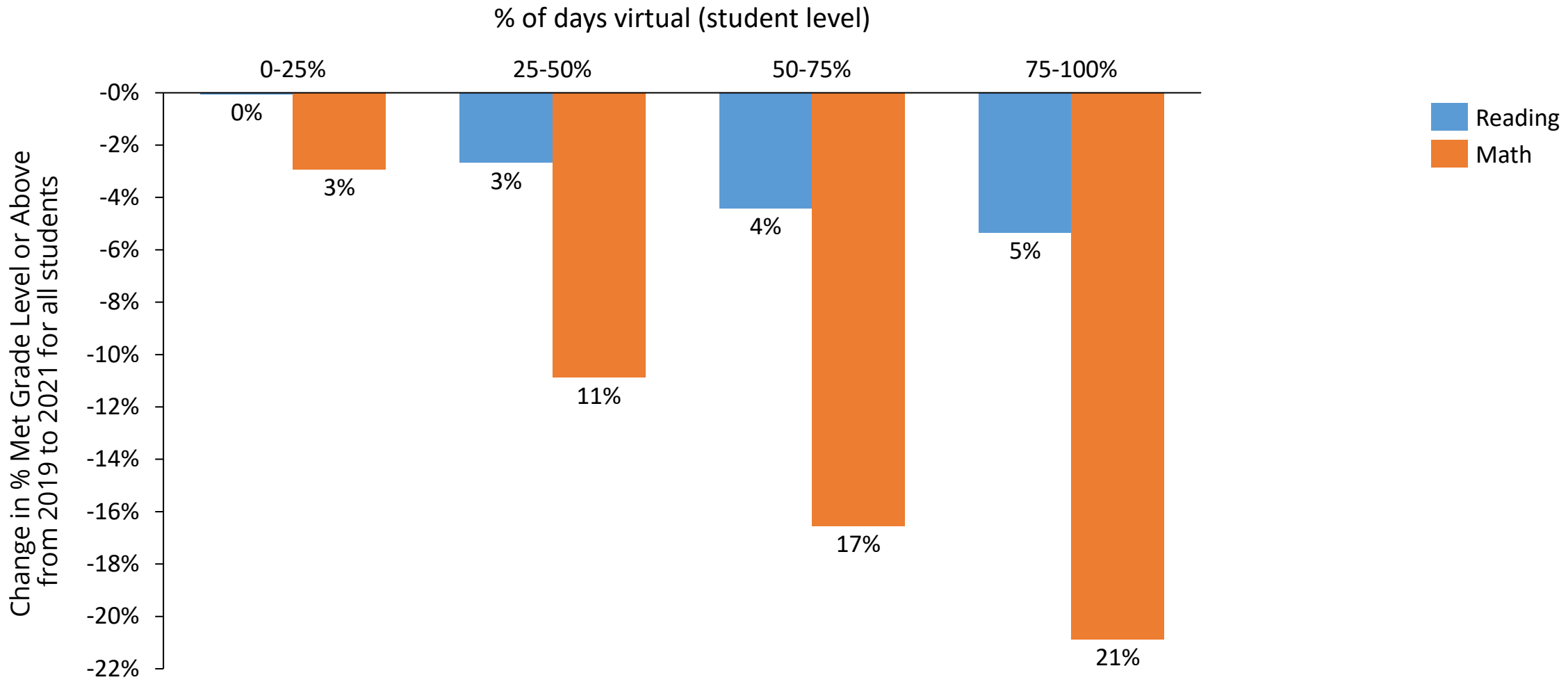


Math results had dramatically improved since 2012 with COVID-19 dropping Texas to 2013 passing rates

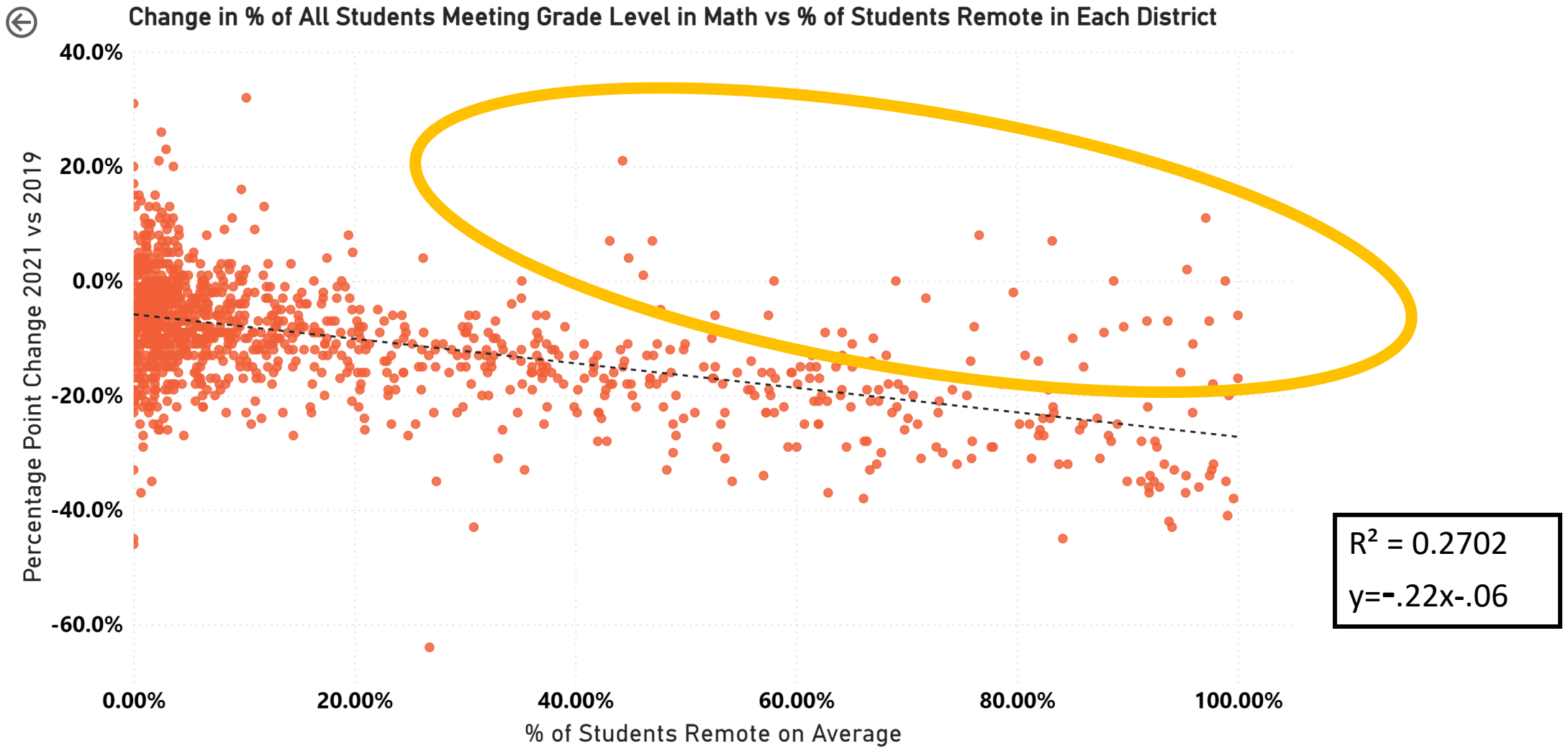


1. Includes STAAR 3-8 Reading, English I and English II EOC Assessments 2. Includes STAAR 3-8 Mathematics, Algebra I EOC Assessment Note: Results for grades 3-5 combine assessments given in Spanish and English. Results exclude STAAR-M, STAAR-L, STAAR-A, STAAR Alternate, STAAR Alternate 2 during any years they were offered. Participation in STAAR math and reading assessments in 2021 was 86%. Spring 2021 STAAR results are for learning and recovery planning only – no SSI grade promotion requirements or ratings for districts or campuses. There is no 2020 STAAR data because of cancellation of STAAR in spring 2020. | Source: 2012-2021 Spring STAAR Data

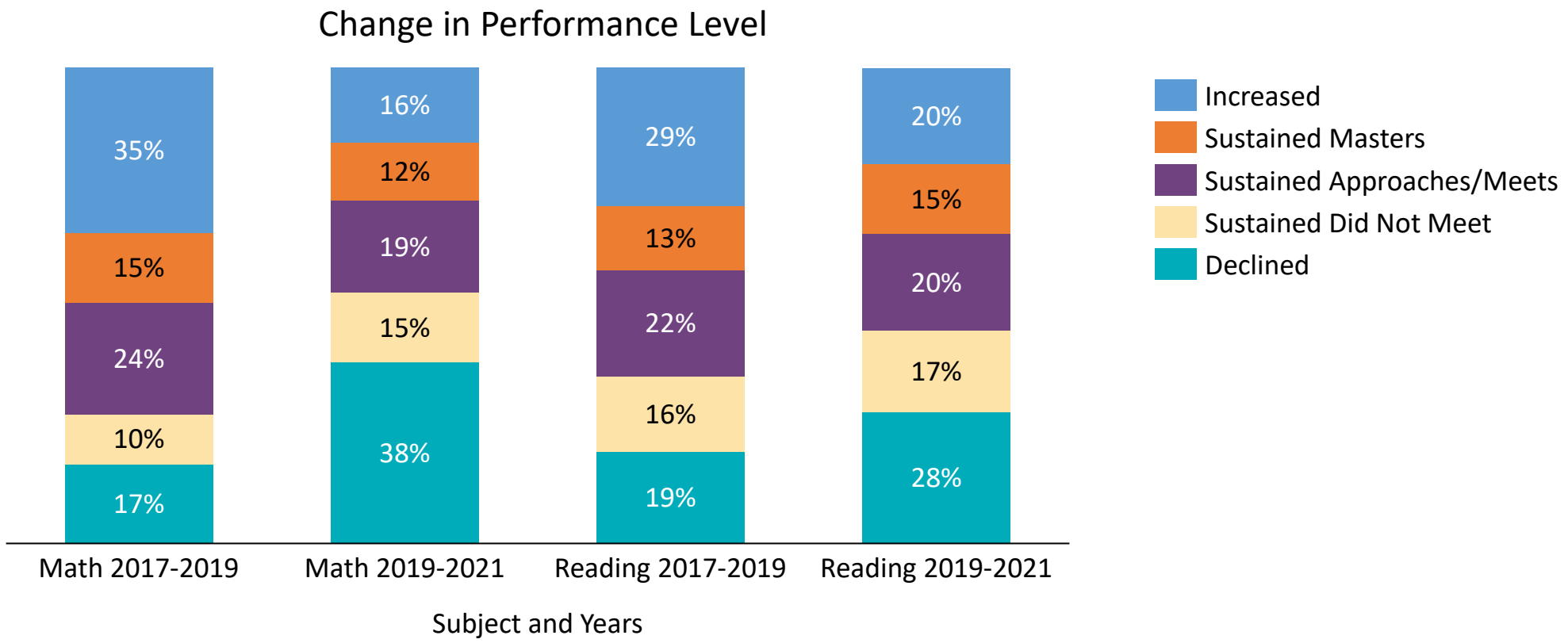
Students who received more virtual instruction were likelier to see drops in STAAR performance, particularly in math



