

Virtual Schools and Online Learning - How It Works

Today's students are at the center of a global educational explosion, with qualified teachers and rich learning resources available from public, private, and for-profit providers to supplement their classroom work, to enroll in courses not available through their own school districts, and to allow individual students to progress at their own pace. This graphic shows how the key components come together to provide online learning to students anywhere, anytime.

Have vs. Have Nots

Fifty percent of school districts offer online courses; 26 states have state virtual schools; 18 states authorize cyber charter schools. While 40 percent of middle and high school students were interested in taking a course online, only a small fraction of today's 42 million public school students have access to online courses. States and districts need to develop funding mechanisms and policies to ensure the "have nots" can access the full range of educational resources and online learning opportunities available today.



INFORMATION SUPERHIGHWAY

Governor & State Legislature

Determine how virtual schools are funded
Determine economies of scale and growth through policies
Determine whether full-time or part-time options are available for every student

Funding

State funding
Federal grants (such as federal Enhancing Education Through Technology program)
Foundations
School districts
Tuition

Virtual School Administration

CEO/Principal
Chief Academic Officer – hires and evaluates teachers, oversees teacher training and professional development
CIO – network and data management; hardware, software, tech support
Student Services – counselors, registration
Teacher Training
Government Affairs
Legal
Human Resources
Marketing



Online Course Development

Functions:

Build and develop online courses
License online courses
Web 2.0 tools
Online libraries
Online resources

Online courses from online providers:

- Districts
- For-profit companies
- Non-profits
- Regional education service centers
- State virtual schools

Online courses offered:

Advanced and IB courses
Concurrent enrollment/college dual enrollment
Core courses in math, science, history, foreign languages, literature, etc.
Elective courses
Credit recovery and remediation for dropout prevention

Online Course Offerings

Traditional School

Needs:
Highly qualified teachers
AP courses
Foreign languages
Remediation and credit recovery
Drop-out prevention

Guidance Counselor

Assists students in selecting and enrolling in online options



Blended Classroom

Teachers integrate traditional face-to-face classroom learning and online courses/software in a new instructional model



Virtual School Systems

Student Information System/Data

Secure Network

Professional Development

Online Courses

Learning Management System (LMS)

Learning Management System

Safe and secure with log-in for students, parents, teachers and administrators
Any-pace progress tracking integrated with Student Information System for timely data
Software/platform for online courses and online learning
Live (synchronous) and asynchronous discussion
Grade book, homework drop-box online
Communication (e-mail, chat, phone)
Tools (whiteboard, Web 2.0 tools)
E-portfolio

Teachers:

Credentialed, licensed, and online
Provide personalized instruction
Assign lessons
Deliver assessments and grade tests, papers, and projects
Communicate regularly with students
Provide Data-driven differentiated instruction
Lead discussions

Students:

Take courses otherwise unavailable
Want flexibility, any-time, any-place, any-pace learning
Want one-on-one, personalized instruction
Need alternative learning path as good or better than traditional face-to-face instruction
Stay on track for graduation through online credit recovery
Want accelerated, rigorous, and advanced courses
Want to learn in a technology-rich, networked, collaborative environment that mirrors the real world
Are better prepared for college and the knowledge-society

Collaborative Project

World/Global Collaboration