

# Arkansas Instructional Guidance for Extended Year AMI

*Supporting Remote Learning in Arkansas*



Arkansas Department of Education  
Division of Elementary and Secondary Education

*The Arkansas Department of Education provides leadership, support, and service to schools, districts, and communities  
so every student graduates prepared for college, career, and community engagement.*

## Introduction

It is extremely important that during this extended closure of our schools, there is a continuation of equitable educational delivery to the students of Arkansas. As Arkansas continues to strive to meet our vision of leading the nation in student focused education, there has never been a time more important than now to act on that vision. School districts across the state may struggle with delivery of instruction remotely to all learners. Remote learning is learning that happens outside of the traditional classroom because the student and teacher are separated by distance and/or time. Remote learning can occur in real-time or occur independently at flexible times, and it may or may not involve technology. As the state continues to provide flexibility for districts to meet the needs of learners, districts and schools will need to persist in their efforts to adapt remote learning efforts to accommodate the needs of parents and students.

Act 862 of 2017 allowed public school districts and open-enrollment public charter schools to develop a plan for Alternative Methods of Instruction (AMI) to be used on days when the superintendent closed school due to exceptional or emergency circumstances. These district plans were to be based on a short term closure, such as winter weather, and submitted to the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) for approval. The AMI Plans districts had in place provided an immediate instructional course of action when schools were closed statewide for COVID-19, but the majority of plans needed to be revamped to provide reasonable remote learning during this pandemic.

This document is meant to provide instructional guidance to districts striving to meet the needs of students outside the typical school day or setting. Each district is unique and will have to weigh their local decisions based on their student population, staffing, and local contexts.

Through our state work with the professional learning community process, the message has been consistent regarding identifying what is essential for student learning. *Less is more*, especially now. Districts will need to determine what is essential and what is the level of expectations for students and staff.

Districts should be aware of the impact that implementation of this guidance and flexibility in state laws and rules may have on local district policies and consult with local legal counsel to determine any necessary adjustments.

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# Alternate Methods of Instruction

## Teaching and Learning Considerations:

### Can districts continue to modify AMI plans and what are the options?

Districts are encouraged to monitor and adjust their AMI plans regularly to respond to the needs of students, parents, and staff. Various options remain available to schools in delivering instruction during this time. However, please do not let a single mode of delivery selected for the majority of your students prevent you from thinking globally about meeting the diverse needs that exist across your student body. Plan to offer multiple AMI options if needed; an equitable education system helps all students develop the knowledge and skills they need to access and be engaged in learning.

Guidance in this document has been approved for use in district AMI plans. Updated AMI plans do not need to be resubmitted to the department, but local districts should communicate with their regional education service cooperative to coordinate AMI efforts.

Approved Instructional Delivery Options to Consider	
Option 1	Districts may continue to use their approved district AMI plan and continue to adjust per guidance from DESE.
Option 2	Districts may utilize the state supported <a href="#">Arkansas AMI Learning Guides</a> with Arkansas PBS programming. Schools are encouraged to personalize the guides to meet their instructional goals.
Option 3	Districts may continue to use their existing online educational platform (SeeSaw, Google Classroom, Canvas, Blackboard, etc.) to deliver instruction.
Option 4	Districts may utilize digital content for 7-12 through digital providers such as <a href="#">Virtual Arkansas</a> and <a href="#">Arkansas Public School Resource Center</a> .

### What subjects should be the focus of instruction during extended AMI?

Districts have the flexibility to limit instruction to essential skills in core subjects. This is not meant to *minimize the importance* of elective courses, but to provide flexibility to schools and students during this time. Districts are encouraged to create cross curricular teams that include teachers of multiple subjects. Teaming allows teachers the ability to work together to cover content and skills across multiple courses

while casting a net of support for a group of students. The arts, physical education, and CTE capture students' interest and promote the practice of essential skills. While scheduling and grading practices may look different during extended AMI, all educators should be working together to meet the needs of students. It is unrealistic for schools to expect students to continue to meet and complete assignments for six to eight teachers or subjects several times a week.