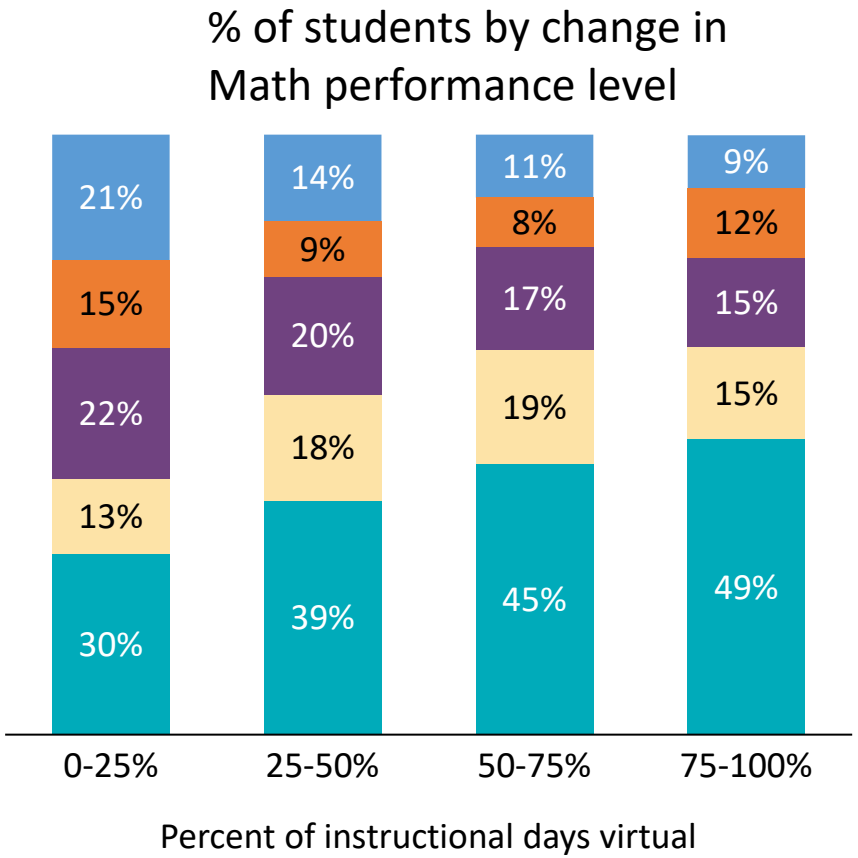
Generally, in math, a higher percentage of remote learners corresponded to higher year-over-year learning loss

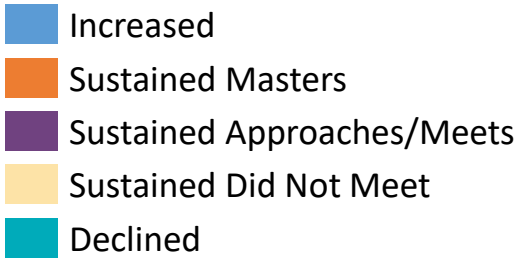


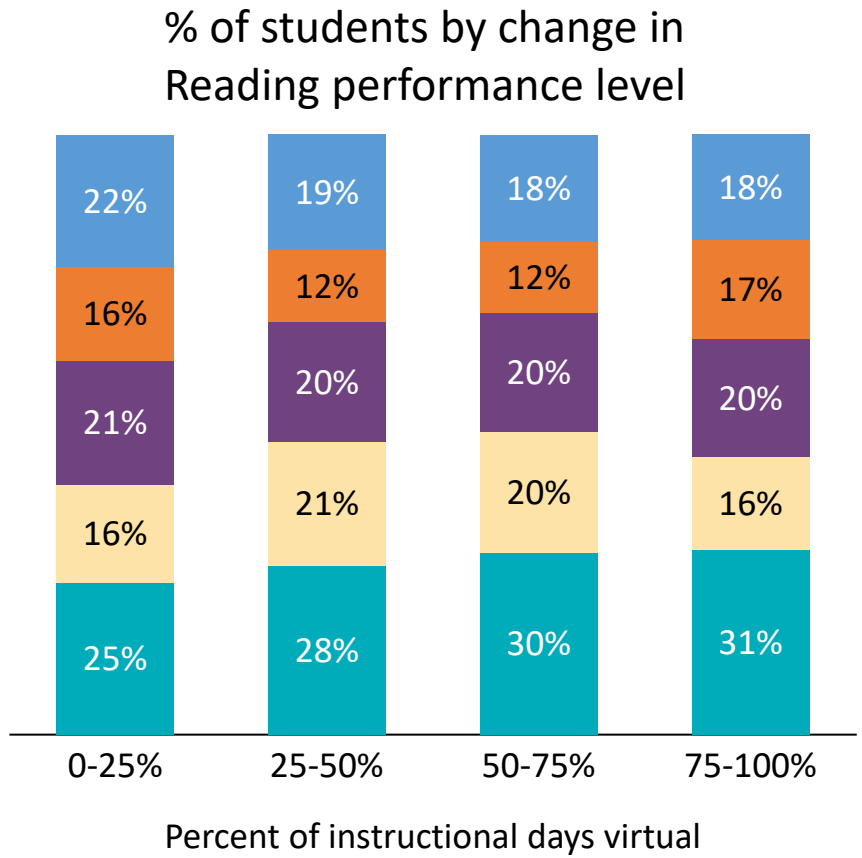
Longitudinal Student Growth: Overall, significantly more students failed to gain a year's worth of academic growth per year than in prior years



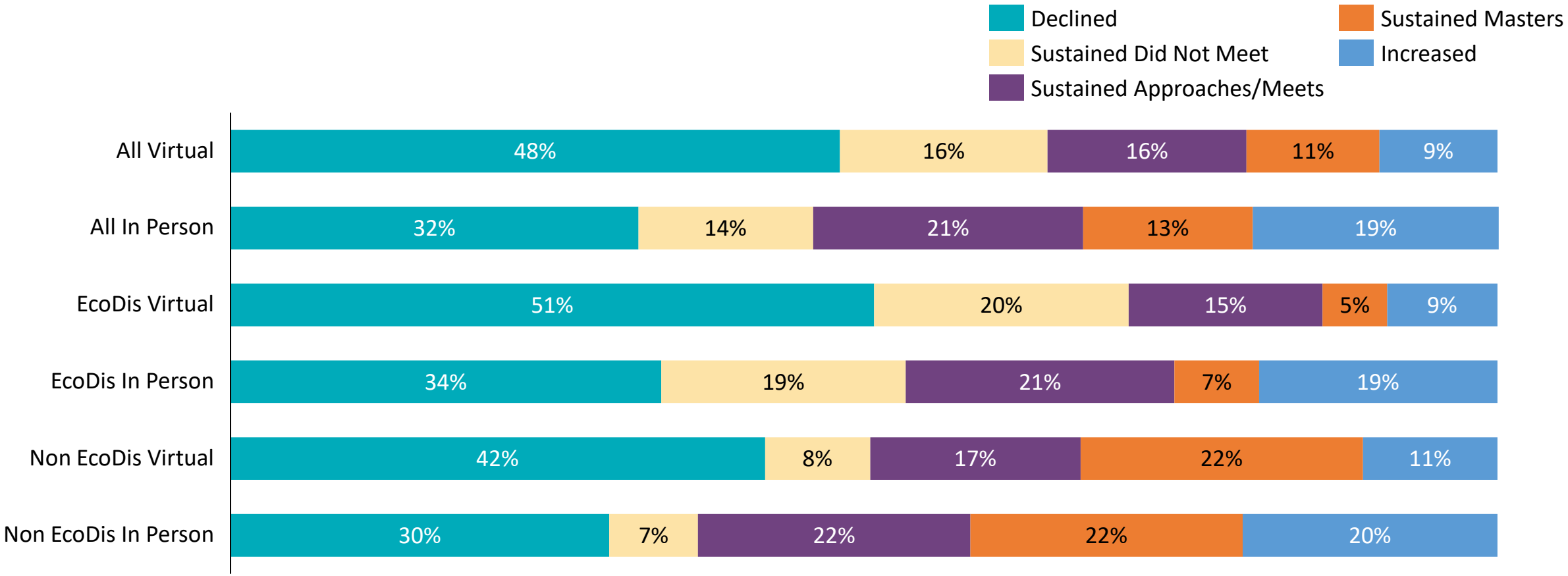
Students who received more virtual instruction were likelier to fail to gain a year academically in math







In-person students were more likely to grow a year or more in a year's time than virtual students in math



- *75% of virtual students participated in math STAAR assessments. 72% of virtual students were included in accountability.*
- *97% of in-person students participated in math STAAR assessments. 92% of in-person students were included in accountability.*

* TEA collected Crisis Code information during the 2020-21 summer PEIMS collection, denoting whether a student was being educated in person or remotely. Summer 2021 contains the entire August 2020- May 2021 school year. A second note here is the different levels of participation rate for each sub-group population.

