

The logo for the Texas Education Agency (TEA), featuring the letters 'TEA' in a bold, white, sans-serif font with a stylized white arrow pointing upwards and to the right, set against a blue background.The 'STRONG START' logo, consisting of the words 'STRONG' and 'START' in a bold, white, sans-serif font, positioned over a circular graphic with orange and blue segments.

2020-21

Preparing for Remote Instruction



Where to find this document:

<https://tea.texas.gov/coronavirus>

- Waivers, Finance & Grants

Keeping Students, Educators, and Staff Safe is Our First Priority

COVID-19 is a major disruption. But if we make certain operational adjustments, we will create an environment where students can safely learn on-campus by significantly reducing the risk of viral spread on campus.

Our collective goal is to safely maximize learning opportunities for students, and we know on-campus instruction is likely the best option for most.



The COVID Slide is Real

Especially for students from low-income families

But not necessarily for those from high incomes

We must ensure that **remote instruction** is delivered as effectively as we possibly can, for all of our students.

In the United States, as of May 24 2020, students from low income ZIP codes decreased progress in online math coursework by **55.6%** compared to January 2020.



Data from students using Zearn, an online math coursework system, on how much student progress occurred relative to normal

[Opportunity Insights, Economic Tracker](#), June 2020



**We cannot allow this public
health crisis to become a
generational education crisis**

Two Major Collective Challenges

Keep school safe in the time of COVID by making operational adjustments



Re-engineer the school experience so students reach high academic outcomes, with the same or better proficiency in 2021 as they did pre-COVID



Keep School Safe



Re-Engineer the School Experience



This presentation describes the **framework** to accomplish this, and the **supports** from TEA to help any district that wants the help to make these changes happen.

Framework

1. Public Health Guidance
2. Remote Instruction Attendance Considerations
3. Calendar Considerations

Supports

4. Instructional Planning
5. Statewide Supports from TEA

Public Health Guidance



See:
Public Health Guidance
at <https://tea.texas.gov/coronavirus>
in Public Health Orders

Remote Instruction Attendance Considerations



For details, see:
SY 2020-21 Attendance and Enrollment FAQ
at <https://tea.texas.gov/coronavirus>
in Waivers, Finance and Grants

Transitioning from Crisis Response

- In the immediate crisis response, a significant number of statutory requirements were waived, as we transitioned to ***providing instructional support*** as opposed to ***providing instruction***. Of note:
 - Schools no longer needed to take daily attendance to get funding.
- This crisis response was necessary, but, when considering the longer term of a full school year, we need a framework that funds schools to ***provide instruction***.
- In crafting this attendance framework, we have attempted to balance the need of our school systems for flexibility to generate predictable funding with the need of taxpayers for accountability that instruction is being provided to students.

Making an ADA System Accommodate Remote Instruction

- The school finance system revolves entirely around the concept of funding average daily attendance (ADA), with requirements:
 1. that schools operate for a minimum of 75,600 minutes over the year; and
 2. students receive a minimum of 4 hours of daily instruction to generate full-day funding.
- TEA has reviewed the legislative framework for remote instruction (the Texas Virtual School Network or TXVSN). It includes two provisions that helped inform TEA proposed rule-making:
 - a. School systems must submit their TXVSN virtual courses to TEA for approval prior to being eligible for funding, to ensure some minimal quality in a remote setting.
 - b. No virtual courses are funded below 3rd grade through the TXVSN.

Making an ADA System Accommodate Remote Instruction

- TEA will use its waiver authority to provide districts with new options for determining daily attendance.
- TEA has attempted to craft a framework that provides **maximum grace** to allow time to transition for the new school year while maximizing funding stability.
- All changes will only apply for the 2020-21 year. More permanent changes related to remote instruction policy will be decided by the legislature.

