

Resources to Support Student Learning During School Closures Due to COVID-19

Vol. 4

2020



Connecticut State Department of Education

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The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) would like to thank our Department of Education colleagues from other states, Connecticut school districts, vendors, and national organizations that have provided information included or adapted in this document.

Disclaimer: Inclusion in this guide does NOT constitute an endorsement or recommendation of any specific online material, program, or by any person or group who has contributed. These resources are provided solely to support educational decisions and continued student learning during school closures due to the COVID-19 outbreak

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Overview

As school districts across Connecticut (CT) remain closed, the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) recognizes that each district has unique needs to support the learning of their students during these unprecedented times. CSDE understands that meeting the individual needs of students can pose challenges in a remote learning environment. This resource document is designed to assist educators in providing information about multi-tiered systems of support to address these challenges and meet these needs.

With CT districts currently engaged in distance-learning plans and striving to meet the educational needs of all CT's students, it is important to understand that the learning that is taking place cannot simply be a review of the content that has already been taught in the traditional class setting. Teachers must engage their students in new learning that advances curricula. Just as supports are provided in a school, learning at a distance requires providing supports for our struggling learners.

Scientific Research-Based Interventions (SRBI) emphasize successful instruction for all students through high-quality core general education practices, as well as targeted interventions for students experiencing learning, social-emotional or behavioral difficulties. Students who do not typically struggle in the physical classroom may struggle in a virtual environment and vice versa. Educators need to differentiate learning and follow up with students who are struggling. Targeted and intensive intervention should be maintained as best as possible.

When planning intervention during school closures, districts and schools need to address a variety of questions such as:

- Who are the students in need of intervention?
- What staff are available to provide interventions?
- What resources are available to provide interventions?
- How will interventions be implemented?
- How will intervention plans and expectations be communicated to families?
- How will interventions be monitored for progress?

Tier 1 Instruction

What is Tier 1 instruction?

Effective Tier 1 practices create a crucial base for the three-tiered model of SRBI; the success of the other two tiers rests heavily on Tier 1. Within Tier 1, all students receive high-quality, scientifically based instruction provided by qualified personnel. High-quality grade appropriate standards aligned curricula provide teachers with information about what to teach all students, but not how to teach. Effective instruction must be informed by research. There are varieties of effective instructional strategies (e.g., flexible grouping, graphic organizers, etc.) that can be applied across a wide array of content areas.

All students need monitoring to identify struggling learners who need additional support. In Tier 1, these “at risk” students receive supplemental instruction during the school day in the regular classroom. This is often accomplished through differentiated instruction. Differentiated instruction is an approach to teaching that emphasizes ways to meet the varying needs of a group of students within the general

education setting. The use of flexible small groups can help in this differentiation, with various groupings providing opportunities for additional practice or explicit instruction in specific areas. Flexible grouping can be used to address not only the needs of students experiencing difficulties, but also those of high-achieving students who are ready to move on to a more complex skill or to explore a particular mathematical topic in more depth than is usually provided by the curriculum.

How do we address Tier 1 at a distance?

Tier 1 instruction during school closures can be accomplished in a variety of ways, including:

- Aligning learning to the grade level content standards;
- Connecting new learning to topics already taught;
- Chunking content into smaller, more manageable bits of information; less is more;
- Presenting new learning using multi-dimensional formats to address all types of learners;
- Offering opportunities for student discourse and reflection;
- Implementing formative assessment practices;
- Providing regular feedback to students;
- Collaborating with other teachers to preplan future assignments for students who struggle or are more advanced;
- Supplementing instruction with “packaged” content videos (e.g., Khan Academy, LearnZillion, etc.).

Tier 2 Instruction

What is Tier 2 instruction?

Students who fail to attain important benchmarks despite adequate curricula, instruction, and differentiation of instruction receive Tier 2 interventions. Tier 2 interventions are short term (e.g., eight – 20 weeks) and remain part of the general education system with supports from specialists. Interventions must be research-based as much as possible, be reasonably feasible for educators to use, and accurately target the student’s area(s) of difficulty. These interventions are supplemental to the core academic instruction that is delivered in the classroom by the classroom teacher or other specialists. These interventions do not replace core instruction.

