

2013

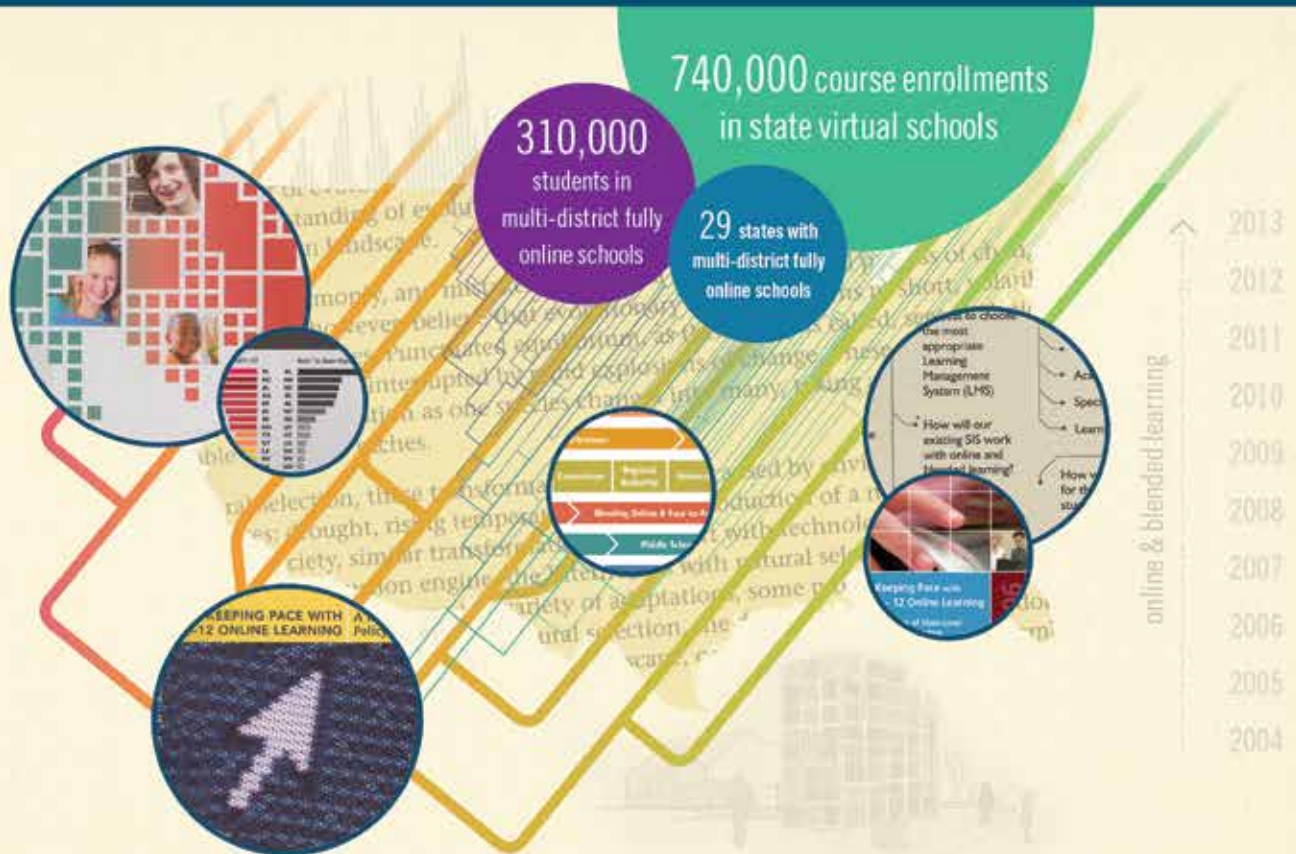
10 YEAR ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

# KEEPING PACE

WITH K-12  
ONLINE &  
BLENDED

LEARNING

An Annual Review of Policy and Practice



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*Wyoming Department of Education*

# Acknowledgments

This is the 10<sup>th</sup> annual *Keeping Pace* report. It is unlikely that when the study was first conceived, anyone thought that it would be around 10 years later, let alone develop to the point that it has.