*"The best teachers are those who recognize 'intersecting axes' in which the heart and the head- the child and the subject- are both part of the education matrix."  
Patricia Driscoll*

## **What skills or lessons should AMI address through the end of the year?**

Schools have been encouraged to follow the professional learning communities model of identifying essential standards. During this time, educators and schools need to reexamine student data and determine what is the most important learning. (Is it to continue to focus on reading and writing skills? Is it to master a specific math concept that is foundational?) What is essential for your students and can be adequately supported and taught in a remote learning environment? **Less is more.**

We do urge caution with respect to introducing new content without adequate instructional support. Instead, we suggest mastery of the essential standards that have been taught up to the point. Schools should be reviewing existing student data to determine where students need support and providing deeper learning opportunities that prevent regression through cross curricular collaboration.

- Students should be offered multiple options that are self-selected depending on their interests, connectivity, and academic ability. Working across multiple subjects allows for high interest, authentic experiences to practice desired sets of skills and expand on new content.
  - Journals ( journaling about what they've learned, writing prompts, a collection of activities completed, etc.)
  - Academic Activities (specific assignments, scavenger hunts, non-digital resources, penpals, software applications, reading to parents or siblings, book studies, manipulatives, counting money, etc.)
  - Social Engagement Activities (group video chats, written communication/emails to teachers and/or classmates, family board games, etc.)
  - Hands-on Activities (art, physical education, music, creating a board game, cooking, gardening) that reinforce an essential skill

## Should schools try to maintain the previous school day schedule?

Those districts operating within the confines of a traditional school day will most likely need to adjust their schedules as AMI has been extended through the end of the year. Districts are encouraged to solicit feedback from faculty, students, and parents. Each district is unique, and will need to determine the right balance for their schools as the year progresses. What worked in weeks 2 and 3, may not work in weeks 5 and 6. During this time, districts may need to revisit their extended AMI plans frequently and consider modifying the number of courses, time on task, and objectives.

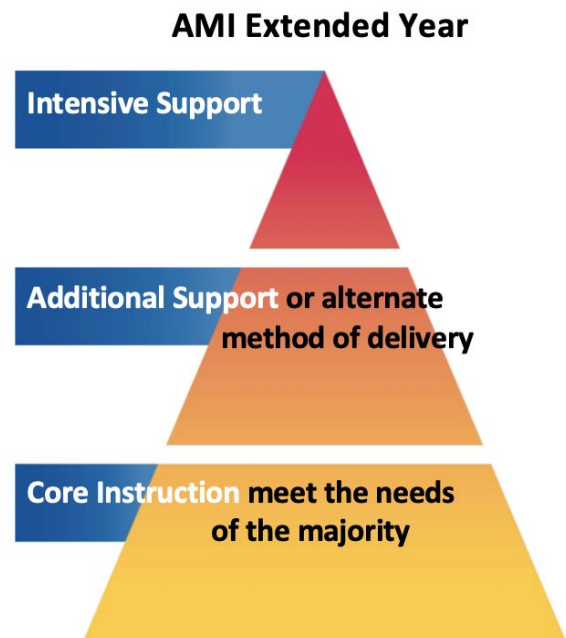
## How should our district approach extended AMI?

This is **Response to Intervention** in action:

**Core Instruction:** Identify the essential skills, and what students need to learn and be able to do. What delivery model meets the needs of the majority of the students?

**Additional Support:** Identify students who are struggling with the learning expectations in a remote setting. Students may be struggling due to lack of internet, need for additional practice, lack of foundational skills, stress, etc. Have a plan of action for Tier 2; work collaboratively to provide additional support to address identified causes.

**Intensive Support:** Identify students who are not fully accessing core instruction and may need additional services and support during remote learning or maybe students who are, for whatever reason, non-participatory or inconsistent. Extended year, summer programs, etc. may be additional considerations.



## What should the district consider when providing instruction virtually?

It cannot be assumed that every family or every student has access to the necessary devices and appropriate internet connection in their home. In many cases, students who are considered to be “at risk” by schools are the ones without access to devices or reliable internet. Local school districts should investigate the technological resources and realities of their community and determine what type of remote learning makes the most sense in their context. Real-time, technology-infused remote learning may be appropriate for District A, while asynchronous instruction with a systematic method for providing support is the right choice for District B. District C might find that a plan that includes a blend of real-time, varied times, technological, and non-technological options is the best fit for students and families.