Accurate pinpointing of individual student’s needs and selection of appropriate interventions are critical to the success of Tier 2 interventions. Tier 2 is typically implemented with groups of three to six students who have similar skill needs. Tier 2 successful small-group interventions use modeling, active participation, corrective feedback, self-monitoring, practice to mastery, and efficient time on task. Teacher support/intervention teams should monitor the progress of Tier II interventions to document the effectiveness of interventions and help ensure fidelity of implementation of interventions

How do we address Tier 2 at a distance?

Tier 2 intervention while engaging in remote learning can be difficult. However, it is important that schools attend to the needs of struggling learners. Suggestions for implementing instruction at the Tier 2 level include (but are not limited to):

- Ensuring ongoing communication with teachers, academic interventionists, special education teachers, and behavioral support specialists so that the needs of all students are understood;
- Maintaining the use of current intervention programs as much as possible or make needed modifications to those programs to work in a remote learning environment;
- Utilizing the “breakout” room feature on digital platforms by having non-instructional staff assist in monitoring so that small group instruction can occur (see [FERPA guidelines](#));
- Providing “packaged” video content for pre-teaching and the building of foundational skills;
- Collaborating with interventionists and special educators to identify evidence based strategies that can be implemented;
- Scheduling distance learning to ensure that students who receive support from an interventionist continue to do so;
- Monitoring the progress of students through formative assessment practices;
- Connecting with families regularly by phone, text and/or e-mail to answer questions; and
- Exploring and making use of resources that are at a student’s ability level and related to the current topics.

Tier 3 Instruction

What is Tier 3 instruction?

For students making inadequate progress with Tier 2 interventions, intensification of intervention should be considered. Educators also may consider different, more specialized interventions. The primary difference between Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions involves the intensity and/or individualization of the intervention. Greater intensity of intervention can be achieved with a smaller teacher-student ratio, a longer duration of instruction, and more frequent progress monitoring.

Tier 3 interventions should be provided by specialists or other trained educators. Tier 3 interventions are designed to address significant problems for which students are in need of intensive interventions. As a result, Tier 3 interventions require careful planning.

How do we address Tier 3 at a distance?

Tier 3 intervention during school closures presents unique challenges. However, the following suggestions may assist districts as they plan for addressing this need:

- Maintaining the use of current intervention programs as much as possible or make needed modifications to those programs to work in a remote learning environment;
- Structuring distance learning so that the time spent on intervention is proportional to the grade level content instruction that occurred prior to remote learning;
- Holding one-on-one virtual meetings with students to provide targeted support;
- Collecting data by using various platforms (e.g., Kahoot, Google Forms, Interim Assessments, etc.);
- Adjusting the interventions based upon data analysis so that the intervention is effective; and
- Connecting with families regularly by phone, text and/or e-mail to answer questions.

SRBI Resources

As districts think about how to best offer SRBI supports to students during school closures as well as when students are able to return the classroom, the following list of resources may be helpful.