There are two new methods to fund remote instruction:

Method A

- **Synchronous Instruction** - Requires all participants to be present at the same time, virtually
- Examples: Live interactive classes with students and teachers participating real-time, teacher supported work time on video conference calls, scheduled and timed online tests

Method B

- **Asynchronous Instruction** - Does not require all participants to be virtually present at the same time
- Examples: Self-paced online courses with intermittent teacher instruction, pre-assigned work with formative assessments on paper or in LMS, watching pre-recorded videos of instruction with guided support



Both instructional delivery formats must cover the required curriculum per TEC, §28.002.



Method A: Synchronous instruction is very similar to “on campus”

- Defined as two-way, real-time, live, instruction between teachers and students, through the computer or other electronic devices or over the phone
- Must address the required curriculum per TEC, §28.002
- Students logged in at the teacher’s documented official attendance time are marked present for that day but would be documented as “Present-Remote Synchronous” in SIS for PEIMS reporting
- Students who are not logged in at the teacher’s documented official attendance time are marked absent
- Teachers take and post attendance on a specific schedule, just as with on-campus ADA



Method A: Synchronous instruction is very similar to “on campus”

- A minimum number of daily minutes are required to earn **full-day funding**
 - 3rd through 5th grade – 180 instructional minutes
 - 6th through 12th grade – 240 instructional minutes
 - PK - 2nd grade are not eligible to earn funding through the synchronous model. (School systems could support these grades via the asynchronous method.)
- Daily instructional minutes need not be consecutive
- Time students spend in work-based learning opportunities can be included in the daily instructional minute calculation; these include internships, externships, apprenticeships, and mentorships
- For half-day ADA FSP funding, divide the full-day minute requirements in half
- School grading policies for remote student work must be consistent with those used before COVID-19 for on campus assignments



Method A: Synchronous instruction is very similar to “on campus”

- Synchronous ADA method is being established as a Commissioner waiver
- LEAs must submit an attestation that they are prepared to offer synchronous instruction before funding will flow for synchronous attendance
- Districts must post the attestation on their website once it has been made
- Attestation checklist is available on the [TEA COVID-19 website](#)
- Checklist components likely to include components like:
 - Ensuring teachers are trained to deliver remote instruction on the district’s chosen platform
 - Ensuring teachers have practiced delivering a synchronous instruction lesson
 - Ensuring there is tech support available to troubleshoot student access issues



Method B: Asynchronous instruction involves far more self-guided student instruction

- Defined as a curricular experience where students engage in the learning materials on their own time, interacting intermittently with the teacher via the computer, other electronic devices, or over the phone
- Must address the required curriculum per TEC, §28.002
- Eligible for all grades
- School grading policies for remote student work must be consistent with those used before COVID-19 for on-campus assignments



Method B: Asynchronous instruction involves far more self-guided student instruction

- Will generate **full-day funding** for each day “engaged,” assuming (for secondary) that a student isn’t scheduled to participate in less than a half-day's worth of courses
- Staff should check daily for student “engagement.” If students are engaged for the day, they would be marked as “Present-Remote Asynchronous” in SIS for PEIMS
- Students who are not “engaged” that day are marked absent
- “Engaged” means any of these three occur:
 - Progress (as defined in the approved learning plan) in the Learning Management System (LMS) made that day
 - Progress (as defined in the approved learning plan) from teacher/student interactions made that day
 - Turn-in of assignment(s) that day