- If the district is requiring synchronous access only each day, then the district must provide equipment and access for students and staff who do not have access to meet the requirements of synchronous learning. *Staff or students sitting in a parking lot for several hours a day for synchronous learning is not realistic.*
- The district should conduct a needs assessment for staff and students centered on access.
- Districts are strongly encouraged to consider asynchronous instruction, as well as synchronous. Asynchronous is content or instruction that is made available to be accessed at different times and locations. An example would be pre-recorded lessons or content available at varied times. *Some districts are providing wifi in a parking lot as an access point for families who do not have internet access. Students and parents are able to download assignments and then work off-line at a later time.*
- If the district has made the decision to move to online delivery for all subjects, consideration should be given to limiting the number of courses each day, and the amount of time per week for each subject.
- The district should determine who is not actively participating and make an effort to contact students to design a support or alternate plan for continued instruction. Digital learning may be extremely difficult for some students and staff members to adjust to in a remote setting.
- If the virtual platform is new, the district should foster on-going embedded professional development to support educators and students.
- The district should encourage educators to personalize lessons when possible. It is easy for students and teachers to become disconnected in a virtual setting.
- The district should not assume that all families understand how wifi access works.

- Districts should consider that many families have more than one child attempting to access online assignments with limited access..ie..one computer, limited bandwidth, etc... and in many cases parents may also be using the device for work.
- The district should consider whether realistic access **or** a comparable alternative that includes instruction is being provided. The district must provide access to all materials and instruction that is required for students and staff.
- The district should continue to monitor internet access as time has been extended. Many families and educators are exceeding internet minutes and plans, and access to wifi has become an issue.

## **What student variables should an educator consider when planning lessons for extended AMI?**

Educators must identify what is essential for grade level or content learning at this time. Assignments should have a clear purpose and time spent on practice or learning should be viewed as valuable and necessary. Busy work, such as word searches and writing an infinite number of definitions does not yield high quality learning and should be avoided.

Creating quality learning opportunities that integrate essential knowledge and promote students being actively literate, critical thinkers, and community engaged should be the goal. Educators can deepen learning by focusing on engaging students while building essential knowledge at home.

Educators need to consider student variables that will impact learning at this time:

- Students may have
  - multiple classes
    - How are you working with other teachers?
  - Other responsibilities, watching younger siblings, etc.
    - Can you capitalize on the learning opportunity of your students teaching younger siblings and meeting your objectives?
  - Personal or family illness
    - Have you created a feedback loop for parents or students to share information with you that may be important?
  - Limited access to devices and internet
    - Do you have an asynchronous alternative for instruction?
  - Difficulty focusing due to added stress and possible trauma related to the current ever changing situation
    - You may need to consider involving a school counselor.
  - Limited English language support from family members at home



- Have you collaborated with the ESOL teacher?
  - Have you provided parent directions in an accessible language?
- Lack of support for instruction
  - Are parents still working? Does the student have adequate support to complete the assignment in comparison to other students?
- Multiple children in the home
  - Is there an opportunity to streamline some of the assignments for a family project that would allow for groups working together in the home?
- IEP, 504, LPAC
  - Are you providing necessary accommodations and supports for students to be able to access and complete assignments?
  - General education teachers and students should be collaborating with support staff.

## How much time should be planned for students to be engaged in learning?

*“It is not enough to be busy...The question is: what are we busy about?”  
Henry David Thoreau*

There has been much discussion regarding how students are held accountable for learning and the expected amount of time for students to spend on school work each week. The 6 hour instructional day has been waived for schools and students. School districts should provide guidance to their teachers regarding expectations for the amount of time students should be spending on school work and prioritizing essential standards.

The following are **recommendations** for the amount of time a student should be engaged in school work each day through any delivery model. This includes instruction and assignments. Recommendations are based on a review of guidance from other states and discussions with local schools and parents. We want parents/students to focus on the process of learning. Engagement is the key to reducing any learning regression.

Recommended Time on “School Work”	
PK-4	30-60 minutes a day, maximum of 5 hours a week
5-8	45-90 minutes a day, maximum of 7 ½ hours a week

9-12	60-150 minutes a day, maximum of 12 ½ hours a week
* Students in AP or concurrent courses will most likely exceed the recommended times.	
<b>All students should be reading regularly in addition to instructional time.</b>	

Schools may consider alternating subjects and days and providing ample time for educators to plan and work together to meet the needs of students. Schools may also consider limiting the total amount of time per subject per week.

