



**Karen B. Salmon, Ph.D.**  
State Superintendent of Schools



**MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**  
**Division of Early Intervention and Special Education Services**  
**IMPLEMENTATION BEST PRACTICES & CONSIDERATIONS**

*Marcella E. Franczkowski, M.S., Assistant State Superintendent*

**DATE ISSUED: January 2021**

## **TIPs to Support Concurrent Virtual and Face to Face Instruction**

As local school systems and individual schools continue to flexibly transition between virtual, hybrid, and face-to-face instruction, educators are collaborating to ensure each student with a disability has access to grade level general education instruction with adaptations to meet each student’s unique learning needs.

### **Consideration Questions**

- *How will students receive support in the physical and/or virtual environment? How will students indicate when help is needed?*
- *How can the environment be reconfigured to enable students to interact and see the teacher(s) when some are virtual and some are physically present?*
- *What individual scheduling considerations need to be made to ensure the IEP is followed and opportunities for engagement with general education peers are maintained or expanded?*
- *Which new paradigms for student groupings or assignments of specialized educators provide greater benefit for students?*

### **CONCURRENT INSTRUCTION: LOGISTICS**

#### **Effective Strategies for Concurrent Instructional Delivery**

- Implement a team-teaching approach, in which one or two teachers are on site to support those in the physical classroom while one teacher is virtually teaching all students. In this model, the in-person support teacher remains with students while the virtual instructor

changes for each course period or activity. This teaming strategy may be successful when it is possible to develop and maintain cohorts/pods of students who remain together for the majority of the day across several subjects, especially for elementary or some middle school students.

- To support a sense of class community, use one device to project students in the virtual conference platform, and use another device positioned towards the students who are learning in the classroom so that classmates at home can see their peers in the classroom.
- Consider using blended learning models to support concurrent instruction:
  - The “[flipped classroom](#)” strategy: the teacher intentionally shifts instruction to a more learner-centered model. Short teacher-led lectures are pre-recorded for students to view in advance, shifting explanations, instruction, and/or modeling to video. During synchronous sessions, teachers answer questions, facilitate group activities, and monitor assignments. This model can be applied to in-person, virtual, or concurrent classrooms, with strategic planning for interactions. The goal of the flipped classroom is to promote varied learning activities that improve student pacing, engagement, and active learning opportunities.
  - The “[station rotation](#)” strategy: the teacher has a series of learning activities that students rotate through, which could include a teacher-led session as well as individual and/or small group activities for both in-person and virtual students, utilizing a set schedule.
  - The “[playlist model](#)” strategy (also called the “menu model” or “a la carte”): the teacher provides each student with an individualized set of instructional activities that they complete at their own pace. This strategy allows teachers to include differentiated activities integrated throughout the lesson to support learning and to give students choices, which can increase engagement. Consider how students who need accommodations and supports to complete individual activities will receive them (both in-person and online).

## **Innovative Practices for Addressing Concurrent Teaching Challenges**

If a school/system has an existing partnership with a college or university, collaborate to determine if new teacher candidates can support the development and/or monitoring of instruction.

## **CONCURRENT INSTRUCTION: SUPPORT BY PARAEDUCATORS**

### **Roles of Paraeducators in Supporting Concurrent Instruction**

- If a student joins a general education class from school, but the majority of their classmates participate via virtual learning, consider how paraeducators can collaborate with, and receive training from, special educators to support embedded instruction and maximize inclusive opportunities for skill development.
- In some cases, due to class size limitations to support social distancing, schools/systems may

elect to have paraeducators continue to support students via technology from another room or their home. In this case, paraeducators can support the ongoing learning of students attending class virtually while the teacher assists students who are physically in the classroom.

- Consider having paraeducators facilitate social interactions, such as lunch bunches and virtual recesses, to build community among virtual and in-person students and support social interaction goals.
- Paraeducators may pre-record videos or mini-lessons that can be facilitated in a concurrent setting for small groups of students in-person or those accessing instruction online.

### **Preparing Paraeducators to Support Concurrent Instruction**

- Provide paraeducators with ongoing opportunities for professional development, ensuring that the topic is timely and relevant to the current instructional model and roles/responsibilities.
- Ensure paraeducators have access to technology or other needed resources to support students. This includes tools used to provide access to instruction for students or technology-based accommodations, such as speech-to-text, closed captioning, integrating augmented communication, etc.
- If paraeducators do not have consistent access to technology, consider how they may engage in lesson planning in support of teachers by preparing learning materials and creating resources.

