

Supporting Talented and Gifted through Hybrid and Comprehensive Distance Learning



In June 2020, The Oregon Department of Education in partnership with the Oregon Health Authority released [Ready Schools, Safe Learners](#) Guidance for School Year 2020-21. Outlined in the guidance includes three models of learning: On-site, Hybrid, and Comprehensive Distance Learning.

Comprehensive Distance Learning is defined as an operational plan for schools where instruction will be delivered exclusively off-site, with students and instructors in different locations. Students engaging in Comprehensive Distance Learning have access to standards-based, grade level-or-beyond educational materials and receive ongoing interaction with, and a full educational experience guided by, their licensed and/or registered teacher(s). It is important to note that Comprehensive Distance Learning includes multimedia communication and blended learning strategies, not just digital/online learning. Learning may or may not be separated in time (asynchronous vs. synchronous), and where possible, daily synchronous learning is required. The Hybrid model is a combination of On-site and Comprehensive Distance Learning.

All schools must continue to serve students identified as TAG by accommodating assessed levels of learning and accelerated rates of learning. With a Comprehensive Distance Learning model, two strategies that will enhance and extend the learning experience for TAG students, include:

1. Educational acceleration, which has long been used to match high-level students' general abilities and specific talents with optimal learning opportunities; and,
2. Curriculum compacting, which condenses, modifies, or streamlines a curriculum to reduce repetition of previously mastered material.

This guidance allows for a common approach in providing equitable support for talented and gifted learners focusing on academic and social-emotional needs. An important focus in serving TAG students is continuing to provide instruction at the assessed rate and level through daily or weekly formative assessment data or evidence of learning in a Comprehensive Distance Learning model. While it may be challenging for educators to gauge the social-emotional impacts of the assigned work, it is imperative to keep social-emotional needs at the center of learning. Below are some considerations, suggestions, and resources for meeting the needs of talented and gifted learners through distance learning.

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Questions to Consider for K-12 Educators Using Offline or Online Resources:

- Which standards are prioritized for learning?
- How are current **assessment/evidence of learning** used to drive instruction?
- Are there opportunities for **combining standards** during distance learning lessons (e.g., project-based learning, performance assessment, portfolios)?
- How might pre-assessment and formative assessment or other evidence of learning be leveraged to **compact the curriculum** and adjust for **assessed rate and level of learning**?
- How was **differentiation** of content, process, and product approached in an in-person learning environment and how can similar planning efforts be used in distance learning?
- If packets are being used as a source of offline comprehensive distance learning, is there a **tiered approach** (i.e. “scaffolds,” “grade level standards-based” and “challenge”) to provide various levels of opportunity specific to students’ needs?

Formative Assessment as a process is the most commonly used high leverage instructional practice in meeting the academic needs of TAG students specific to their rate and level of learning. The Oregon Department of Education defines Formative Assessment as a Process on page 2 (under the heading “Components of a Balanced Assessment System”) in ODE’s [Right Assessment for the Right Purpose](#) document.

Family Engagement

Reach out and engage families as partners in their student’s learning and social-emotional well being. Honor family culture, language, funds of knowledge, and the comprehensive perspectives of families.

Promising Practices

It is important to engage in promising practices that promote learning for TAG students.

1. Provide “in lieu” of activities/assignments, rather than “in addition to.”
2. Foster student agency and self-regulated learning.
3. Allow flexible pacing (acceleration) and options for students to demonstrate their learning.
4. Provide success criteria and/or outcome-based rubrics specifically outlining standards of proficiency and mastery.
5. Seek and respond to student and family feedback regarding assignments and activities.

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Scenario Guidance

These scenarios are common in all learning models. In recent weeks, several districts have presented ODE with dilemmas and questions that pertain to the topics below.

If...	Then...
Pre-assessment data or current learning evidence indicates a student has prior knowledge at a level of proficiency or mastery,	Compact the curriculum for the student by eliminating the standards the student has already mastered and accelerate the student to a new standard of learning.
A menu of choice options for activities and assignments is presented to all students as an effort to demonstrate learning in a personalized manner,	Include depth and complexity (DOK 3 and 4) opportunities to support “level” (rate and level) of learning.
A student (or family) indicates the level and pacing of learning is not meeting their student’s needs,	Discuss a plan and provide district or state vetted resources to advance their learning.

Resources

Please see the [Oregon Open Learning Hub](#) for a list of additional [TAG resources](#) and well as ODE’s [TAG webpage](#) for updates.