Note that pandemic-era data has limitations; conclusions to guide future policy should be drawn carefully

SY20-21 Pandemic-Era Virtual Education

Brief timespan. 1 year of data, disrupted at various points by the pandemic

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Emergency response. LEAs set up virtual learning quickly, with varying quality

Low choice. Many students and families temporarily selected virtual learning out of pandemic fear/concern, and lacked a spectrum of model choices

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Concurrent instruction. Most virtual students were in classrooms simultaneously with in-person students

TXVSN Historical Data

Longer timespan. 10+ years of data

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Insight #1: LEAs needed significant support setting up curricular and technology systems

Devices / Connectivity

Operation Connectivity launched to help connect all of Texas's 5.5 million public school students with a device and reliable internet connection.

To be discussed further today

Curriculum

TexasHomeLearning

Texas Home Learning 3.0 (THL 3.0) launched to provide free access to high quality instructional material that operates effectively in in-person and virtual environments. Materials cover:

- Pre-K
- RLA K-12 (incl. Spanish K-5)
- Math K-12
- Science K-5

Learning Management System

schoology

TEA provided all Texas school systems access to PowerSchool's Schoology for two years at no cost.

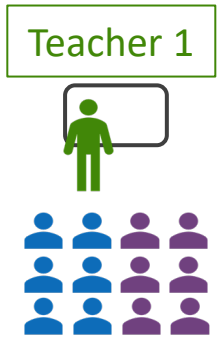
Currently, Schoology is used in schools representing more than one million students across Texas (1 in 5 students statewide).

Insight #2: Staffing models were a significant challenge to effective virtual instruction

A significant number of LEAs engaged in **concurrent** instruction, which strained teachers and students

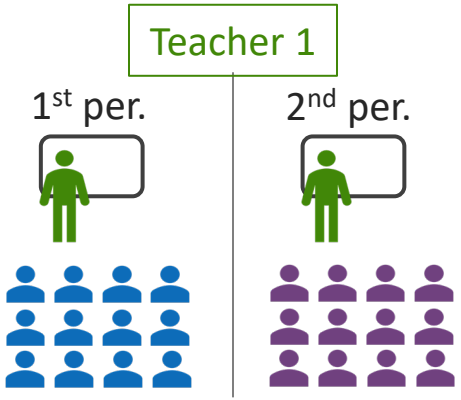
Concurrent

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



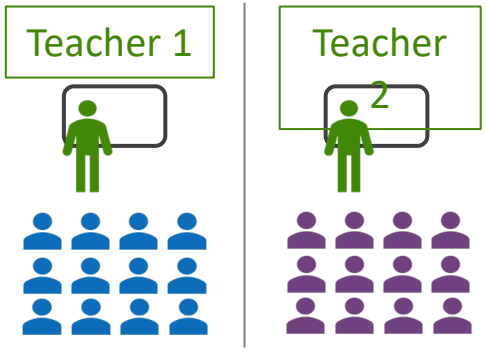
Split Scheduling

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

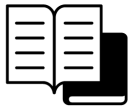


Split Staffing

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



Insight #3: School leaders and teachers faced challenges that continue to require support



Curriculum LEAs had long used was not effectively set up for virtual instruction and engagement

Student engagement and attendance in virtual environments was challenging

Technology and LMS learning curve was steep for teachers.
Note: Research shows that LMS organization in particular is a key differentiator for virtual classrooms

School systems did not immediately know to how support **students with disabilities and emergent bilingual students** in virtual environments

Parent and family onboarding, capacity-building, and ongoing engagement for effective virtual instruction was uneven and took time to build up

TXVSN data provides more insight into results of intentionally planned, high choice virtual learning

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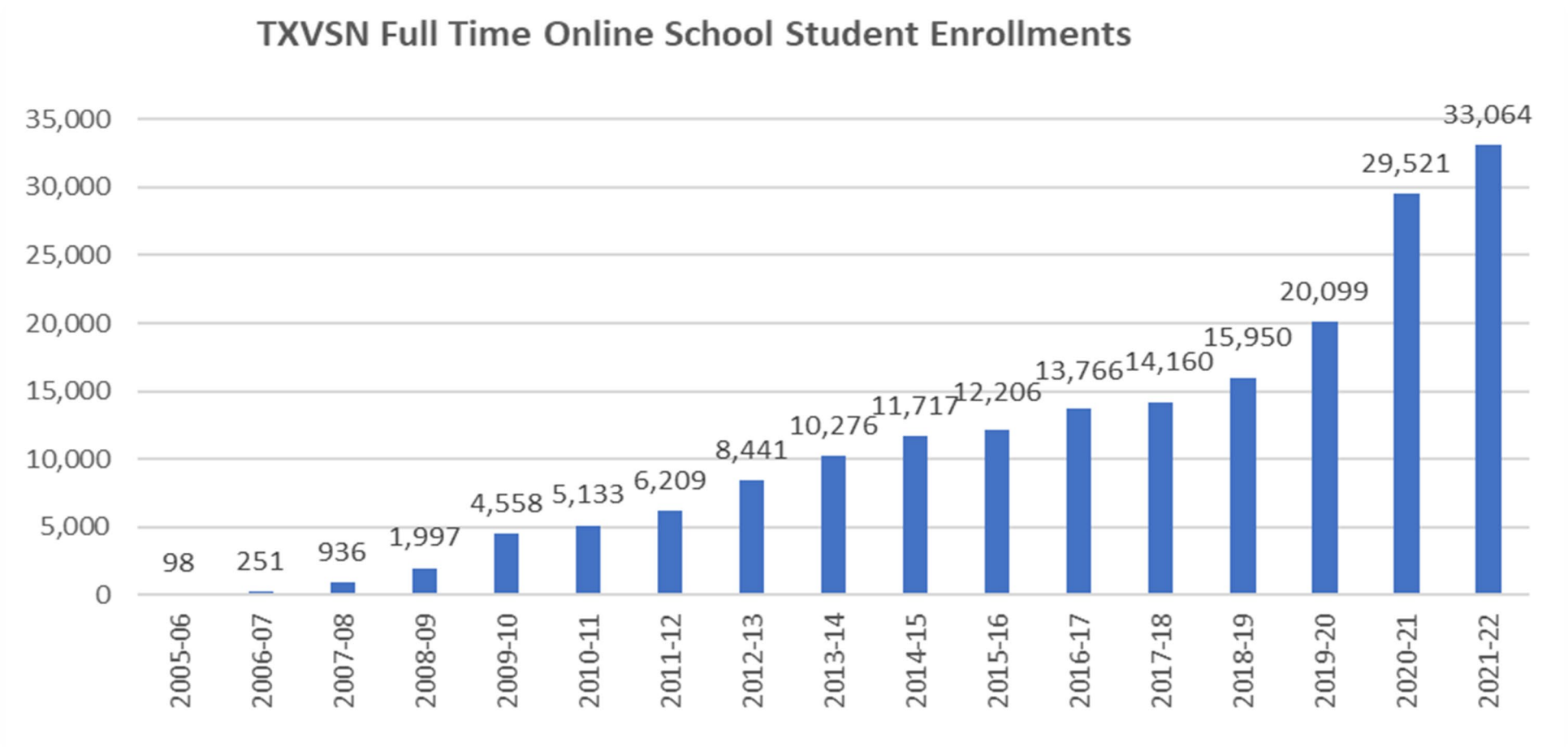
Overview: Texas Virtual Schools Network

	Full Time Virtual Schools	Course Catalog
# Students	• Total: 33,064 (21-22 SY) • Elementary (3-5): 5,622 Middle: 16,993 High: 10,449	• Total: 6,658 (20-21 SY) • Elementary: NA Middle & High: 6,658
# Providers	• Total: 7 • Elementary: 5 Middle: 5 High: 7	• Total: 14 • Elementary: NA Middle: NA High: 14
LEA Eligibility Criteria	• "Capped" at 7 providers for full funding • Key Criteria: Accountability – Acceptable; Accredited Status; Financial – Standard Achievement; Grades 3-12	• Key Criteria: Accountability – Acceptable
LEA Program and Teacher Requirements	• Program – 100% course standards met • Teacher – Texas certified or IHE credentialed (dual credit) • Professional development on virtual instruction that meets specific standards	• Program – 100% course standards met • Teacher – Texas certified or IHE credentialed (dual credit) • Professional development on virtual instruction that meets specific standards
Funding Basis	• Successful course completion	
Allowable Modes of Learning	• 100% Virtual Learning (no in-person elements) • Synchronous, asynchronous, or a combination	