***The amount of learning time will vary for students depending on their individual needs (some may need more or less than the recommended times). The above recommendations are for districts to consider while making their local decision and are not requirements.***

### **Should all teachers be available each day?**

Local decisions should determine the availability of educators for instruction, meetings, and support. Schools are encouraged to set up a hotline that includes extended hours for parents and students to communicate with educators about assignments. Calls may be forwarded to the child’s teacher, team, or subject area educator who is familiar with assignments to provide support. Again, districts are encouraged to create cross curricular teams and focus on the essential skills.

Teachers could be collaborating and building on each other's strengths.

Example: If writing a research paper with proper sources is the essential skill for English 11 and 12, then a group of educators could be working together to design the lessons and support. One teacher may record and upload a lesson designed by the team, while other teachers (English, and speciality) make direct phone contacts with students or assist with grading. If the health teacher has a topic that is essential, then the health topic can become part of the model lesson for determining a reliable source in English class.

The nature of a professional learning community is to be collaborative, to ensure the teaching and learning process is both effective and efficient. This work is hard enough; a true professional learning community is working daily in a collaborative process to meet the needs of all students. Schools who are working as teams, and have developed a systematic plan for contact and support, will be able to find a balance. Four

or five teachers calling one parent or student over 2-3 days may be overwhelming for the parent and teachers, as compared to 1-2 teachers or other staff members checking in for the team.

**Not calling or making contact by phone, text, Zoom, or email is not acceptable. An attempt to contact each student at least once weekly is recommended. Creating a team approach to ensure contact by at least one person from school is important.**

## **How much planning time should teachers have each day?**

“Give me six hours to chop down a tree and I will spend the first four sharpening the axe.”  
Abraham Lincoln.

Schedules should be flexible for students and teachers. If a district reduces the amount of direct student contact, then the district might want to encourage an increase in collaborative teacher teams planning and supporting one another. As the time for remote learning extends, the remote working conditions will likely increase the feelings of isolation of individual teachers unless the district takes proactive steps to ensure collaboration can continue.

STOP thinking of the traditional school day and START thinking globally about professional teachers supporting one another. If the educator was a hardworking professional prior to COVID-19, then trust they will remain a hardworking educator remotely. Many educators are putting in more hours than in a traditional setting; giving grace and flexibility to those who have met your expectations previously will be appreciated. Allowing flexibility for educators could allow the district to provide instruction or make contacts in the evenings for some students.

## **Should CTE courses be offered during AMI days?**

Career and Technical teachers are encouraged to collaborate with the core content teachers to integrate applied learning concepts into core content instruction. The primary focus should be on core content learning within the Career and Technical Education (CTE) context when possible. Many CTE courses require hands-on practice and demonstration of technical skills that require the use of industry based-tools and equipment that are not readily accessible to students and may not be possible to teach in an online or distance setting. District will need to determine how they will offer or blend CTE courses within their extended year AMI plans. For more information related to CTE go to the following [link](#).

## **How do Student Success Plans fit into AMI?**

Student Success Plans are an on-going and intentional process of planning for secondary students, not a piece of paper or a one time conference. Many schools create these plans for elementary students as well. Districts are encouraged to make Student Success Plans part of lesson planning these final weeks. Student Success Plans should cover four key areas: pathways to graduation; acceleration or enrichment opportunities; remediation; and college and career planning. Districts may choose to create appointments or assignments relevant to a Student Success Plan. All districts have access to their chosen College and Career Readiness tool provided by the state and are urged to use the tool during this time as part of instruction.

## **Can professional development provided to teachers in May, count for the 2020-2021 school year?**

A district has the discretion to count new professional development, beginning May 1, 2020, for the 20-21 school year PD requirements while still operating under the current school year (2019-2020) contract days.

## **What type of communication should be considered during extended AMI for parents and students?**

Districts and schools should create a communication plan regarding extended AMI that is transparent. It is not the intention of remote learning that parents become the sole provider of educational content, but schools will rely on parent support. With a strong partnership between homes and schools, we can keep students progressing in their education during this unprecedented time.

Districts or schools should limit the use of multiple communication platforms in order for the communication to be streamlined for parents and students. Many districts have a calling/texting notification system that can be easily used to communicate with parents and students. Districts should communicate changes that impact students including grading practices, time on task, assignments, health and well-being. Many schools are the hub of the community, and how the school communicates and

responds during this time will have a tremendous impact on the community response to COVID-19.

