

S.I.P

STANDARDS IN PRACTICE



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STANDARD HIGHLIGHT

Standard Set: Online Programs

I10: Courses offered through the program include opportunities for both asynchronous and synchronous learning.

STANDARD OVERVIEW

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This standard addresses the need for curriculum and course design to utilize both asynchronous and synchronous learning opportunities to provide students flexibility in when and where they access instruction and in the format of the instruction. Regularly scheduled synchronous sessions are particularly useful at the younger grade levels while high school students are more able to recognize when they need to reach out for additional instruction. Course design to include both modes can include standard style guides and course set-up checklists that require instructors to make these opportunities clear to students as well as utilizing subject matter experts (SMEs) to design content in a way that ensures flexibility in delivery across all courses in the program.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Weekly Schedule					
M	T	W	Th	F	
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	
9:00-10:00	Math	Advisory / Team Sponsorship Time	Math	Advisory / Team Sponsorship Time	Math
10:00-11:00	Social Studies	Library	Social Studies	Social Studies	Social Studies
11:00-12:00	Flex Time Independent Work Time / Small Group Instruction / Office hours	Flex Time Independent Work Time / Small Group Instruction / Office hours	Flex Time Independent Work Time / Small Group Instruction / Office hours	Flex Time Independent Work Time / Small Group Instruction / Office hours	Flex Time Independent Work Time / Small Group Instruction / Office hours
12:00-1:00	Language Arts	Flex Time Independent Work Time / Small Group Instruction / Office hours	Language Arts	Flex Time Independent Work Time / Small Group Instruction / Office hours	Language Arts
1:00-2:00	Science	Book Club	Science	Flex Time Independent Work Time / Small Group Instruction / Office hours	Science
2:00-2:30					

Sample weekly schedule for synchronously learning and student norms



HELPFUL HINTS for putting standard into practice

• Course Design:

- Mood Boards and Style Guides can establish a consistent style for content and assignments so that students can easily locate important information, such as synchronous opportunities, across all courses.
- A standard set of guidelines for teachers to reference and complete, such as a [Teacher Beginning Course Checklist](#), helps ensure that courses are appropriately set up. This provides a consistent learning experience for students and families.
- Clear [Teacher Expectations](#) create a common set of expectations for teachers to reference during the year that addresses expectations around interactions with students both synchronously and asynchronously.
- Content that includes information for Learning Coaches can help adults support the students they work with in person by providing context and extensions for the learning.
- Teachers of middle school and younger students should consider a set schedule for synchronous sessions to provide direct instruction of content and provide feedback. The image shown in this SIP is an example of a 7th grade student's weekly synchronous schedule.
- Utilizing LMS notification and announcement features can highlight synchronous events, opportunities for individualized instruction, or for group collaboration.

• Synchronous:

- **Schedule:** Establish a consistent synchronous learning schedule that is developmentally appropriate for K-12 students. The schedule should provide a balance for learners to be on or off-screen. At higher grade levels this may include direct instruction in executive function skills and students creating their own schedules.
- **Expectations:** Establish synchronous learning expectations regarding behavior and participation. Consider allowing students to participate in creating norms and consequences. SLANT is an acronym used to remind students of onscreen expectations at elementary grade levels

- **Feedback:** Teachers can provide real-time feedback and clarification, including the opportunity for breakout sessions to assist students. Peer-to-peer feedback opportunities provide students the option to collaborate and receive feedback.
 - **Differentiate:** Synchronous learning can be challenging for students who struggle with focus. Consider giving some students roles and responsibilities for the learning environment. Break-up sessions with breakout rooms, interactive whiteboards, polls, and jigsaw learning will all increase student engagement.
 - **Community Building:** Include activities that are focused on developing a solid and supportive community of learners and extend synchronous sessions beyond class time for optional unstructured socialization.
- ### • Asynchronous:
- **Executive Function Coaching:** Providing explicit instruction around setting routines, goal setting, time management, and choosing an appropriate learning environment.
 - **Communication:** Provide modeling, instruction, and tips for students to communicate effectively regarding questions with the content or on assignments. This includes various modes of communication with the student's peers, learning coaches, or teachers.
 - **Teacher Presence:** Increase interest and teacher presence in asynchronous learning by including instructional videos, page interactives, and personalization, such as hiding seasonal icons for students to look for in lessons.
 - **Flexibility:** Allow students flexibility in when and how they visit course materials and submit assignments within an overall structure of expectations.

RESOURCES to support standard use (mostly practical)

- Northern Illinois University: Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning: [Recommendations to Increase Student Engagement in Online Courses](#): A variety of suggestions to promote student engagement and community development for both asynchronous and synchronous learning sessions.
- Iowa State University: Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning: [Engaging Students](#): Key strategies for developing teacher presence in both asynchronous and synchronous learning environments.
- [Deepening In-Class and Online Learning: 60 Step-by-Step Strategies to encourage interaction, foster inclusion, and spark imagination](#) by Larry Swartz, Debbie Nyman, and Magdalin Livingston - Describes each strategy, why to use, demonstration of the strategy, teaching tips, strategy extensions, and even anchor text resources.
- Connecting with Students Online: Strategies for Remote Teaching and Learning by Jennifer Serravallo - This color-coded, easy to use, book gives educators strategies on topics such as building a learning community online, assessment and progress monitoring, revising the curriculum for online learning, time management, and supporting learners at home.

Author/Organization Bio

The Vermont Virtual Learning Cooperative (VTVC) has been Vermont's public online K-12 educational provider since 2009. VTVC works under a cooperative model with public schools and districts to offer this flexible pathway to students and provides access to accredited curricula and courses for schools to use. Ashley Newton directs VTVC's Academic Programs as the Assistant Director. Jennifer Fribush coordinates curriculum and professional learning. Jennifer Hindes is the Principal of the K-8 program.