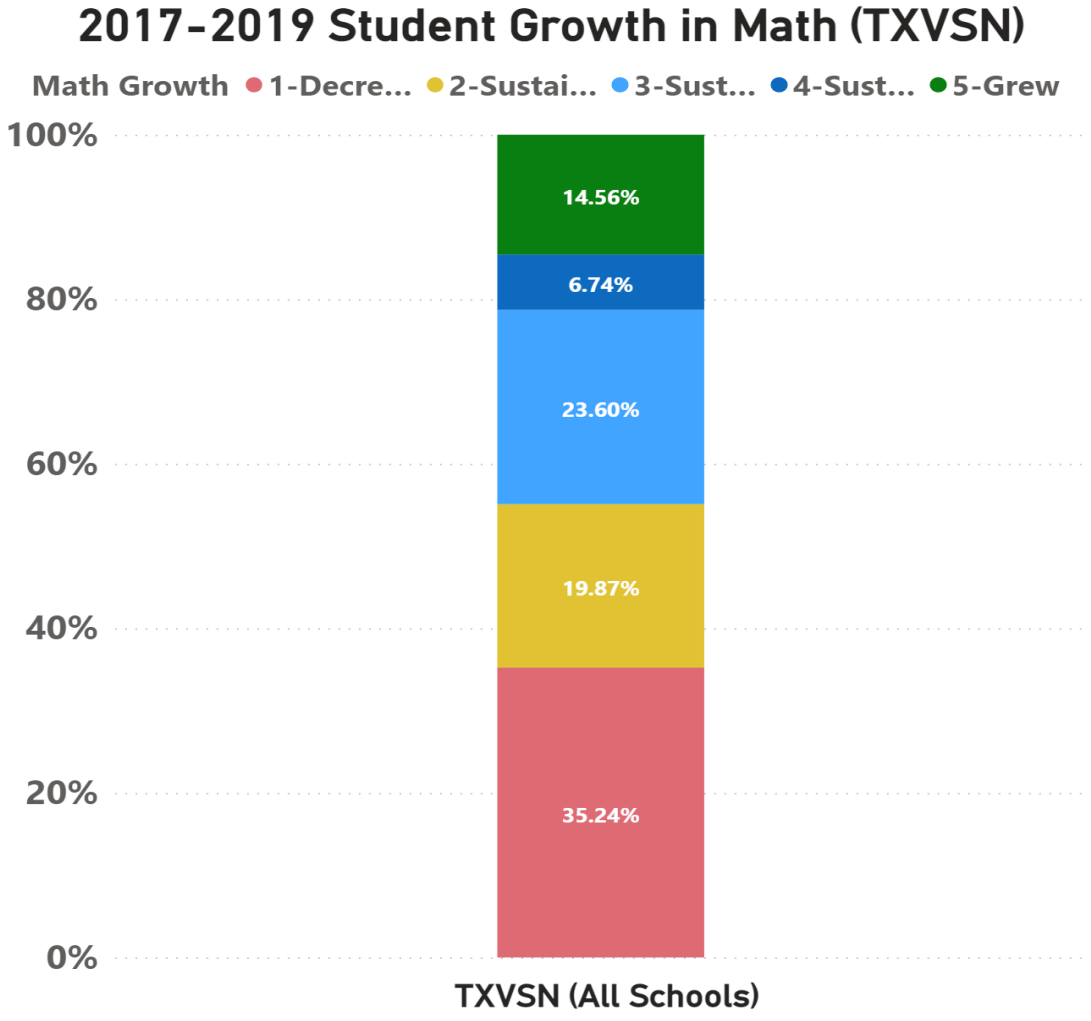
Data Source Enrollments: 2021-2022 PEIMS Snapshot, TXVSN catalog web page December 2021

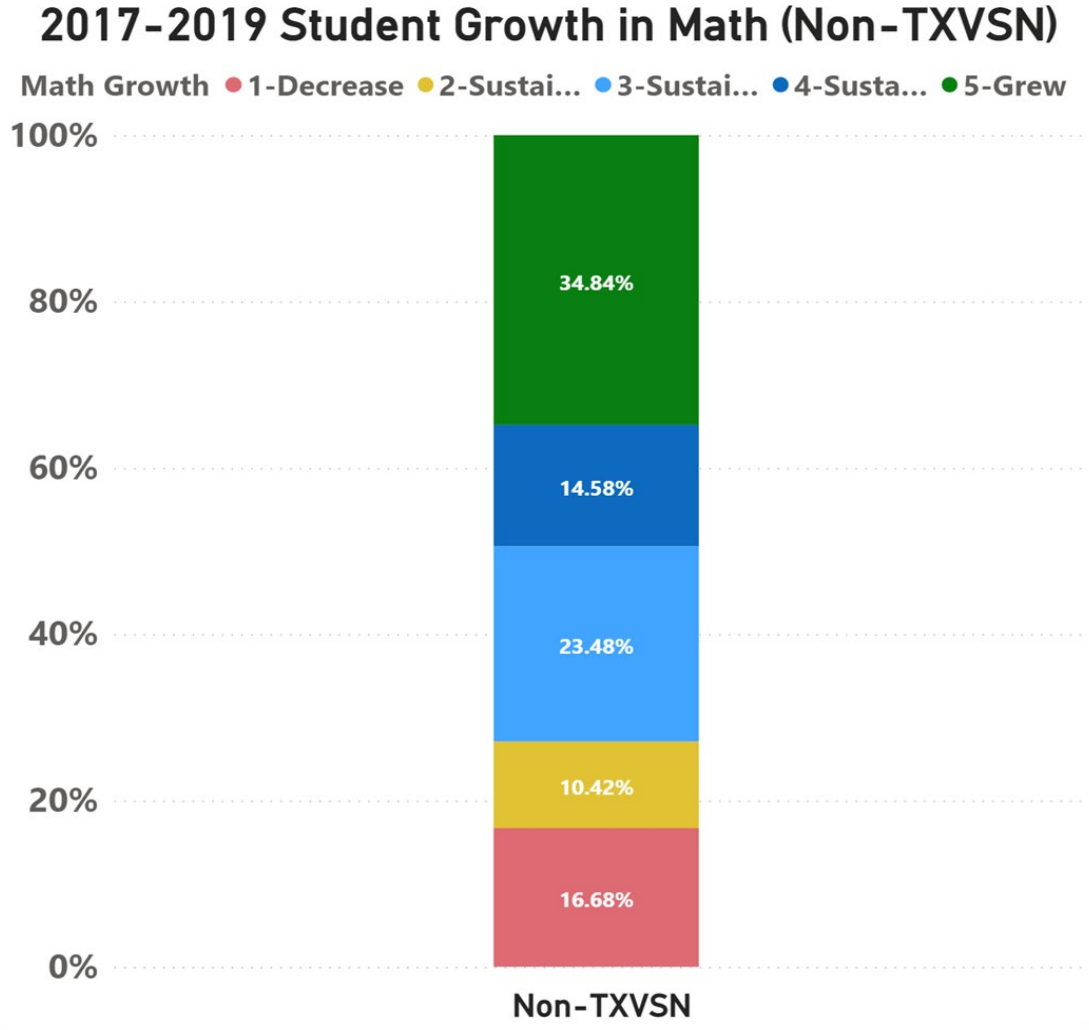
TXVSN full-time online school enrollments increased 64.5% in the past two years



Data Source: PEIMS and 2021-2022 September attendance

TXVSN students have historically failed to gain a year's worth of academic growth per year at higher rates than non-TXVSN students (math)