### **Should the district solicit feedback during this time of school closures?**

Yes, the district should create a method for parents, students, and faculty to provide feedback regarding AMI instruction, support, and needs. This could be done using a survey platform, such as Google Survey, SurveyMonkey or within a class packet for work. Allowing stakeholders to give honest feedback and the district being able to respond to that feedback in a timely manner is critical.

The district should continue to take the health and safety of their students, staff, and community into consideration. A communication system that includes a readily accessible method to provide feedback allows for the opportunity to share information privately that the district may not be aware of during this time. Has a parent lost a job? Is someone in the home sick or at a high risk? Do school employees have internet access? Being informed allows the district to provide flexibility and support as needed.

### **What guidelines for faculty should a district consider?**

Faculty and staff want clear expectations and a plan. They are the best method for communicating with your students and provide a sense of normalcy to many of them. It is recommended that administrative/leadership teams confer frequently, especially at times when important information needs to be shared with the public and school staff. Having a consistent messaging and clarity of the school's plan is critical.

It is recommended that building/district level administration:

- Set weekly digital meetings with the entire faculty and staff
- Are aware of faculty and staff who may feel disconnected, and look for ways to engage them
- Set weekly digital meetings for grade levels and content areas to collaborate
- Continue to check on the status of faculty and their ability to deliver instruction effectively
- Have faculty working together to identify students who are excelling and have adequate support, and those who are not and may need more assistance
- Provide flexibility in work times, delivery, and daily work assignments
- Create teams that cast a net of support for a group of students
- Utilize all faculty and subjects to create meaningful lessons
  - Educators are talented professionals who can work together to design purposeful lessons aimed at essential skills and knowledge if given the time.
  - Have teams set times for collaboration

- Set clear minimum and maximum expectations for instruction

- Conduct a needs assessment regarding technology needs
- Have a plan of action to address needs of students with 504s, IEPs, LPACs
- Ensure special education teachers are working with general education teachers

## How should a school handle paper packets going out and coming in?

Schools need to be mindful of safe social distancing and safety regarding paper packets. Faculty putting packets together should follow health and safety guidelines including screening, as well as wearing a face mask and gloves while printing and handling materials for students.

If a district is requiring paper packets to be returned, schools will need to set procedures for health and safety of staff. It is recommended that you ask only what is being graded to be returned. You may also consider asking the student or parent to upload a picture to email, or send by text if possible.

## What should grading look like during extended AMI?

The state has provided flexibility pertaining to the uniform grading scale and districts have flexibility in this area. Districts may continue to issue a numeric/letter grade, or they may consider other alternatives such as a pass/incomplete model or a demonstration of content mastery approach.

Grading decisions should be based on the principle of *no educational harm to any child*. This pandemic and the statewide closure of onsite instruction has impacted education in ways that we have never before experienced; therefore, we would strongly encourage districts to think about grading options, and how remote learning has impacted students' grades. **The expectation is that during the extended closure there should not be a negative impact on students.** We ask that districts consider allowing students make-up assignments, extended time, etc. to help improve grades when possible. Individual student engagement or disengagement should be addressed locally. There are factors outside of the control of the school system with learning being moved off site; therefore, the aim is that student grades are not lowered as a result of remote learning.

Districts should consider the following questions:

What is our current purpose for grading during extended AMI?

Are our current practices and work submission procedures within remote learning aligned with that purpose?

Are we ensuring learning or compliance by our current grading practice?

The emphasis for all graded assignments should be on the identified essential skills. The focus for any schoolwork assigned, reviewed, and completed during the remote learning period should be on learning, not on compliance. *“Two grades a week is compliance driven,”* compared to submitting work that demonstrates the mastery of an essential skill. Districts that are continuing to collect hardcopy materials should only require what will be graded to be submitted.

All students should have the opportunity to redo, makeup, or try again to complete, show progress, or attempt to complete work assigned prior to the remote learning period. Options for self-assessment are a great option for students to report on their level of learning and progress. A focus on keeping children emotionally and physically safe, fed, and engaged in learning should be our first priority during this unprecedented time. Many districts across the state have established the 3rd 9 weeks grade as the baseline, and provided opportunities for students to improve.

