

Re-Entry: Virtual Students; ADM; and Instructional Time



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On June 5, 2020, the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) issued its guidance to schools on re-entry to school (IN-CLASS) and it provides for health and safety measures schools should consider when coming back to school for the Fall 2020 semester. One item to consider is how instruction will be delivered to students given the required restrictions and that some students will not be able to return to school or feel comfortable in coming back to the physical school building for instruction. Many school corporations are considering as part of their re-entry plan to provide instruction virtually through e-Learning or other methods.

Providing instruction virtually brings into play the definition of a virtual student, which is defined as a student who receives more than fifty percent (50%) of instruction through technology wherein the student is separated from their teacher(s) in time or space or both. Under the basic tuition support formula, a school corporation receives eighty-five percent (85%) of the foundation amount. School administrators have expressed concern if e-Learning is provided upon returning to school, these students would be reported as virtual students, and the basic tuition support to the school would be reduced based upon the formula.

IDOE has added a third reporting option for schools to use in their ADM counts for such students. This code is to be used only for those students who are provided virtual instruction due solely to COVID-19 issues and concerns. IDOE added the new code for this school year's ADM count only for these students as results from many school corporation surveys suggested some parents do not want the students physically in the school building due to safety and health concerns or other related COVID-19 pandemic reasons. Schools providing students with virtual instruction for COVID-19 reasons should count the students as "Virtual due to COVID" for ADM purposes and document the students such status through written statements from the parent or guardian or forms developed by the school and signed by the parent or guardian.

For more information on this topic, see IDOE's memo and FAQ [HERE](#).

IDOE has also provided guidance on the calculation of instructional time for instructional day purposes. State law requires a minimum amount of instructional time for elementary and secondary grade levels. By law, instructional time includes a "reasonable amount" of passing time between classes. The reasonable amount of passing time is not defined in statute or the IDOE regulations. It is determined locally by the school corporation. Given the distance restrictions that will be required upon returning to school, school schedules may be expanded to allow for a longer period between classes so students may safely move to their next classroom. This expanded passing period may count as instructional time as it is determined at the school level. IDOE does not audit instructional time during the day but only monitors the total instructional days provided by a school corporation.

Additional information may be found [HERE](#).