



Distance Learning

Model/Option Overview

Distance Learning is typically used by non-traditional students. In this approach there is geographic separation between teachers and students during instruction. Various technologies are used to facilitate student-to-teacher and student-to-student communication. Distance Learning has existed for a long time in one form or another. In this factsheet, we'll be considering the use of the internet to facilitate classroom interaction. This type of distance learning typically requires working with an outside vendor to help organize and deliver classes.^{i, ii}

Bethel Specific Information

Anticipated cost	High School \$ Medium	Middle school \$ N/A	Elementary school \$ N/A	District wide \$
Potential capacity increase	Low – probably under 200 High School students			

What Could Change? (schools affected)

- Infrastructure for online education
- Classroom curriculums
- Teacher availability to students

Other District experiences

Districts currently / previously using this model

- If option moves forward:
 - List districts interviewed, if applies

District feedback

Anticipated/experienced transition challenges	
Implementation timing considerations	
Effects on learning outcomes	

Recommended for use in other districts?	
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Benefits of The Model

- ✓ Additional capacity
Students participate in courses from their home computer or laptop, since they are participating in courses online.ⁱⁱⁱ
- ✓ Increased flexibility
Research shows that distance learning provides more flexibility for students and families, allowing them to take classes from wherever works for them and scheduling study time around other schedule obligations. Distance learning also allows students to move through coursework at their own pace.^{iv}
- Impacts fewer students (school-specific v district-wide)

Challenges of The Model

Community & family

- Family schedule
- After-school care
- Vacation

Student

- ✓ Social development
Students have minimal in person interaction with teachers and classmates in this model. Critics argue that socialization is a critical aspect of K-12 education and Distance Learning does not provide students with enough opportunity for interaction in these early years.^{v, vi}
- Safety

Instructional

- Summer school/remediation
- ✓ Atmosphere
Due to the virtual nature of the classroom, there is limited capacity for only one speaker to talk at a time. Discussions have the potential to take longer than in-person interactions, and discussions are prone to being confusing if two speakers are talking at once. Technical limitations on discussions and engagement can cause frustration with students.^{vii}

Student achievement/learning outcomes

Teaching staff

- ✓ Curriculum
The 24-7 nature of Distance Learning can result in more demands on teachers, rather than less. Teachers will also need to translate their curriculums to use online, mostly likely through an outside vendor. Research shows that it can be difficult to ensure the quality of the class content.^{viii} Teachers

also find that they don't get immediate feedback from students on whether or not they understand the content of a lesson which makes it challenging to ensure that students are keeping up with the course. Additionally, it is also difficult to make sure that work is being completed by the student and not someone else.^{ix}

✓ State testing

Research shows that if schools use curriculum from an outside vendor that is not state-based it can be difficult to align courses with state standards.^x

Classroom space

Additional staff

Administration

Work hours

Additional staff

Extracurricular activities

✓ Music / band

✓ Athletics

✓ Clubs / social organizations

Distance education does not replace extracurricular activities.^{xi}

Facilities

Storage

Time

Access

Increase in wear and tear

Additional staff

Transportation

Additional buses/routes

Additional bus drivers

Increase in traffic during student pick-up & drop-off

Resources

1. Mupinga, D. M. (2005). Distance Education in High Schools: Benefits, Challenges, and Suggestions. *The Clearing House: A Journal of Educational Strategies, Issues and Ideas*, 78(3), 105–109. <https://doi.org/10.3200/TCHS.78.3.105-109>
2. Scholley, S. E. (2001). *Distance Education at the Elementary and Secondary School Levels* (USA, Nevada Legislative Counsel Bureau, Assembly Committee on Education). NV. Retrieved October 10, 2018, from <https://www.leg.state.nv.us/Division/Research/Publications/Bkground/BP01-04.pdf>
3. Harris O'Hanlon, L. (n.d.). Virtual Elementary School: Should You Enroll Your Kids? *Parents*. Retrieved October 10, 2018, from <https://www.parents.com/kids/education/elementary-school/virtual-elementary-school-should-you-enroll-your-kids/>

ⁱ Mupinga, D. M. (2005). Distance Education in High Schools: Benefits, Challenges, and Suggestions. *The Clearing House: A Journal of Educational Strategies, Issues and Ideas*, 78(3), 105–109.

<https://doi.org/10.3200/TCHS.78.3.105-109>

ⁱⁱ Scholley, S. E. (2001). *Distance Education at the Elementary and Secondary School Levels* (USA, Nevada Legislative Counsel Bureau, Assembly Committee on Education). NV. Retrieved October 10, 2018, from

<https://www.leg.state.nv.us/Division/Research/Publications/Bkground/BP01-04.pdf>

ⁱⁱⁱ Ibid., 2.

^{iv} Ibid.

^v Ibid., 3.

^{vi} Harris O'Hanlon, L. (n.d.). Virtual Elementary School: Should You Enroll Your Kids? *Parents*. Retrieved October 10, 2018, from <https://www.parents.com/kids/education/elementary-school/virtual-elementary-school-should-you-enroll-your-kids/>

^{vii} Gedera, D. (2014). Students' experiences of learning in a virtual classroom: An Activity Theory perspective. *International Journal of Education and Development Using ICT*, 10(4). Retrieved from <https://www.learntechlib.org/p/150708/>

^{viii} Scholley, S. E. (2001). 3, 13.

^{ix} Harris O'Hanlon, L. (n.d.).

^x Scholley, S. E. (2001). 13.

^{xi} Ibid.