Although many districts may move away from the traditional grading scale during remote learning, feedback should continue to be provided regularly. Feedback is a highly effective means to communicate with students regarding work submitted. Remember, while focusing on essential skills, the goal is mastery. Feedback should be used to encourage and motivate learners to access content and engage in suggested activities such as discussion boards, reflections, short essays, etc. Feedback should be personalized, informative, and tailored to the assignment or lesson.

The DESE APSCN team will work with schools to modify reporting options in eSchool and is ready to help districts think through unique situations. Options to consider include:

- Option A) Process grades as normal. All setups are currently in place for this procedure. Grades will be submitted for the fourth 9 weeks as normal during a typical grading period and Semester grades will be processed as normal. No eSchool changes necessary.
- Option B) Schools may opt to carry the third 9 weeks grade to the fourth 9 weeks and average the two 9 weeks grades to provide the semester grade. This process will require setup changes. A district’s eSchool administrator should seek assistance from APSCN field support technicians. Fourth 9 weeks work can be used to modify the grade at the end of the year.
- Option C) Pass/Incomplete option. (Pass/Fail is not recommended) The district may issue a Pass/Incomplete type grade. The parameters of the pass/incomplete grade option will be defined by the district. This option will require setup changes in eSchool, will vary depending on the school district, and will require assistance from eSchool field support technicians. This option will require district personnel to enter a semester grade for each student. And it is



highly encouraged that this option be well planned prior to implementation by the district's eSchool administrator and administrative staff.

District eSchool administrators should contact their education service cooperative APSCN field tech for assistance or guidance on making changes to grading processes in eSchool.

### **What if a parent or student refuses to participate in AMI?**

While it is important that students participate in AMI, it is equally important that assignments and instruction are viewed as valuable. Assignments that are viewed as busy work or unreasonable undermine the goals of AMI learning, and parents and students will disengage. If large numbers of students or families have disengaged from the work, administrators are encouraged to review assignments from impacted grades or courses. The district does have flexibility to make final determinations for grades based on a mastery of the identified standards.

Attempts to contact the family through the school counselor, administration, or a faculty member who has an established relationship is highly recommended to determine if there's a legitimate reason. Did the parents not understand the purpose of AMI? Is there a factor beyond the families current control that is preventing the student from AMI? Based on the reason, the district may design an AMI plan for an individual student that addresses the identified reason. The individual AMI may be a different delivery mode, different assignment or project, or timeframe. Additionally, the school may determine that face-to-face instruction through a summer program may be more appropriate and mark the student as incomplete at this time.

### **Are districts required to enroll new students at this time?**

If a new student moves into your district as a resident and contacts you regarding enrollment, please work with the family to enroll the student or create a plan that best meets the needs of the student.

If the student is transferring from another Arkansas school, work with the family and previous district to determine the best course of action regarding AMI and enrollment. If the move is temporary as a result of the current health crisis (example: moved in with grandparent because parents are working), work with the previous district to determine if they can continue to provide AMI and do not enroll the student. If the

previous district cannot continue to provide AMI or the guardian requests enrollment, the receiving district must enroll.

Districts need to involve their homeless liaison and be mindful of the McKinney-Vento Act requiring the identification of homeless youth and the services and supports those children and youth are entitled to. McKinney-Vento defines homeless children and youth to be those who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. Under the larger umbrella, sharing housing due to a loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason does qualify as homeless and students are entitled to the support and protections of the Act.

Regardless, if the move is temporary or permanent, a family requesting to enroll should be enrolled. Students moving into the state from “hot spots” should follow the CDC guidance pertaining to quarantine.

### **Are schools required to use the state supported Arkansas AMI?**

No, Arkansas AMI is an option for districts to utilize. It was designed to provide support for educators and parents across the state. Arkansas AMI does not replace the teacher or district responsibility for providing and supporting learning. Arkansas AMI will continue through May 22nd.

### **What is Arkansas AMI?**

Arkansas AMI is a partnership with Arkansas PBS and the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education to provide AMI resources for districts. Arkansas PBS broadcasts streamlined, curriculum-based programming for the state’s pre-K through 8th grade, while DESE creates learning guides associated with the PBS broadcasts that may be personalized to provide AMI instruction for students across Arkansas.

Content aligns with current state standards so that programming is flexible enough to serve as both supplemental and fundamental, based on timing and need. Educators and parents also have access to bilingual lesson plans and curriculum materials to facilitate meaningful use of the content and support remote learning. Previous Arkansas Teachers of the Year are hosting the segments each day.