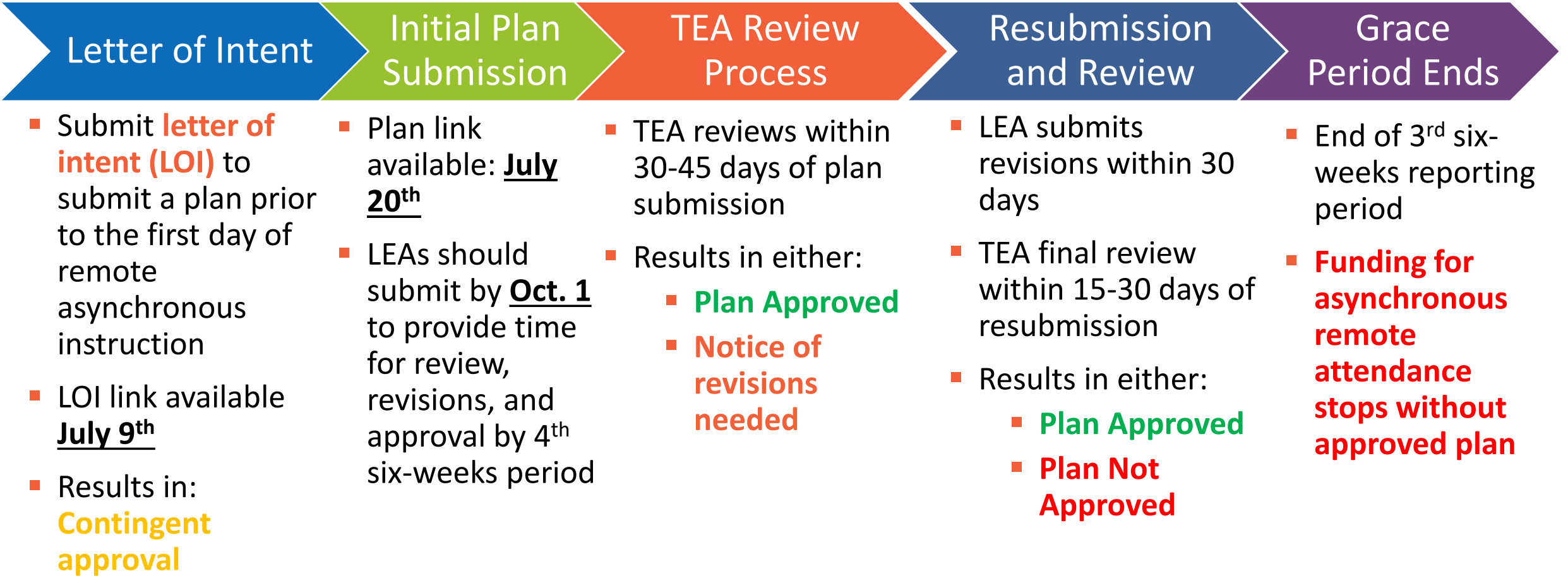
Method B: Asynchronous instruction involves far more self-guided student instruction

- Asynchronous ADA method is being established as a Commissioner waiver
- LEAs must apply to receive the waiver, by submitting a plan to TEA for approval
- Plans must address four key requirements:
 - **Instructional Schedule:** Expectations for when and in what setting students are learning--loosely equivalent to an on-campus instructional day
 - **Material Design:** Curriculum must be designed for asynchronous student learning
 - **Student Progress:** Daily student progress is defined and measured
 - **Implementation:** The LEA must provide educators with support to provide remote instruction
- Plans must be posted online for parents to see
- Plans can include differentiation by grade and subject, but only one plan allowed per LEA
- LEAs can submit a letter of intent to begin claiming asynchronous attendance.
Asynchronous will be funded **for up to the first three six-week periods**, even if plans aren't approved during that period, to provide maximum grace while systems adjust





Method B: LEAs must submit an asynchronous letter of intent and will enter a grace period through the end of the 3rd Six-Weeks FSP Period



Method C: TXVSN Remains an Option



- Funding is all or nothing based on successful course completion (defined as passing the course or subject).
- There are two TXVSN paths – full time vs. individual high school (HS) courses.
- Full Time:
 - There are a limited number of full-time, virtual schools authorized for full funding in the TXVSN.
 - Other districts that wish to offer full-time virtual instruction under the completion model can do so if they meet all TXVSN requirements, but under statute can only be funded for up to 3 courses (i.e., half-day funding).
- Individual HS Courses:
 - The TXVSN statute includes the ability for school systems to contract with authorized TXVSN course providers to offer up to three high school courses while remaining enrolled in their own school.
 - This could help LEAs offer a hybrid experience, with students on campus for several classes and off campus for others.
 - These students generate daily attendance via normal on-campus participation for the remainder of their schedule.