- [Interim Assessments](#): The Smarter Balanced and NGSS interim assessments are available to be administered remotely. These provide a way for educators to formatively assess and progress monitor students.
- [Interim Assessments webinar](#): This webinar provided support on the use of the Interim Assessments during this time of remote learning. Recommendations on procedures, proper uses, and administration tips with respect to Smarter Balanced and NGSS Interim Assessments are included.
- [Solution Tree](#) Free Resources for SRBI: This resource contains reproducibles, study guides, and webinars.
- [Intervention Central](#): Intervention Central provides a variety of information about academic and behavioral interventions.
- [Center on RTI at American Inst. Research](#): This website includes webinars, training modules, etc.
- [Edutopia](#): This article contains many links embedded to quality organizations.
- [ASCD](#): ASCD site has many links embedded to quality resource library.
- Communities of Practice [CREATING EQUITY FOR STUDENTS & SUPPORTING DIVERSE LEARNERS](#) through virtual learning: This community focuses on considerations for educators to ensure equity for students with diverse needs stays at the forefront for the remainder of this school year as well as into the next. Topics to be covered include addressing exacerbated learning gaps in a virtual community, meeting the needs of English-language learners virtually, learner variability in the online space, culturally responsive virtual education, and more.
- [CAST](#): CAST makes remote learning accessible and inclusive. Explore curated resources on high-leverage topics.
- [SRBI for English Learners](#): Handbook that accompanies Connecticut's Framework for RTI so address tiered interventions specific to English Learners.
- [Texas Region III Education Service Center](#): If you currently have a structured RTI/Intervention program happening at your school, some ideas for continuing intervention remotely.
- [CenterPoint](#): [Diagnostic](#) and [interim assessments](#) in English language arts/literacy and mathematics in grades K-11. These are available on a variety of platforms (and print-based).
- [Educating All Learners](#): Resources and guidance on a variety of topics that will assist in meeting the needs of diverse populations of learners.
- [Introduction to Intensive Intervention Module](#): This interactive self-paced module: defines intensive intervention and DBI describes how intensive intervention fits within a tiered system such as MTSS, RTI, or PBIS, and demonstrates how intensive intervention can provide a systemic process to deliver specialized instruction for students with disabilities.
- [Using Data-Based Individualization to Intensify Instruction](#): This IRIS Star Legacy Module is the first in a series of two modules focused on databased individualization. This module provides an overview of databased individualization and information about adaptations for intensifying and individualizing instruction. Developed in collaboration with the IRIS Center and the CEEDAR Center, this resource is designed for individuals who will be implementing intensive interventions (e.g., special education teachers, reading specialists, interventionists).

- [Collecting and Analyzing Data for Data-Based Individualization](#): This IRIS Star Legacy Module is the second in a series on intensive intervention. This module offers information on making databased instructional decisions. Specifically, the resource discusses collecting and analyzing progress monitoring and diagnostic assessment data. Developed in collaboration with the IRIS Center and the CEEDAR Center, this resource is designed for individuals who will be implementing intensive interventions (e.g., special education teachers, reading specialists, interventionists).
- [Webinar: Strategies for Setting Data-Driven Behavioral Individualized Education Program Goals](#): This webinar challenges current thinking about how to set appropriately ambitious and measurable behavioral goals in light of the 2017 Endrew F. v. Douglas County School District decision by the United States Supreme Court. Dr. Teri A. Marx from the National Center on Intensive Intervention and the PROGRESS Center, as well as Dr. Faith G. Miller from the University of Minnesota—Twin Cities, share how to set ambitious behavioral goals for students by using a valid, reliable progress monitoring measure, and how to write measurable and realistic goals focused on the replacement behavior.
- [Strategies for Setting Data-Driven Behavioral Individualized Education Program Goals](#): The purpose of this guide is to provide an overview of behavioral progress monitoring and goal setting to inform data-driven decision-making within tiered support models and individualized education programs (IEPs). The guide covers components of quality behavioral IEP goals; how to know which behavior(s) should be addressed through an IEP goal; information about behavior(s) of concern; how to set goals and progress monitor; common challenges and solutions; and additional resources and tools.
- [Coaching for Ongoing Professional Learning within Tiered Support Models](#): The purpose of this document is to provide content-specific examples of how to structure educator-level and/or systems-level coaching as a mechanism to ensure ongoing professional learning to support tiered intervention. This document provides examples of coaching supports, models, and functions within the context of tiered intervention (e.g., RTI, PBIS, MTSS) and databased decision making.
- [Great Lakes Equity Center](#): This website presents equity considerations for online learning.
- [Accommodations, Modifications, and Intervention at a Distance](#): Suggestions to start thinking about some of the many service-delivery questions teams are facing.
- [Chapter 7 of Library Technology Reports](#) (vol. 54, no. 4), “Accessibility, Technology, and Librarianship,” Heather Moorefield Lang, Editor: This chapter will highlight how instructional designers at the Center for Teaching Excellence at the University of South Carolina—Columbia work with faculty and campus partners (including librarians) to create accessible and universally designed online courses.