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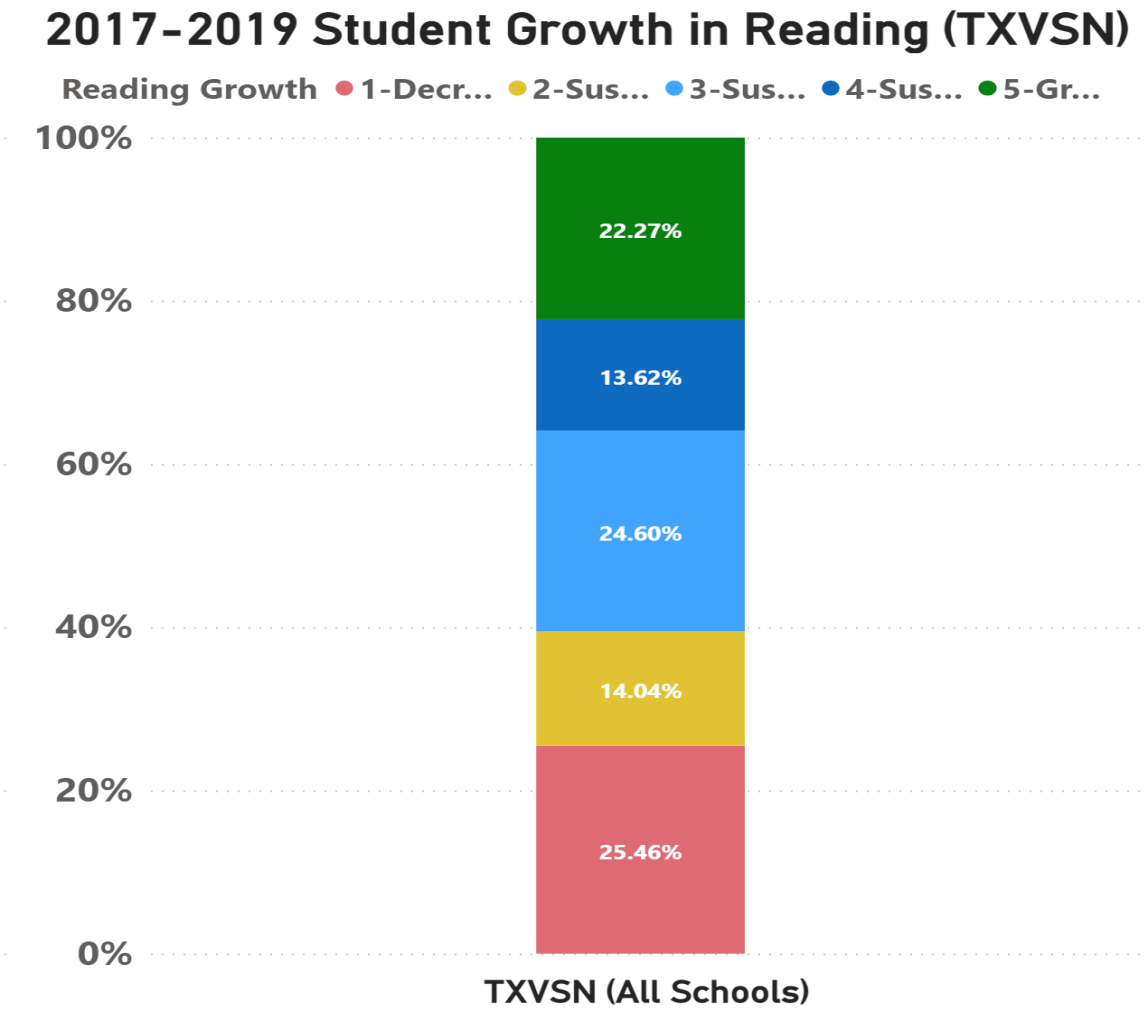
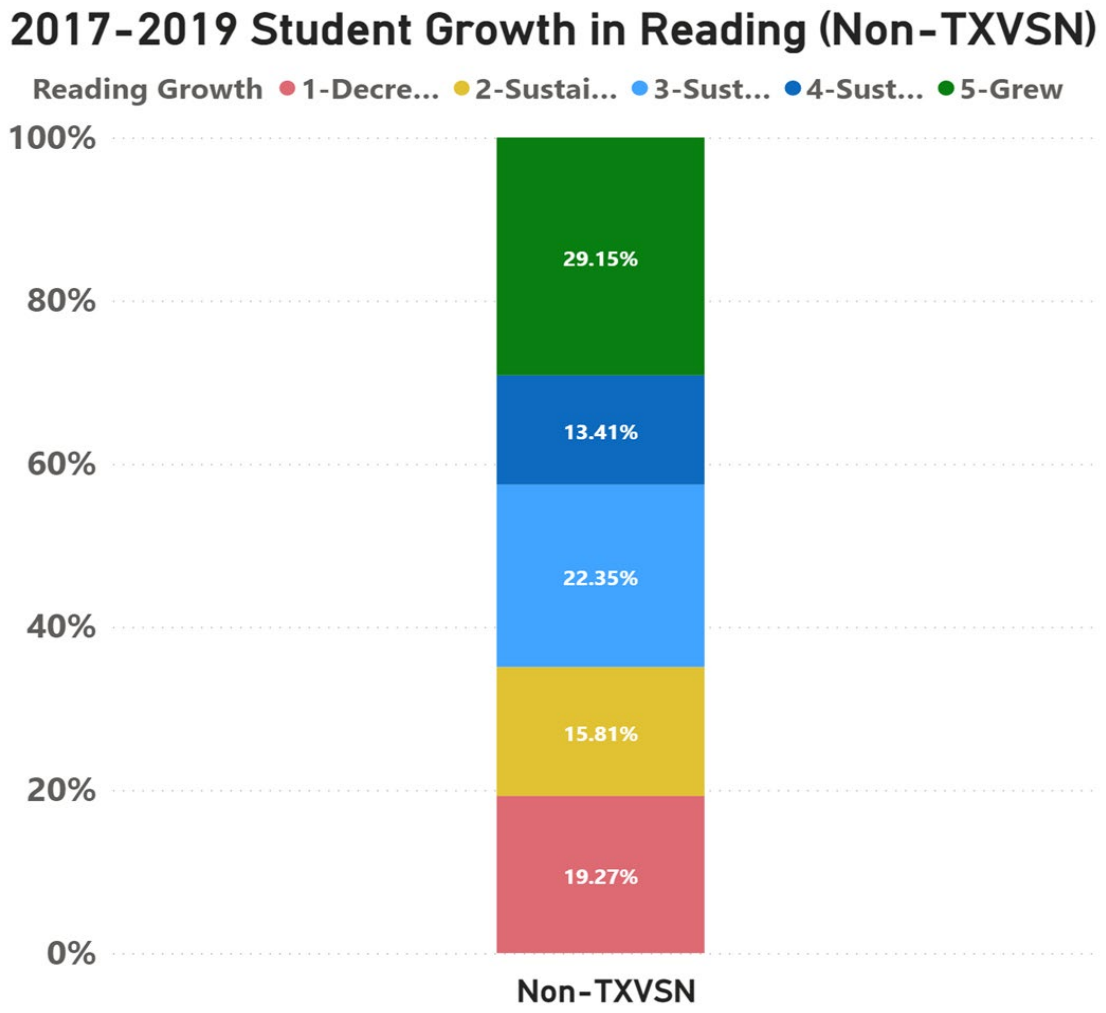
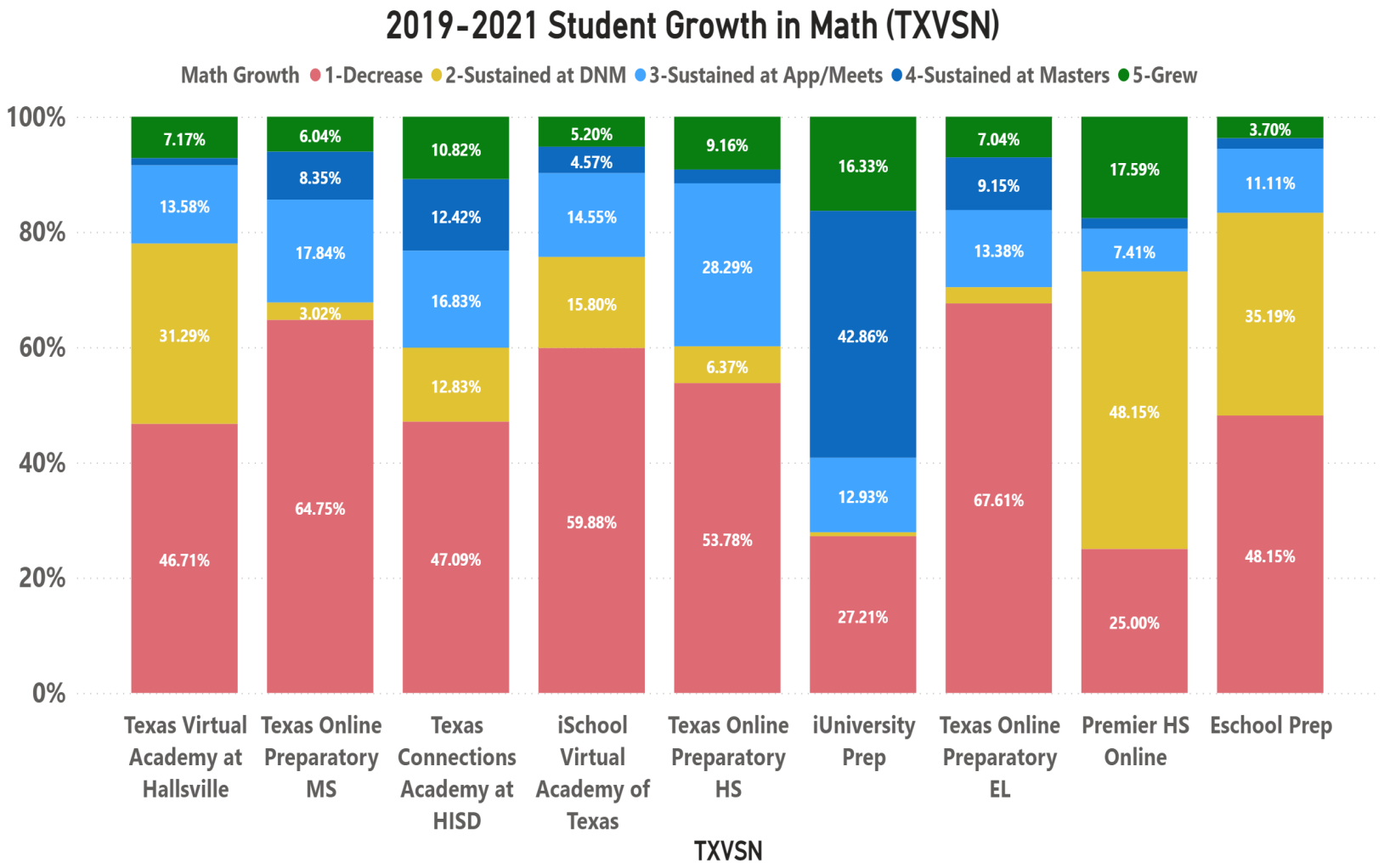
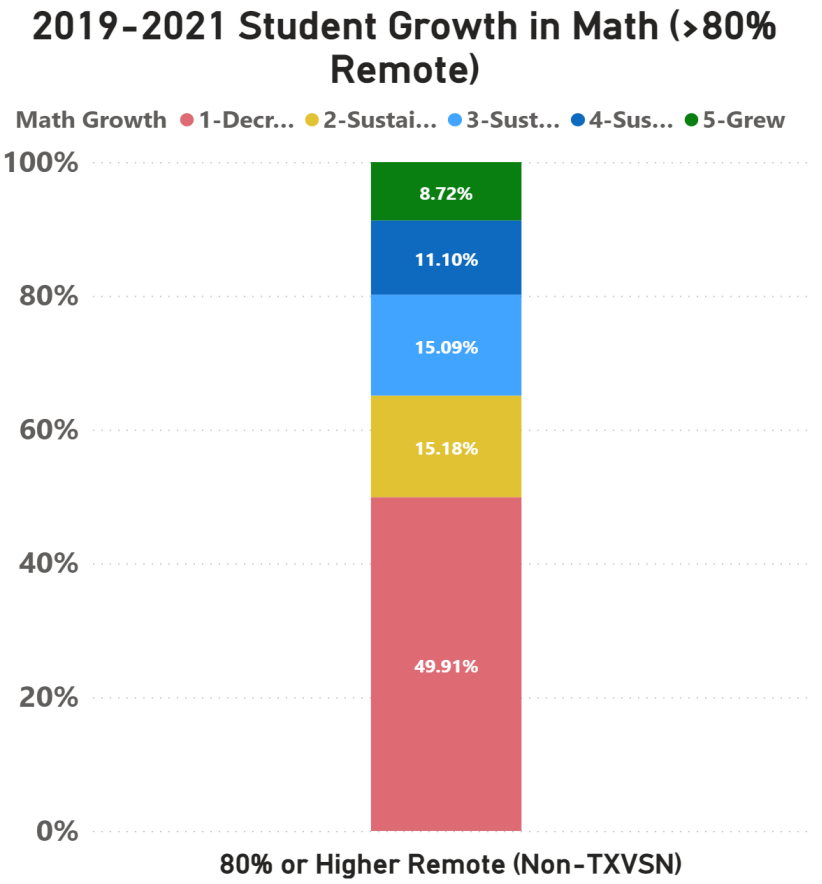