Stable Funding with Expectations for Student Instruction

- School systems have uncertainty over how long it will take to implement these practices.
- To stabilize funding expectations, school systems will be provided an **ADA grace period** for the first two six-weeks (of FSP reporting) to allow time for us to collectively adjust. Specifically, if ADA counts during those two six-weeks are more than 1% less than the first two six-weeks last year, the **first two six-weeks will be excluded** from 2020-21 ADA calculations. Some restrictions apply. See the FAQ for more specifics.
- In addition to this ADA grace period, school systems also have the **attendance grace period** for asynchronous plan approval, which continues through the end of the **third six-weeks**.
- Remote instruction has never been funded before, outside the TXVSN. The proposed framework fully funds remote instruction for every LEA using statutory waiver authority, but that commitment to full funding has been made contingent on a system of student-focused checks and balances as outlined in this document:
 - Daily on campus instruction is provided
 - Daily attendance is being taken
 - Remote student work is being graded consistent with on campus practices
 - Academic accountability returns in 2020-21
 - For asynchronous – daily student progress with academic content is occurring
 - For asynchronous – LEAs must have approved plans to deliver instruction in a way that works asynchronously

Generating ADA for Remote Instruction

- LEAs can require parents who choose remote to remain remote for up to one full grading cycle (i.e, a six-week period) if it is in the best educational interest of the child.
- Except as noted below, on-campus instruction must be provided for all grades served every day for all students whose parents want them to attend on campus, in order for an LEA to be eligible to receive funding for remote instruction any day.
 - For any day a campus is ordered closed, remote instruction will be funded.
 - For any day an LEA closes a campus as a result of a confirmed COVID-19 case on campus, remote instruction will be funded, subject to the following:
 - To allow sufficient time to resolve the public health concerns, campuses may remain closed for up to 5 days to on-campus instruction while drawing funding for all students participating in remote instruction.
 - During the first three weeks of the school year, LEAs can limit access to on-campus instruction (for example, 25% of a campus' normal occupancy for the first week, only certain grades or classes, or fully virtual). Students who do not have access to Internet or devices at home for remote learning must be allowed on campus (even if otherwise fully virtual during this period).
 - LEAs are permitted to offer a hybrid instructional model (less than daily on-campus attendance) for those students who choose it, as long as a daily on campus option is also available for all parents who want it.
 - Full-time TXVSN campuses may be fully remote, as allowed by statute.

Should You Adjust Your Instructional Calendar?

- School calendars are locally controlled, not subject to TEA approval.
- Schools must offer 75,600 operational minutes to be fully funded.
- If you must close to on-campus instruction for COVID-19, as long as you offer remote synchronous or remote asynchronous instruction on days your campus is closed, those days will count toward your operational minutes requirements at the same number of minutes as your on-campus schedule would have been. Alternatively, you may use bad weather make-up days, but you may need more than the normal amount of days.
- **TEA will not issue missed school day** waivers for COVID-19 closure days to districts that do not offer remote instruction.
- **TEA will not issue low attendance** waivers for COVID-19 closure days, unless you can meet the 75,600 minutes without the low attendance days.
- For consideration: At this date, for those that want to add more time for on-campus instruction for students, adding time to the end of the calendar likely makes more sense than starting sooner, given all of the operational changes you need to implement for the start of school and where we are in the year. **Similarly, if you need more time to implement necessary remote instruction or-campus operational plans, you have legal flexibility, in light of the health crisis, to delay the start of school, if such a change is prudent in your local context.**
 - Note: STAAR testing windows are [extended a month](#).

Instructional Planning



Two Major Collective Challenges

Keep school safe in the time of COVID by making operational adjustments



Re-engineer the school experience so students reach high academic outcomes, with the same or better proficiency in 2021 as they did pre-COVID



Two Major Collective Challenges

Re-engineer the school experience so students reach high academic outcomes, with the same or better proficiency in 2021 as they did pre-COVID



- What changes can we make **now**
- to **curriculum & instructional practices**
- to ensure we accelerate learning, making up for any COVID slide,
- and come out of 2020-21 academically stronger than we did pre-COVID

In adjusting C&I practices to meet student and community needs...