### **How do I access the Arkansas Learning Guides?**

The Arkansas AMI Learning Guides are released each Tuesday and posted to the DESE AMI webpage, allowing the district time to customize. Learning Guides that are

personalized to meet the needs of individual students and reflect district identified essential skills will be more beneficial. These resources are meant to provide a foundation of support for educators and families engaging in AMI.

Districts using the learning guides are encouraged to sign up for notifications when new resources are posted on the DESE web page and may register at this [link](#). Registering does not require the district to use the templates, it simply provides you with notice of new releases or updates to the guides. The District and Teacher Learning Guides and Resources [Google folder](#) posted on the DESE AMI web page allows a district to “Make a Copy” of the documents within Google and customize.

Each Arkansas AMI Learning Guide (PK-2, 3-5, and 6-8) has multiple learning opportunities in literacy, math, and science. Each Learning Guide is also available in Spanish, and includes various other resources to support schools implementing this remote mode of delivery. The guides can be modified to adjust the number of student learning opportunities each week, based on age and grade level. A district checklist, as well as teacher guidance documents are available for each grade band in the [Google folder](#). Consideration for grading through a district customized self-reporting tool is also included. While the Arkansas AMI was designed to be a turnkey option for schools, the ability to customize allows educators to take ownership of the learning opportunities available to their students. All PBS shows are recorded and available on-line, and districts may utilize earlier programming and guides at later dates if needed. It is particularly important for districts using this option to consider customization as school closures have been extended to the end of the year.

## What channel can I find Arkansas PBS

Arkansas PBS is available statewide over the air or through select cable and satellite providers. More information about how to watch can be found at [myarkansaspbs.org/channelinformation](http://myarkansaspbs.org/channelinformation).

- KAFT-Channel 13 (Northwest AR)
- KEMV-Channel 6 (North Central AR)
- KTEJ-Channel 19 (Northeast AR)
- KETS-Channel 2 (Central AR)
- KETG-Channel 9 (Southwest AR)
- KETZ-Channel 12 (Southeast AR)

- This same broadcast content will livestream online at [myarkansaspbs.org/ArkansasAMI](http://myarkansaspbs.org/ArkansasAMI)
- It is also available on-demand and archived on the website each day by 10 a.m. Content will remain archived and available the entire time students are out of school due to COVID-19
- *Engage Arkansas PBS* app
- On-demand services and devices such as **Apple TV and Roku** where the PBS app is available
- Arkansas PBS channel for YouTube TV subscribers

For help with broadcast or finding Arkansas PBS on TV, contact Arkansas PBS Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Call 501-682-2386 or email [info@myarkansaspbs.org](mailto:info@myarkansaspbs.org).

### **What time do the shows air on Arkansas PBS:**

The shows are broadcasted each day in three grade band segments. Each segment is hosted by an Arkansas Teacher of the Year.

8:00 - 9:30 a.m. Grades PreK-2nd

9:30 - 11:00 a.m. Grades 3-5

11:00 a.m.- 1:00 p.m. Grades 6-8

### **What if Arkansas PBS is not available in a location or students don't have access?**

All of the learning guides have learning opportunities that do not require watching the high interest PBS shows. DESE has also created Generic Learning Guides that do not link to any of the PBS programming. These guides may be found on the DESE AMI web page in the same [Google folder](#) with other resources.

## Special Populations and AMI instruction

### **What type of support and services should the school be providing to students with disabilities?**

The impact of AMI needs to be considered for each child based on their individual needs and how they will access the special education services and supports outlined in their Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504. As you modify the district plan for AMI, the district will need to ensure students with disabilities have equal access to the curriculum as compared with their peers.

#### **Actions to Take Before, During, and After an Extended School Closure**

The district remains responsible for the free appropriate public education (FAPE) of its students who are eligible for special education services with an IEP. FAPE may include, as appropriate, special education and related services provided through distance instruction virtually, online, or telephonically. Districts should be communicating with parents and guardians prior to, during, and after a school closure regarding their child's IEP services. After an extended closure, districts are responsible for reviewing how the closure impacted the delivery of special education and related services to students and should plan accordingly to support each student's needs.