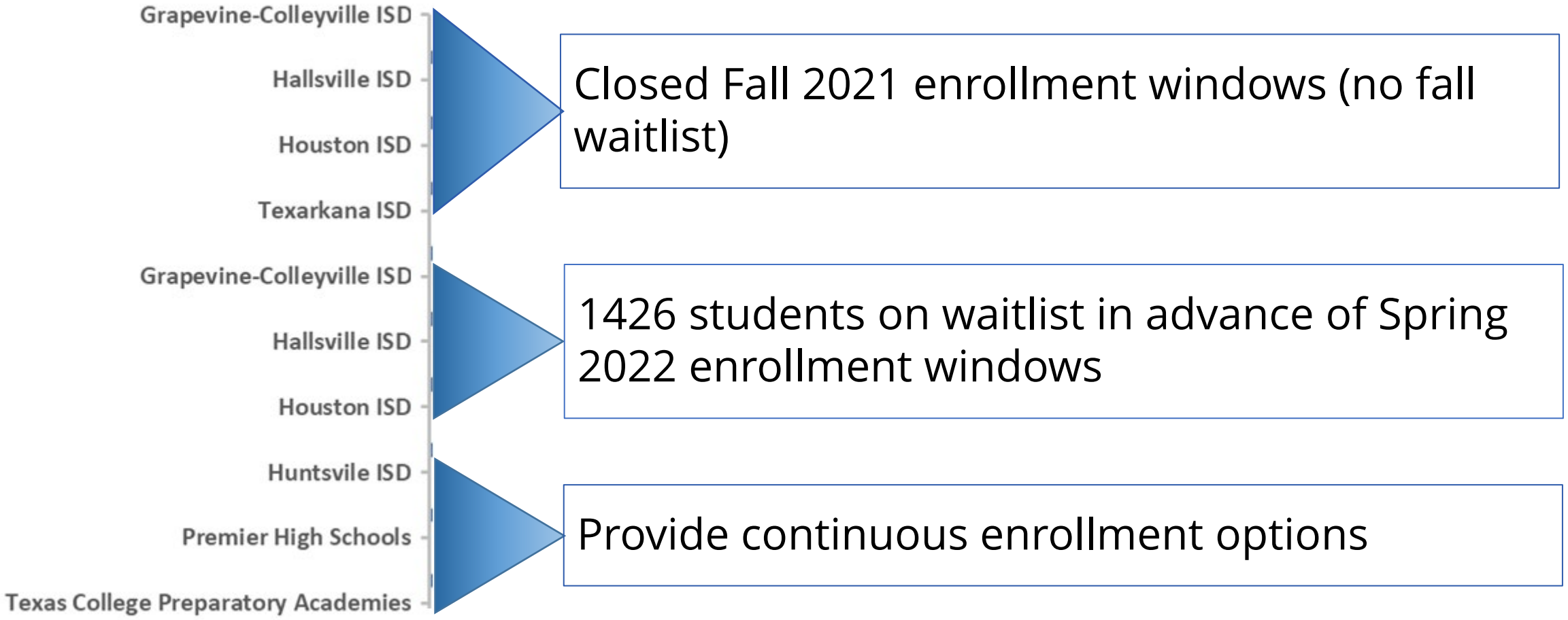


Detail: TXVSN longitudinal student growth varies significantly by school





Detail: TXVSN schools have different enrollment windows



Data Source: TXVSN OLS Survey, November 4, 2021

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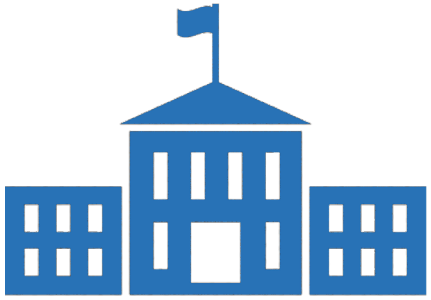
TXVSN Course Catalog – How it works

Catalog Provider

- Offers TEA-approved high school or dual credit courses through catalog
- Provides certified and trained instructor
- Provides LMS and support
- Sets course fee up to $400/student



District or Charter School

- Selects courses and enrolls students
- Awards credit
- Benefits for LEAs
  - Course choice
  - Schedule flexibility
  - Credit advancement or recovery
  - Personalized instruction
  - Teacher shortages

Enrolled Student

- Participates in course
  - Synchronous
  - Asynchronous
  - Combination
- Receives mentoring and support from local school

Completion

- Fee based on student success
  - Success 100%
  - Not successful 70%

TXVSN student-facing and professional development courses must meet key requirements

TXVSN courses must meet the following course requirements for a course to be offered in a TXVSN online school or TXVSN course catalog.

1. Course must meet the definition of a TXVSN course as defined in Texas Education Code (TEC), Chapter 30, including emphasis on extensive communication between student and teacher and among students.
2. Meet 100% of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) state curriculum standards and corresponding breakouts.
3. Meet 100% of the Texas Content Quality Measures.
4. Meet 100% of the NSQ National Standards of Quality for Online Courses .
5. Meet current federal accessibility requirements listed in Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, including requirements for creating accessible digital products and websites.

TXVSN professional development courses must meet the following course requirements to be included in the TXVSN professional development offerings.

1. Meet 100% of the NSQ National Standards For Quality Online Teaching.
2. Meet current federal accessibility requirements listed in Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, including requirements for creating accessible digital products and websites.

Recall: Each data set provides insights, but also carries limitations for drawing policy conclusions

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Virtual Course Offerings Independent of VSN

TEA currently provides Texas College Bridge via virtual delivery

TexasCollegeBridge

Students are prepared for entry-level college coursework in English language arts and mathematics.

Texas College Bridge provides options for the HB5 College Preparatory Courses

All Texas public school LEAs can access:

- ✓ **No-cost**, **online**, adaptive **college preparatory course curriculum** for HB 5 College Preparatory **English language arts** and **mathematics** (EdReady).
- ✓ **Competency-based progression** aligned with college readiness exams like ACT and SAT
- ✓ **Dashboards** to **monitor** and adjust student **progress.**
- ✓ **Professional development** for teacher facilitators, district coordinators, and counselors/advisors.
- ✓ **Student-facing college** and **career** planning **tools**, **activities**, and trackers.

As a Texas College Bridge grantee LEAs will receive:

- ✓ **Funding** to **implement** program **locally.** Funding may be used for**:**
  - ✓ **teacher stipends** for successful student completion (up to $100 per student per subject).
  - ✓ **counselor stipends** for student completion of counseling/advising online modules (up to $100 per student).
  - ✓ **TSIA testing** for participating students ($8 per student).
- ✓ **Flexibility** in program **implementation**
- ✓ **Access** to **all** supports **available** to any Texas public school.

LEAs have already been accessing the Texas College Bridge online courses

336 LEAs	**75** Colleges
9,445 Active English students	**11,146** Active Mathematics students

- Completion certifications earned by Texas students
  - English: **3,566**
  - Mathematics: **5,181**
- LEAs from **every** Education Service Center Region are **participating**
  - Urban
  - Suburban
  - Small
  - Rural

The College Bridge points to the potential of virtual education providing access to specialized courses, for example, AP courses, that LEAs across the state may not be able to readily provide (for example, rural LEAs). The potential for virtual education to be used for this purpose might be a consideration for this Commission.