Districts must provide a daily on-campus learning option

Districts may, depending on local context, provide additional learning options

On Campus

Remote

Hybrid

Students and families will choose how they “attend” school...

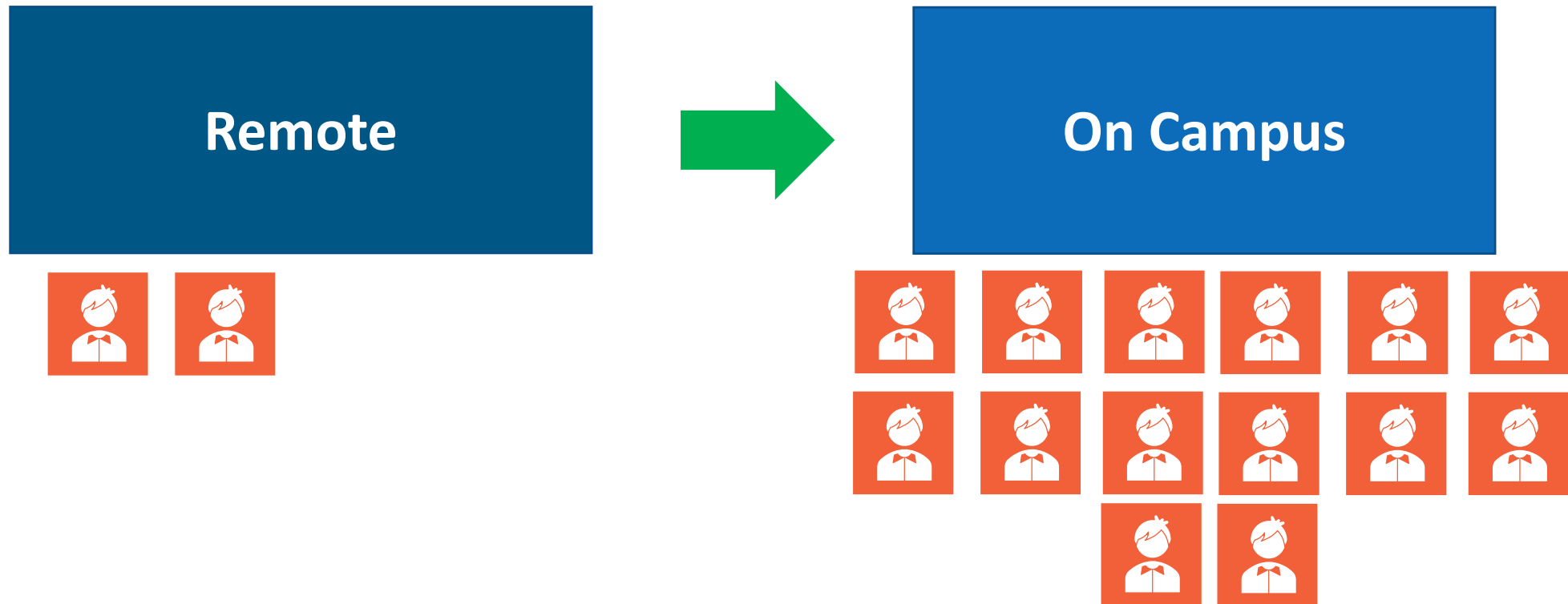
Student plans to participate in on-campus instruction 100% of the time

Student plans to participate in remote learning 100% of the time

Student plans to participate in an intentionally designed mix of on-campus and remote learning