#### **Special Education teachers should continue to collaborate with general education teachers to assist with instruction.**

DESE COVID-19 Guidance for Special Education Unit [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQ\) Link](#)

The following site provides recommended [Supports for Students With Disabilities](#).

The following site provides recommended [Supports for Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities](#).

### **Are Telehealth services available to students for Medicaid reimbursement?**

On March, 23, 2020, the Division of Medical Services (DMS-Medicaid) released a policy update memorandum regarding the use of telehealth for Occupational, Physical, and Speech Therapy during the COVID-19 outbreak. The memorandum allows for therapy to be provided in the home of a student via telehealth and widens the technology options that may be used for this purpose. DESE has distributed this information to various school personnel along with a

document that provides clarifying points regarding the new DMS-Medicaid policy. The DMS memorandum may be found at the following website:  
[https://humanservices.arkansas.gov/images/uploads/resources/Memorandum\\_DMS-04\\_%28D-D-therapy-telehealth%29%28FINAL%29.pdf](https://humanservices.arkansas.gov/images/uploads/resources/Memorandum_DMS-04_%28D-D-therapy-telehealth%29%28FINAL%29.pdf). Additional information is available on the DESE COVID-19 website.

### **What type of support should a district consider for dyslexia services?**

District's should provide dyslexia intervention services if possible. As with all educational services, the provision of dyslexia services will be impacted and may not be delivered with fidelity. However, creating a plan of support and communicating with parents and students regarding services is important. The district should consider how current practices and programs can be modified to meet the needs of students. Depending on time and access, the district may provide dyslexia instruction as part of the literacy block. After an extended closure, districts should review how the closure impacted the delivery of dyslexia services to students and should plan accordingly to support each student's needs.

### **What type of support should a district consider for ESOL?**

While some English Learners may be able to progress with the same AMI activities or related supports as provided to all students, keep in mind that if a student needs language support at school, they will also need it at home. This may include providing differentiated materials, visuals, language scaffolds such as sentence frames for responses, and graphic organizers. Schools will need to address any accommodations a student might need whether through distance learning or other means. Keep in mind that English Learners often need practice speaking about a topic before being able to clearly write about that topic. Consider this when creating writing assignments, especially for students at the lower levels of English proficiency.

Schools should continue to provide opportunities for students to develop the English language. Suggestions include providing AMI packets/resources similar in type of ELD services that are provided to students at school. Students at lower levels of English proficiency may need alternate activities to work on ELD.

DESE has developed a list of accommodations and related resources ([Supports and Accommodations for English Learner](#)) to consider by grade band, but this is not an exhaustive list. Teachers may want to highlight the items a parent could use to support their child's learning, while ensuring the selected supports and accommodations align with each student's identified language needs. A bank of resources to assist districts with these three key areas is [available here](#).

## **Should the district continue to provide GT services?**

As school closures are extended, school and district teams are encouraged to work collaboratively to ensure the needs of gifted and talented students are taken into consideration in planning for student learning. GT educators should be working with general educators to personalize instruction as needed and offering opportunities to challenge and extend thinking. Additional guidance on [Gifted Education Considerations](#) may be found on the DESE AMI webpage.

## **Can concurrent courses be modified and the student still receive credit?**

Students, including graduating seniors, must meet the objectives of concurrent courses to receive college credit. Students taking online concurrent courses will continue as usual to receive college credit. Districts should contact their college liaisons to determine the most feasible means to arrange completion of face-to-face concurrent courses. Examples may include migrating students into online sections or students completing the courses via correspondence. ADHE encourages colleges to provide flexible and innovative approaches in assisting students and districts with the completion of concurrent courses while maintaining academic integrity and quality learning experiences.

## **Is there additional support for students taking AP classes and preparing for the AP exams?**

The [AP College Board](#) will be supporting students by providing access to AP content and AP exams. For each AP subject, there will be two different testing dates. The full exam schedule, specific free-response question types that will be on each AP exam, and additional testing information is available on the DESE website: [AP Guidance](#).

## **In Summary:**

In terms of training for an endurance race, coaches have to determine the level of tolerance for their athletes based on the conditions. Have you determined the current “tolerance” level for your students, parents, and staff?

Each district is unique, and schools will need to determine the right balance between instruction and health. Learning will continue in Arkansas, as we determine what is expected through AMI, and continue to keep the health and safety of students, staff, and community at the forefront.