MTSS-Behavioral Resources

Staff across CT are working hard to navigate effective methodologies to work in remote learning spaces. Students and adults are feeling overwhelmed, anxious, and stress during this uncertain time, which can impede learning and cause a manifestation of certain behaviors. Below are some resources to support student behavior and self-regulation. The following list of resources may be helpful as districts think about how to best offer integrated supports for learning and behavior during school closures as well as when students are able to return the classroom.

- [Creating a PBIS Behavior Teaching Matrix for Remote Instruction](#): This practice brief shares tips for maintaining continuity of learning through defining classroom expectations for remote (i.e., distance) instruction and online learning environments. With a few adaptations, teachers can use a PBIS framework to make remote learning safe, predictable, and positive. [Spanish Version](#)
- [Responding to the Novel Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Outbreak through PBIS](#): One of the key principles of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is to focus on building prosocial skills. This practice brief contains a few simple recommendations educators can embed across a continuum of supports and families can try to encourage while students are at home. [Spanish Version](#)
- [Supporting Families with PBIS at Home](#): Families and caregivers should consider using PBIS in their homes on a daily basis. It is especially helpful when events disrupt normal routines – events like worldwide health pandemics. This practice brief provides recommendations for families and caregivers on how to use PBIS to continue to support their students’ social and emotional growth and minimize behavioral disruptions in the home. [Spanish Version](#)
- [Getting Back to School after Disruptions: Resources for Making Your School Year Safer, More Predictable, and More Positive](#): When your students are ready to come back to school, it is important to remember they may have been exposed to unpredictable schedules, inconsistent supervision, or food insecurity while they have been away. This practice guide has six strategies we recommend school teams use to ensure a safe, predictable, and positive school year. They are beneficial for all students if the school has been closed, as well as for individual students returning from extended time away from school. [Spanish Version](#)
- [MTSS Behavioral & Social---Emotional Supports](#): Meeting students’ behavioral needs using a multi-tiered system of supports to teach social and emotional skills in elementary school.

Connecticut Reading Model

The HILL for Literacy (HILL) organization is now providing free, on-demand professional learning webinars and instructional videos to CT's literacy leaders and teachers in all districts. These resources include foundational skills demonstration videos for parents. The HILL has extensive experience working with Connecticut schools, and continues to support the CT Reading Model work in Alliance Districts by providing literacy leadership training aligned to the [Connecticut Systems for Effective Reading Instruction](#), a conceptual framework for implementing various evidence-based processes to support reading improvement. For more information, visit the [HILL](#).

HILL eLearnings:

- [The Brain and Literacy Development](#):
 - Review how reading development links to instruction
 - Learn new routines to target specific aspects of reading instruction with the goal of building students’ foundational skills to ultimately facilitate reading comprehension
 - Learn new routines to target specific aspects of reading instruction with the goal of building students’ foundational skills to facilitate reading comprehension
- [Features of Effective Instruction](#):
 - Explain why effective instruction is especially important for children learning to read
 - Identify the 4 main elements of effective instruction

- Describe what teachers can do to prepare for effective reading lessons (Cognitive Preparation/Planning)
- Describe best practices for
 - introducing a lesson to students (“I do”)
 - engaging students in practice (“We do”)
 - releasing students to independent practice (“You do”)
- Explain how to create effective routines using concise language and an appropriate teaching pace
- [The Brain, Reading and Assessments:](#)
 - Discuss areas of the brain involved in Reading Development
 - Link Reading Development to various Assessments
- [Types of Assessment:](#)
 - Identify the difference between an “assessment” and a “test”
 - Name the four general categories of assessments
 - Evaluate an assessment to understand the purpose
 - Identify when/where/how to use different assessments
- [Master Schedule Development:](#)
 - Know the purpose and benefits of a master schedule
 - Identify different approaches to solving common scheduling obstacles
 - Learn and practice methods for building a Master Schedule