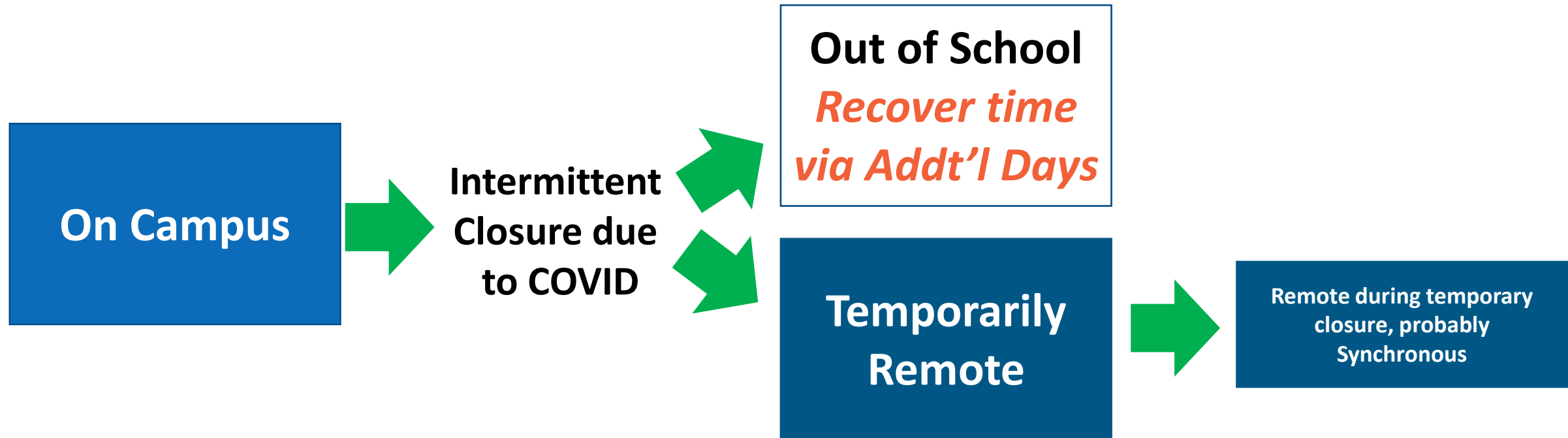
All options should be developed with contingencies in mind

There may some students who elect to begin the year in remote learning who eventually decide to transition to on-campus learning.
(LEAs can restrict transitions back to on campus to occur at the end of a grading period)



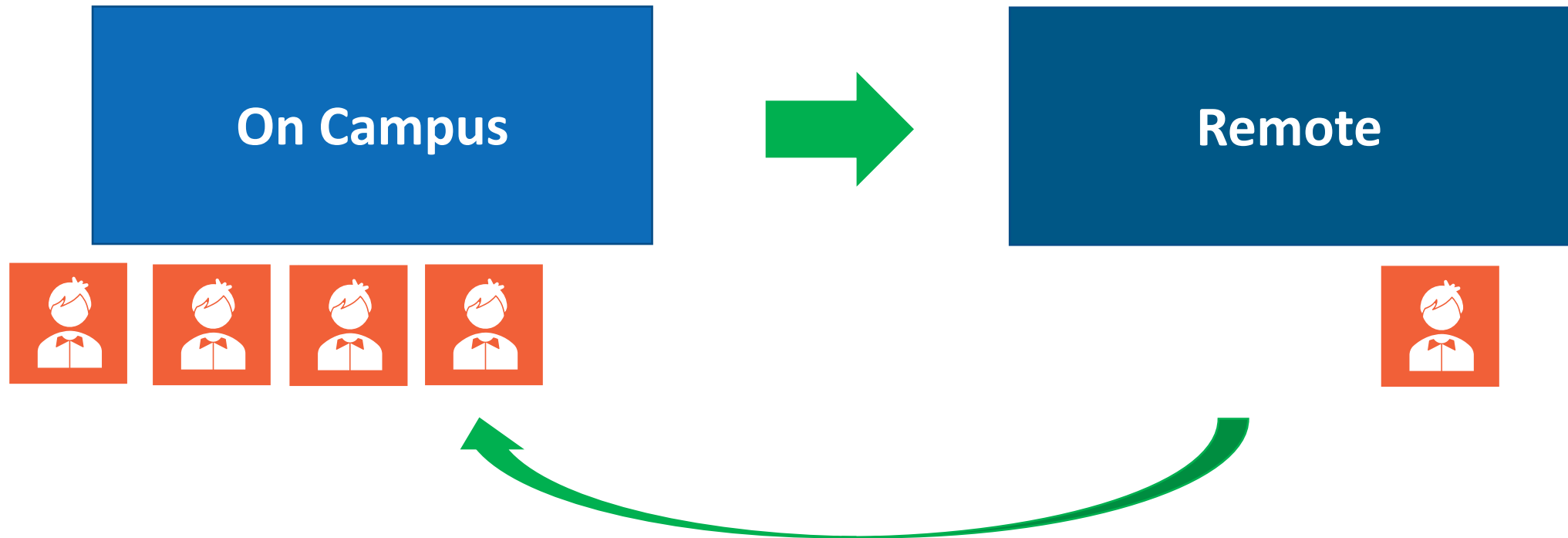
All options should be developed with contingencies in mind