Q&A

Agenda

Chair Opening Remarks & Introductions

State of Virtual Education in Texas

Operation Connectivity

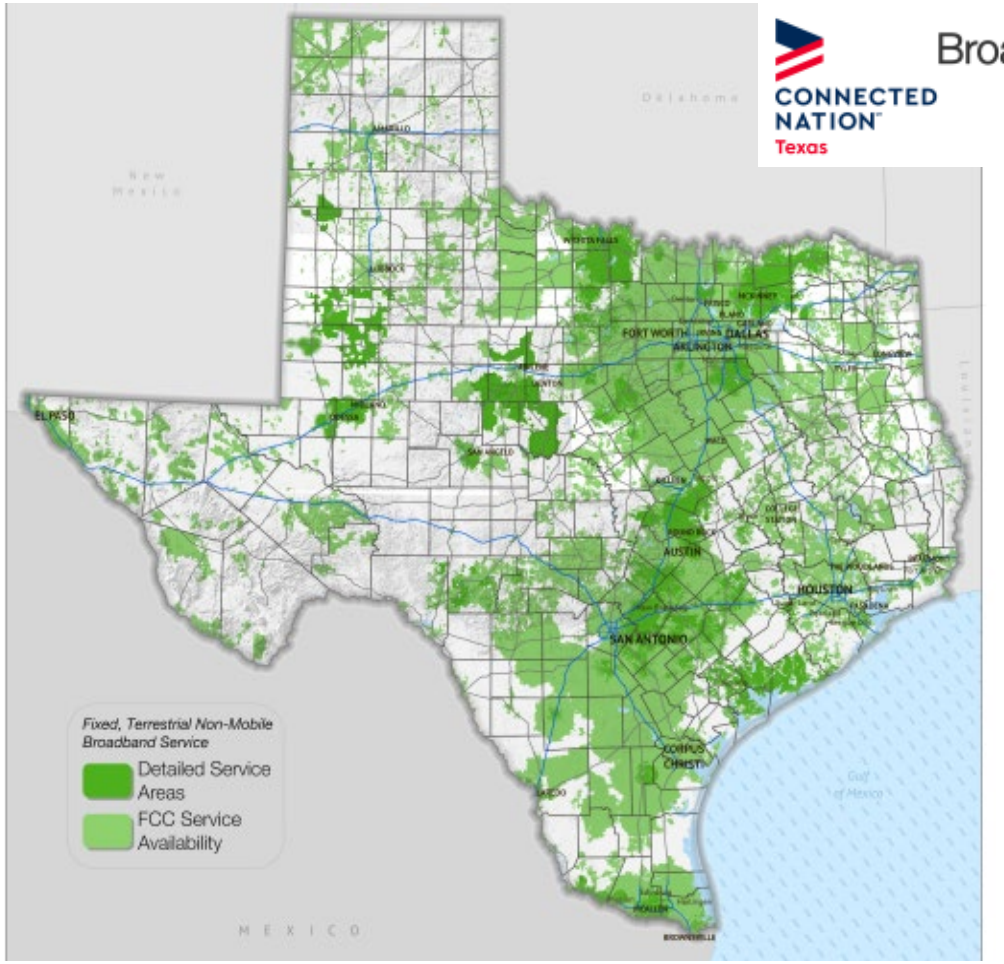
Next Steps

Texas Education Agency

Overview of Operation Connectivity

January 2022

In early 2020, Texas faced sizable device access and connectivity gaps, especially in rural areas

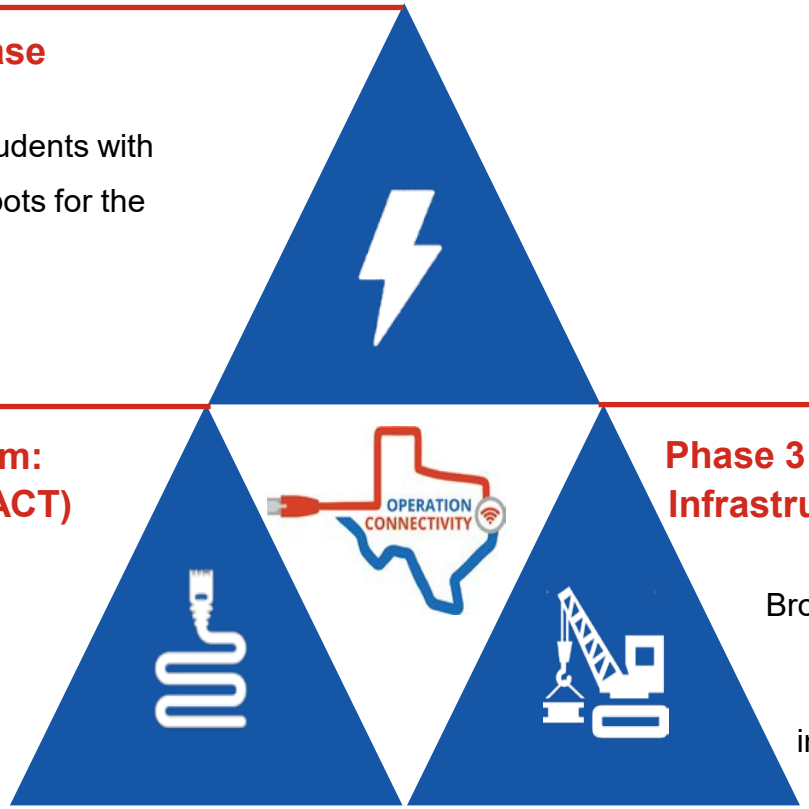


*Map published by Connected nation on 01/31/2022 and can be accessed at the following link: https://connectednation.org/texas/state-maps/

Operation Connectivity was established in May 2020 by Governor Abbott to address connectivity gaps

Phase 1: Bulk Purchase

Immediately connecting students with learning devices and hotspots for the 2020-2021 school year



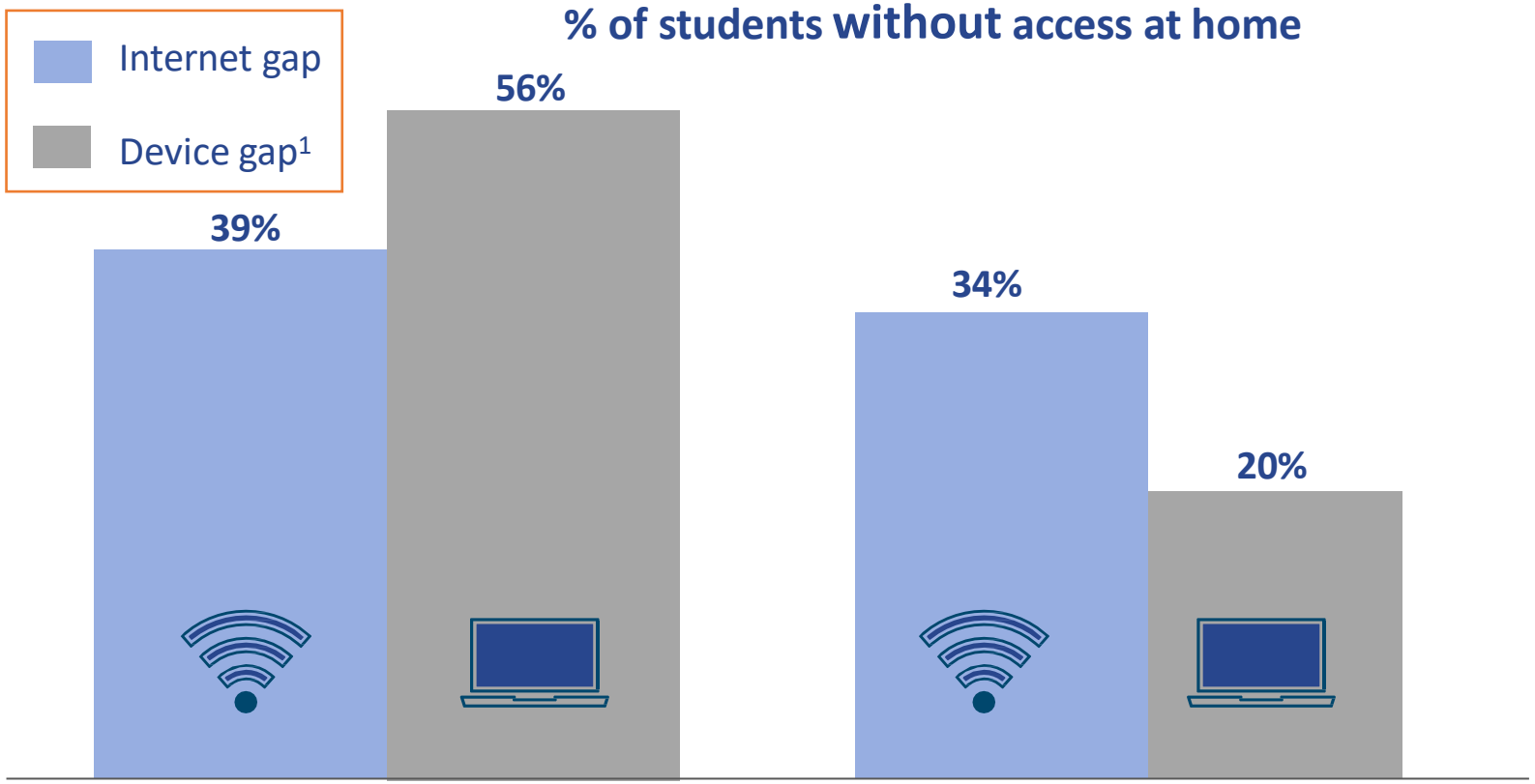
Phase 2: Medium-Term: TEA Connect TX (TEACT)

Connecting students to reliable and affordable internet within existing infrastructure

Phase 3: Long-Term: Broadband Infrastructure Development

Working with the Texas Broadband Development Office to close the remaining gap for students in areas where infrastructure does not currently exist

Operation Connectivity conducted a survey in July 2020 in preparation for OCs Bulk Purchase Program and Texas' students demonstrated far greater need than the national average