HILL for Teachers: Effective Instruction

- [To practice foundational skills with accuracy and automaticity:](#) Small group instruction- Reading Street, Kindergarten
- [To read decodable text accurately and effortlessly:](#) Small group instruction- Reading Street, Grade 2
- [To practice foundational skills with accuracy and automaticity:](#) Whole group instruction- Reading Street, Grade K
- [To practice foundational skills with accuracy and automaticity:](#) Whole group instruction- Program unknown, Grade 1
- [To build text fluency by chunking meaningful phrases:](#) Small group instruction, Grade 3

HILL for Parents:

- [To practice blending sounds- phonemic awareness activity:](#) Example 1: Parent at home practicing foundational skills with their child
- [To practice blending sounds- phonemic awareness activity:](#) Example 2: Parent at home practicing foundational skills with their child
- [To practice segmenting sounds- phonemic awareness activity:](#) Example 1: Parent at home practicing foundational skills with their child
- [To practice segmenting sounds- phonemic awareness activity:](#) Example 2: Parent at home practicing foundational skills with their child

- [To practice encoding \(spelling\) - phonics activity](#): Example 1: Parent at home practicing foundational skills with their child
- [To practice reading decodable text](#): Example 1: Parent at home practicing foundational skills with their child
- [To provide practice with target words](#): Directions for the Activity
- [To provide practice with target words](#): Watch Us Play
- [To provide practice with target words](#): Next Steps

Additional Resources

Many content providers are making materials available to teachers during this time of continued school closures. While CSDE encourages districts to utilize the resources currently available in their schools and familiar to their stakeholders, districts have expressed the need for additional resources to address content, professional learning, assessment, etc. Below are resources to continue to assist in planning and delivery of distance learning.

- [K-8 Learning Activities for Math](#): Veteran teacher Fawn Nguyen has curated a selection of grade-level-specific math activities (enough for four weeks of remote learning) that support a balance of conceptual thinking and reasoning, fluency practice, and application. These are perfect for engaging students in challenging and creative mathematical thinking as a class or independently.
- [Foundational Skills Practice Strategy Resource](#): This document is filled with free, open-source activities to support K-1 foundational skills practice. Activities are organized by foundational skills topic and separated into teacher-led practice opportunities, and tasks that can be completed without teacher support.
- [Achieve the Core Mini-Assessments](#): Achieve the Core's standards-aligned mini-assessments for ELA/literacy and Math are available in PDF and digital format (via our partner Edcite.com). Edcite.com is a free platform for educators—you can learn more about mini-assessments (and how to deliver them virtually via Edcite.com) on this recent webinar. Note: Edcite has not signed the CT Student Data Privacy Pledge.
- [World Language](#): CT COLT is a well-regarded professional organization representing many of the state's world language professional.
- [Voyager Sopris](#): Free resources to support math, writing and professional learning.
- [American History](#): Free online curriculum that uses Hamilton to engage students in American history.
- [Social Studies and English](#): The Film Foundation's educational outreach program, The Story of Movies, is available free to all educators who register. The Story of Movies objective is to teach children how to read a film—as a narrative, as a cinematic document, and as a historical and cultural document. All lessons are based on National Film Study Standards and dovetail neatly with national standards established by the National Council of Teachers of English and the National Council for the Social Studies.
- [Personal Finance](#): Offers over 50 lesson plans and assignments for teaching personal finance.
- [Professional Learning](#): Six different professional learning kits to develop or sharpen skills that will help accelerate learning when students return to the classroom.