On-campus instruction may experience intermittent closure



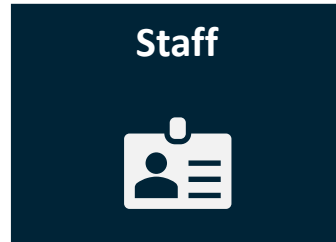
All options should be developed with contingencies in mind

Some of those students in schools who experience intermittent closures may elect to go remote full time



And then some of them may elect to return to on campus as they confirm they are safe

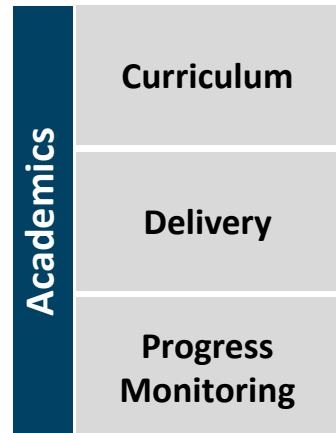
An intentionally designed hybrid model may make sense in some contexts



- **Split staffing model**
- Leverage teacher strengths across:
 - Environment: On-campus v. remote
 - Instruction type: Large scale v. small group



- Additional days school year planned to account for intermittent closures
- Student schedules that allow for asynchronous learning (whether on or off-site)
- Specific days for small group support and intervention



- Instructional materials intentionally selected for quality, rigor, and ability to span remote and on campus
- Mix of synchronous & asynchronous while on campus or remote
- Through formative and interim assessment
- Requires teacher collaboration across environments

The contingency scenarios should drive district design

What are changes to make now such that students experience coherent high-quality instruction, even if they change instructional settings?

Ensure rigor and coherence of instructional materials across options

Create student progress monitoring processes that work across options

Build educator understanding and capacity to deliver across multiple options

All changes should prioritize students most likely to have suffered a COVID slide (SPED, EL, and at-risk students and those with significant learning gaps)

Some Resources to Help with Instructional Planning

Visit the instructional continuity page:

<https://tea.texas.gov/texas-schools/health-safety-discipline/covid/covid-19-support-instructional-continuity-planning>

Available now:

- [Reflection Tool](#) – to help jumpstart the planning process
- [Survey resource](#) – sample questions compiled from LEAs for LEAs to better understand parent & staff concerns & goals

Statewide Supports from TEA



Resources Coming Soon

Keep School Safe



- Public Health Operational Guidebooks
- Confirmed Case Planning Exercises & Tools
- Personal Protective Equipment

Re-Engineer the School Experience



- Texas Home Learning 3.0
- Strong Start Planning Tools
- Educator Training & Support
- Operation Connectivity

Public Health Operational Guidebooks

Step-by-step implementation support and best practices

Keep School Safe



What to expect:

- Step-by-step processes and templates for implementing public health guidance
- Exemplars to demonstrate how guidance can be applied in different contexts
- Public health communications protocols and templates