## **CONCURRENT INSTRUCTION: TOOLS AND STRATEGIES**

### **Tools/Strategies to Support Engagement**

- Embed the use of [PearDeck](#), [Classroomscreen](#), [Nearpod](#), or similar technology to monitor and increase student engagement both in class and on a virtual conferencing platform (i.e., Zoom).
- Adapt traditional engagement strategies, such as think-pair-share and gallery walks, to virtual platforms ([8 Strategies to Improve Participation in Your Virtual Classroom](#)). Engage students in activation and engagement strategies in both the face-to-face and digital setting by concurrently running the activities or having students who are physically in the classroom login to a virtual platform to participate.

### **Tools/Strategies to Support Self-Advocacy**

- Utilize breakout room features in video conferencing platforms to provide opportunities for students to request a break or seek assistance. If a breakout room feature is not available, create a separate virtual space for students.
- Develop and reinforce the same language or process for requesting a break or assistance in person and in virtual instruction to build self-advocacy in both environments.
- Continue to provide students with visual cues & supports to advocate for assistance, breaks, etc.



## **Tools/Strategies to Support Perseverance**

Consider differentiating instruction to meet a variety of student needs, such as the use of:

- Tiered assignments: Different tasks are assigned to different students with varying degrees of challenge and/or complexity to meet the same learning goal.
- Independent Projects: Instructional tasks that offer choice and are multifaceted to appeal to auditory, visual, tactile and kinesthetic learners.
- Flexible groupings: Allows students to rotate into different groups with different partners or within small groups.

## **Tools/Strategies to Support Accessibility**

- Explore the remote control features to provide modeling and/or address accessibility issues in virtual platforms. ([Zoom Help Center - Remote Control](#))
- Utilize a program to make PDF files interactive and accessible for all students (i.e., Kami).
- Teach students to use text-to-speech, speech-to-text, word prediction, and other assistive technology tools as an alternative to accommodations delivered by a person to enable independent, active participation in classes and learning activities.

## **Tools/Strategies to Engage and Support Parents and Families**

- Provide opportunity for small-group and individual sessions for supporting parents and families with technology questions.
- Utilize technology (i.e., [AnyDesk](#)) to access screens remotely and model actions for parents/families.
- Regularly check in with parents/families and gather information about needs related to access, supporting students with instruction, social/emotional concerns, etc., regardless of the student's participation in virtual or hybrid instruction.

## **Tools/Strategies for Administering Formative Assessment**

- Utilize digital tools to engage students during formative assessment ([75 Digital Tools/Apps for Teachers to Support Formative Assessment.](#))
- Use system-wide or pre-developed data collection tools (e.g., Excel spreadsheets, Google Forms) to track and monitor student progress with consistency among service delivery models.
- Utilize skills-based rubrics and one-on-one conferencing to develop flexible, choice-based assessments and provide timely, specific feedback to students. ([How Conferencing for Assessments Benefits Students During Hybrid Learning](#)).

## **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

- [The Concurrent Classroom: Using Blended Learning Models to Teach Students In-person and Online Simultaneously](#)

**Maryland State Department of Education**  
**Division of Early Intervention and Special Education Services**  
***TIPs to Support Concurrent Virtual and Face to Face Instruction***

- [Strategies for Assessing Students Remotely](#)
- [What is Blended Learning?](#)

---

© 2021 Maryland State Department of Education. Produced under the guidance of Marcella E. Franczkowski, Assistant State Superintendent, Division of Early Intervention and Special Education Services. Please include reference to the Maryland State Department of Education, Division of Early Intervention and Special Education Services on any replication of this information. To request permission for any use that is not “fair use” as that term is understood in copyright law, contact the Maryland State Department of Education, Division of Early Intervention and Special Education Services, 200 West Baltimore Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21201, 410-767-0249 voice.

**Karen B. Salmon, Ph.D.**, State Superintendent of Schools

**Clarence C. Crawford**, President, Maryland State Board of Education

**Larry Hogan**, Governor

**Carol A. Williamson, Ed.D.**, Deputy State Superintendent for Teaching and Learning

**Marcella E. Franczkowski, M.S.**, Assistant State Superintendent, Division of Early Intervention and Special Education Services

200 West Baltimore Street  
Baltimore, Maryland 21201  
[MarylandPublicSchools.org](http://MarylandPublicSchools.org)  
[MarylandLearningLinks.org](http://MarylandLearningLinks.org)