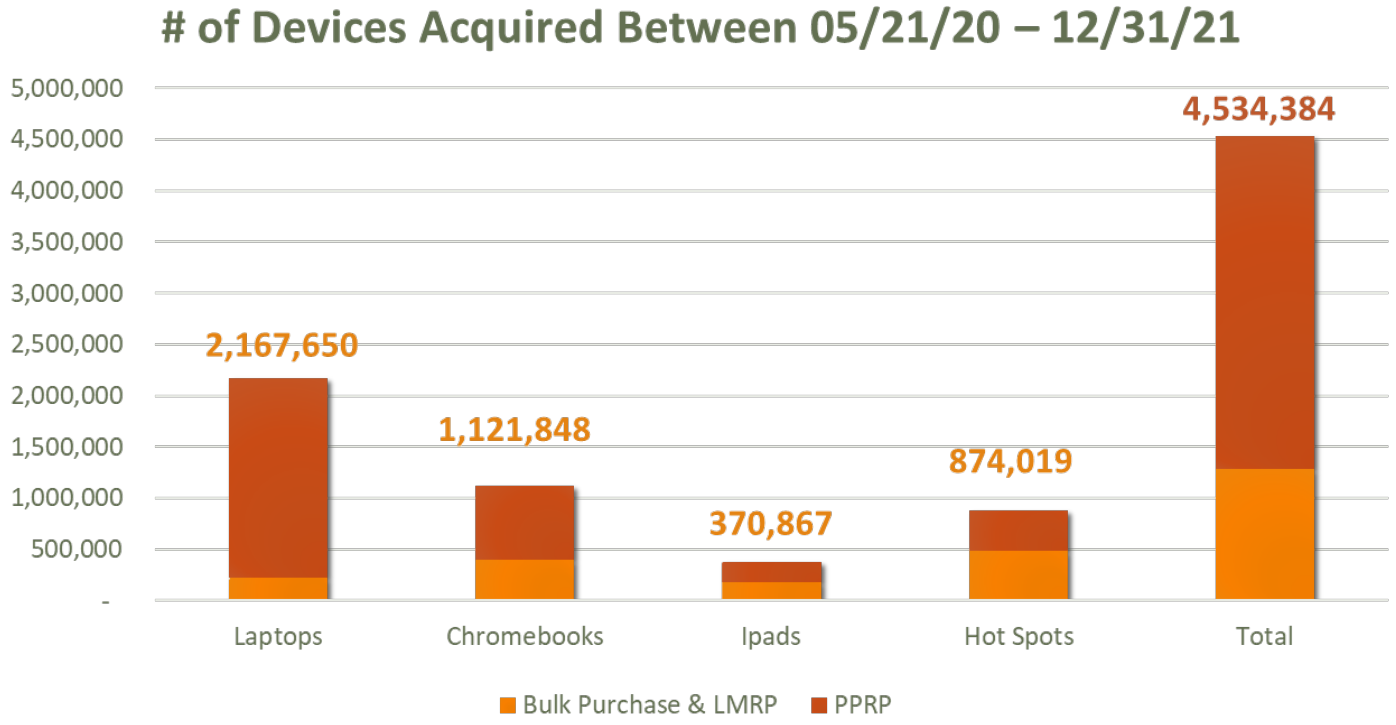
1.8 to 2.0 million Texas Students Lacked Broadband Before the Onset of COVID19

2.9 to 3.1 million Texas Students Lacked E-Learning Devices Capable of Synchronous Learning in Before the Onset of COVID19

Community Survey, filtered for Texas 4. Total estimated student need calculated by applying percent of Texas students without both broadband or laptop/tablet to total enrollment in

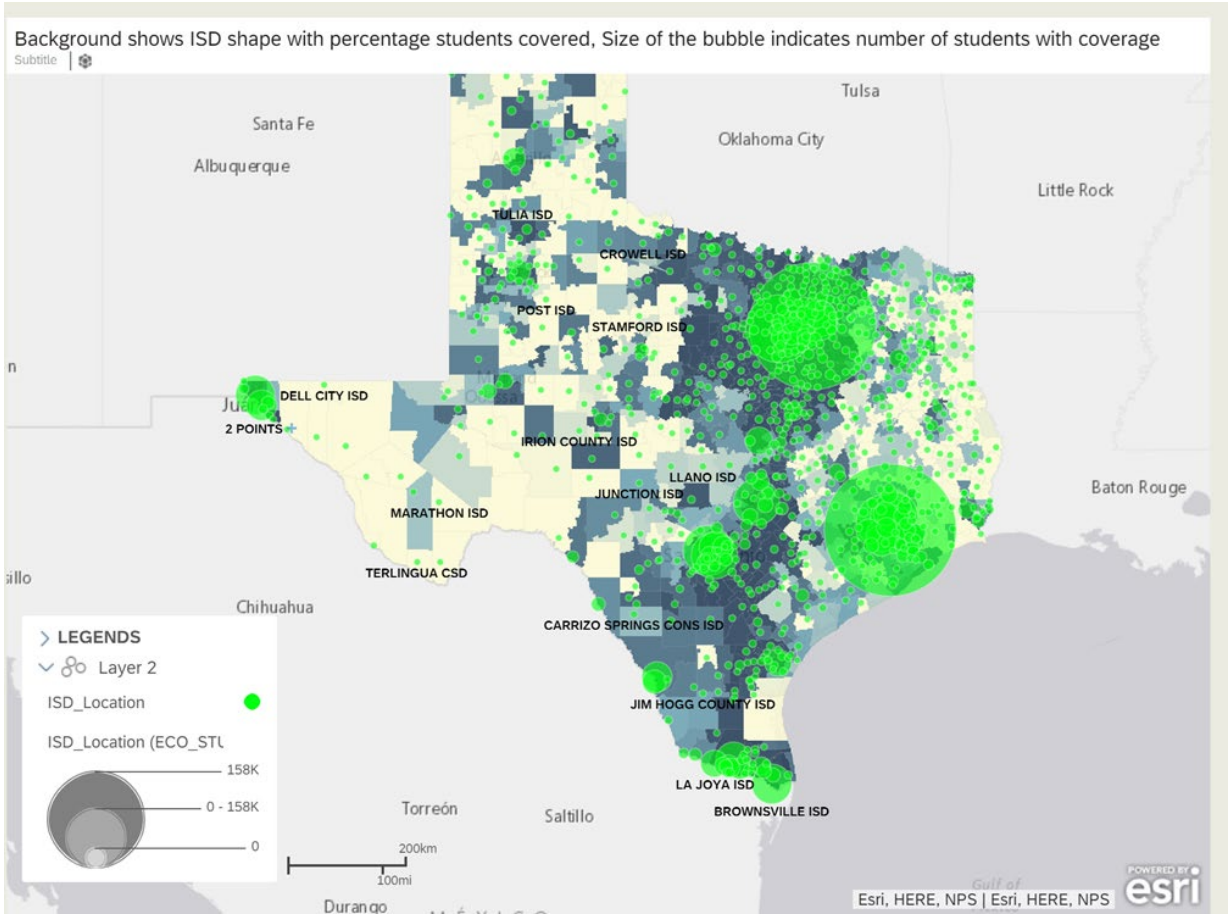
Operation Connectivity Phase 1: Summary Impact of Operation Connectivity Bulk Purchase and Reimbursement Programs Totaling $1 Billion Invested

- In Phase 1 of OC **3.6 Million E-learning devices** and **874,019 hotspots** were distributed to economically disadvantaged students across Texas
- 821 LEAs participated in OCs Phase 1
- 56% of participating LEAs were rural
- **At the conclusion of Phase 1, enough devices were distributed to provide 1:1 device access to all economically disadvantaged students across the state**



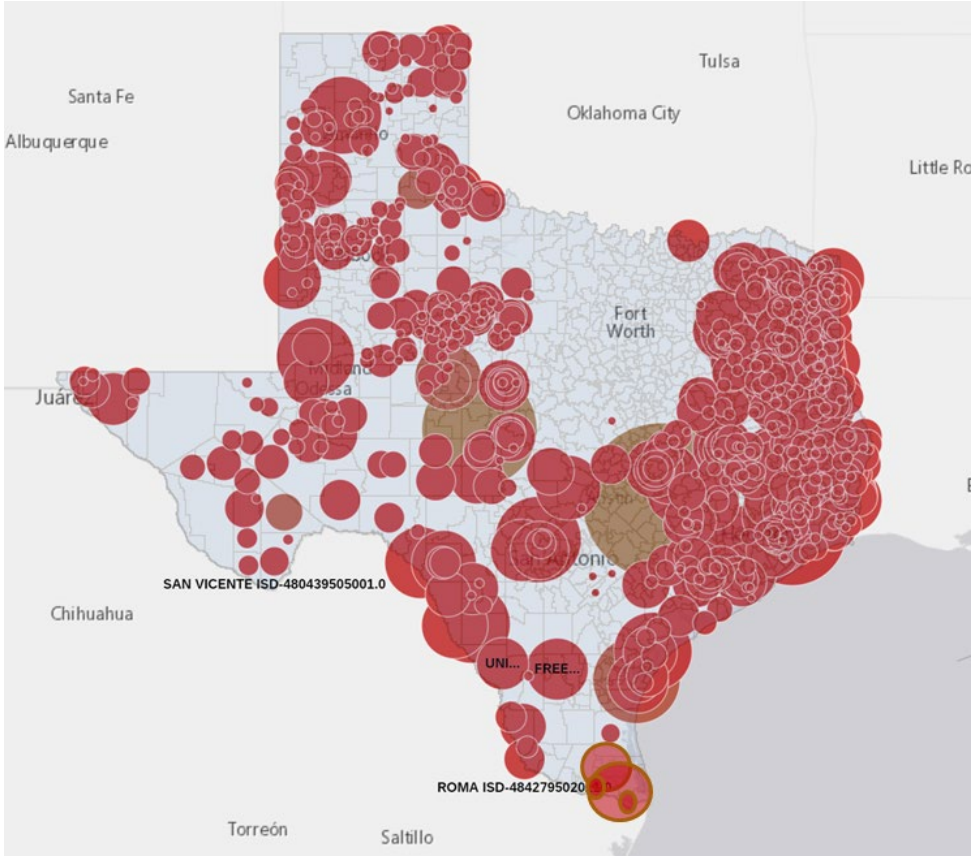
Operation Connectivity Phase 2: Summary Impact of Operation Connectivity's Phase 2 Program TEA Connect Texas (TEACT)

- OC's Phase 2 mapping demonstrated that over 2 million economically disadvantaged students have access to commercially available broadband at home, but that only a small % can afford it
- Through the TEACT program, OC partnered with 14 ISPs to facilite the bulk purchase of fixed lines by LEAs for installation in student households
- To date **111,412** lines have been ordered by LEAs, totaling **$26,498,443**
- **19,365** households have signed-up for service to date
- **6,099** installations are scheduled or completed



Operation Connectivity Phase 3: Supporting the Broadband Development Office's infrastructure investments

- Given the passage of HB 5 (87th Legislative Session), the Comptroller now administers the Broadband Development Office.
- Operation Connectivity has identified several regions with low rates of broadband access where pilot infrastructure projects are under discussion, and is working to ensure those projects are submitted to the BDO for consideration.



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Rex Gore

Chairman

Virtual Education Commission

Next Commission Meeting:

March 30, 2022

Contact Information

Please direct all questions to

VirtualEducationCommission@tea.Texas.gov