What it will help you accomplish:

- Implement required public health guidance effectively
- Determine which aspects of the recommended guidance apply best in your context and consider how to apply them

**Initial guidebooks
posted on TEA website
July**

Confirmed Case Planning Exercises & Tools

Practice procedures before a COVID-positive case occurs in your school, in partnership with public health authorities

Keep School Safe



What to expect:

- Guidance and contacts to facilitate work with local health authorities
- Training for administrators on how to respond to a positive case
- Exercises conducted with local health authorities to prepare for future positive cases

What it will help you accomplish:

- Be prepared in the event your school experiences a positive case on campus
- Re-open campuses sooner in the event they are closed, while ensuring families have confidence in your safety measures

**More information
coming in July**

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Providing PPE for students and educators to safely re-open schools

What to expect:

- An initial supply of PPE for systems that would like to use it to mitigate COVID spread among staff and/or students
- PPE includes disposable masks, reusable masks, thermometers, hand sanitizer, gloves, and face shields
- **What it will help you accomplish:**
- Have PPE on hand, if desired, for the start of the school year
- Decrease some costs associated with PPE

Keep School Safe



Information related to distribution strategy in July 2020 and PPE arrives in your district by August 1

Texas Home Learning 3.0

Continuing TEA's efforts to meet the distance learning needs of your students

Re-Engineer the School
Experience 

What to expect:

- Texas Home Learning 3.0 provides an **optional** free high-quality curriculum and tools to facilitate remote learning, including a Learning Management System and aligned progress monitoring for any interested school systems to use as needed
- Implementation resources and support for teachers, school leaders, and district leaders

What it will help you accomplish:

- Help districts make changes for student learning scenarios likely to occur during the year, including remote, hybrid, and students who transition settings
- Cut down on costs associated with providing remote learning

[More information on the instructional continuity site and coming throughout July 2020](#)

Strong Start Planning Tools

Comprehensive set of planning tools to support a successful 20-21 school year

Re-Engineer the School
Experience 

What to expect:

- Reflection tool to jumpstart the planning process
- Sample surveys to use with your families and educators
- Guidebook to lay out key district design decisions
- Sample school models for more COVID-resilient schools

What it will help you accomplish:

- Understand what your family and staff preferences are
- Evaluate organizational and operational capacity
- Make key decisions about district and school design

**First tools posted on TEA
Website on June 23
and updated regularly**

Educator Training and Support

High-quality professional development for a Strong Start to SY20-21

Re-Engineer the School
Experience



What to expect:

- Virtual training for 8,000 school leaders on excellence in remote instruction focused on leading remote learning and supporting teachers in remote instruction
- Training resources for teachers on delivering content remotely
- Virtual training for teachers focused on understanding and effectively responding to trauma along with building positive classroom climate and culture in remote and on campus instructional settings

What it will help you accomplish:

- Set educators up for successful delivery of remote instruction
- Respond to your teachers' and students' mental health and emotional well-being for when they return to school

**Trainings start
July 2020**

Operation Connectivity

Meeting the challenge of ensuring all students have access to internet and a device

Re-Engineer the School
Experience 

What to expect:

- Planning tools to help meet immediate needs for broadband & devices for students who opt for remote instruction
- Statewide plan to eliminate the digital divide, ensuring students have sufficient broadband & devices at home

What it will help you accomplish:

- Get families in need broadband & devices, cheaper

**Planning Framework
early August**

Timeline for Upcoming Resources

Re-Engineer the
School Experience



Keep School Safe



June

July

August

- **2020-21 Strong Start Planning Tools: Reflection Tool & Survey**

- **Public Health Operational Guidebooks**
- **Confirmed Case Planning Tools**
- **Texas Home Learning 3.0 Planning Materials**
- **More 2020-21 Strong Start Planning Tools**
- **Educator Training**

- **Texas Home Learning 3.0**
- **Personal Protective Equipment**
- **Operation Connectivity Guides**