- [Class Dojo](#): ClassDojo helps you instantly communicate and engage with all families and students, so you can keep building relationships while school is closed.
- [STEM from the Start](#): Curriculum resource for teaching STEM content to PreK-2 students. Blending animated adventures with guided activities, these free lessons are engaging, effective, easy to prepare and aligned with the Next Generation Science Standards.
- [CenterPoint](#): CenterPoint is offering free:
 - Curriculum-aligned interim assessments for [EL Education](#) and [Illustrative Mathematics](#). These are available on a variety of platforms (and print-based).
 - [Digital and print-based formative tasks for grades K-2](#) to support English language arts/literacy and mathematics for early learners.
 - [High school math tasks](#) for Algebra I and Geometry. These are available in our resource library in PDF and ready to print.
 - [Resource library](#) of expertly developed digital tools, customizable assessments, professional learning modules, and instructional strategies, along with a curated, vetted collection of open education resources (OER).
- [StrADDeGy](#): StrADDeGy has 100's of games and learning experiences that parents can play with their young children at home (grades K – 3). It also has embedded, professional-learning videos to help parents be more intentional about the activities they choose and the math they are targeting.
- [MetaMetrics - Lexile and Quantile Hub](#): The Hub is a site that is free to all Connecticut educators and provides access to all of the Lexile tools that support student learning in reading and all of the Quantile tools that support student learning in math.
- [Opportunity Culture](#): In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Public Impact has developed materials to support teachers and students in the transition to at-home teaching and learning
- [Reading](#): Free educational materials designed to accompany the books written by author and artist Esphyr Slobodkina.
- [Great Lakes Equity Center](#): Resource created for parents/caregivers, educators, and administrators which contains equity considerations for distance and online learning
- [Funexpected Math](#): Funexpected Math was built for kids from 3 to 7 years old to help them build mathematical thinking and become comfortable with math from an early age.
- [Smarter Balanced](#): Smarter Balanced remote teaching site that includes notification about remote administration of Interim assessments.
- [Microsoft Professional Learning](#): Explore free courses, learning paths, resources, and lesson plans to help you master remote teaching and learning on a personalized hub created just for educators.
- [Professional Learning](#): Free courses that demystify teaching online. Courses include everything from leading practices for online teaching to EdTech tools like Canvas to collaboration software like Microsoft Teams.
- [CTE Distance Learning: Hands-on Learning at Home](#): CTE professionals explore how to continue hands-on learning when instructors can no longer demonstrate skills up close, and students can no longer access campus facilities, equipment and technology that are difficult and sometimes impossible to replicate at home.

- [Career Smart Classrooms](#): New set of resources to help educators across the school incorporate career content and workplace skills into the classroom. Resources include career information sheets, lesson plans and activity plans. use the code "CareersmartNOW"
- Moving Forward Together: Sharing Resources with the ReadConn Family: We, at ReadConn, appreciate that teachers, literacy leaders, and administrators are keeping literacy learning moving forward during a very challenging time. We also understand that not all teachers and students are working the same way due to the limitations or lack of availability of technology. We would like to hear what is working best for you. One of the most valuable activities of each ReadConn Regional Session has been the opportunity to share “artifacts” and ideas with colleagues from across the participating districts. We would like to share some of the best resources we have found, and give you an opportunity to share ideas and resources as well. Our resources will be drawn from the comprehensive list provided by, *CSDE: Resources to Support Student Learning During School Closures Due to COVID-19*. We have curated that list to identify the very best and most easily accessed resources, especially those related to ReadConn Regional Session 4, Vocabulary and Comprehension. We also look forward to hearing what you have discovered and how you are using it. Contact [Joanne White](#) for additional information.
- [Drawing Children into Reading](#): This program is both instructional and enriching. Beginning with the development of a foundation it enhances the areas of drawing, penmanship, and reading through the development of visual literacy. Currently there are hundreds of step-by-step lessons available in the following areas:
 - Science
 - Engineering
 - Math
 - Geometry
 - Social Studies
 - Language arts
 - Writing
 - Peace
 - Art techniques
- [Covid-19 Padlet](#): A compilation of a variety of resources and information by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt to support distance learning.