

**TEA**

**STRONG  
START**

2020-21

**Preparing for  
Remote  
Instruction**



**Where to find this document:**

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

**- Closure Guidance & Communication**

# 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**

# Remote Instruction Attendance Considerations



For details, see:  
SY 2020 Attendance and Enrollment FAQ  
under the Waivers, Finance and Grants card  
under Attendance and Enrollment



# 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 needs 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 3<sup>rd</sup> 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 & 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 at 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 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 will be published on 7/2**
- Checklist components likely to include components like:
  - Ensure teachers are trained to deliver remote instruction on the district’s chosen platform
  - Ensure teachers have practiced delivering a synchronous instruction lesson
  - Ensure 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 or 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 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-days 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 is any of these three:
  - 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



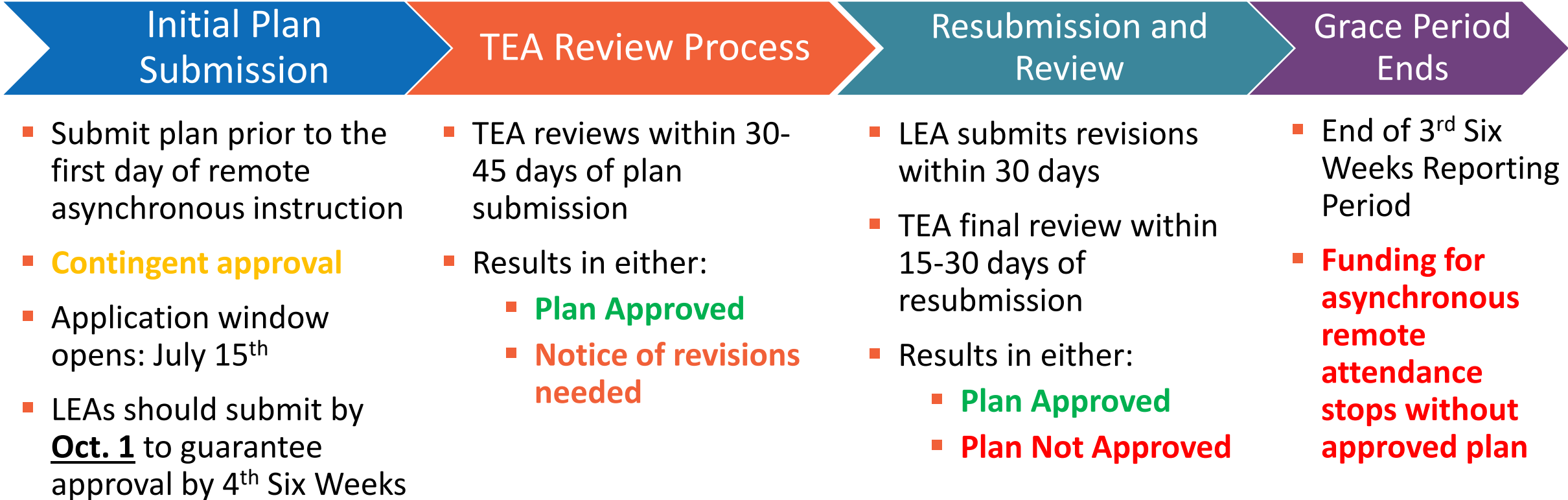


# Method B: Asynchronous instruction involves far more self-guided student instruction

- 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 & subject, but only one plan per LEA
- All plans will be given **contingent approval for up to the first three six weeks**, to provide maximum grace while systems adjust



# Method B: LEAs submitting an asynchronous plan will enter a grace period through the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Six Weeks FSP Period



Plan template and scoring rubric are planned for release 7/2

# 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 VSN paths – full time vs individual 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 VSN 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 VSN. 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 & balances as outlined in this document:
  - 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