The digital learning world has changed markedly in 10 years. One thing that hasn't changed is that we continue to receive extraordinary support from sponsors, supporters, educators, education agencies, and others. We are incredibly grateful to all these people and organizations, and everyone who has helped along the way. *Keeping Pace* would not be possible without the spirit of cooperation and collaboration that is common in education.

As *Keeping Pace* has matured, the list of people and organizations involved has grown, and it has become increasingly difficult to acknowledge properly everyone who has been involved over the years. Still, it is worth remembering that the first *Keeping Pace* was published in 2004, in response to a request for timely online education policy information from the Colorado Department of Education (CDE). Stevan Kalmon, then of the CDE, was a strong advocate for the project and was instrumental in its early development. The report originally was envisioned as a simple document that would be distributed only to the sponsoring organizations, but Cathy Gunn, then of the North Central Regional Educational Laboratory at Learning Point Associates, recognized the work's larger value and suggested, and then managed, publication and distribution to a wider audience. The four funding organizations in the first year were the CDE, Illinois Virtual High School (IVHS), Learning Point Associates, and Wisconsin Virtual School.

In 2005 *Keeping Pace* expanded to review all 50 states. The expansion to review the entire country was largely in response to the vision of Matthew Wicks, then of IVHS, who overcame the reluctance of the researchers faced with the daunting task of covering all states. Matt's presence is one of the very few constants in the entire history of *Keeping Pace*, and the report continues to benefit from his thoughtful leadership.

The cast of *Keeping Pace* sponsors evolves every year, with the only common thread being that they are educational organizations that share an interest in online and blended learning and that believe current policy and practice information should be available to practitioners and policymakers. Sponsors provide guidance and leadership in planning, research, analysis, and writing. *Keeping Pace* benefits from the involvement of these experienced and knowledgeable online learning practitioners and their organizations:

## **Andy Scantland**

*Advanced Academics*

## **Rachel Mohl Abrahams**

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## **Pat Laystrom and Mickey Revenaugh**

*Connections Education*

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*The Virtual High School*

## **Lachelle Brant and Scott Bullock**

*Wyoming Department of Education*

## **Program Advisory Board**

With the rapid growth of online and blended learning being offered by individual schools and districts, in 2013 we added a formal *Keeping Pace* advisory board to ensure that the program

perspective is well represented in the report. The following people gave their time and expertise freely, and we deeply appreciate their insights and assistance:

**Suzanne Falkenstein**  
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*Minneapolis Public Schools (MN)*

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The educators and policymakers who gave their time to provide the information for *Keeping Pace*, though they are not affiliated with the report in a formal way, are another set of key contributors to the report. We have been consistently surprised by the amount of time and the quality of responses we receive from people around the country; this report would not be possible without their input.

The research required to develop the report continues to grow each year. In addition to the Evergreen team, we brought Sara Frank Bristow on board for state profile research.

We have made every attempt to ensure accuracy of the information in *Keeping Pace*, but we recognize that, in a report of this breadth, some errors of accuracy or omission are likely. We welcome comments, clarifications, and suggestions to [john@evergreenedgroup.com](mailto:john@evergreenedgroup.com).

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# 1 PROGRAMS & POLICY

## Opening Snapshot

### K-12 online and blended learning in 2013

*The following pages provide a snapshot of the K-12 online and blended learning landscape as of late 2013 aligned with a guide to where you can find more information about these topics in the report.*

#### Programs

ACCESS TO ONLINE AND BLENDED LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES CONTINUES TO BE DETERMINED BY ZIP CODE. Florida remains the only state that provides a full range of supplemental and full-time online opportunities to all students across the state. A handful of other states, including Arizona, Minnesota, and Utah, are moving in the same direction by creating policies to support student choice at the school and course level, but do not yet have the student enrollment and course enrollment numbers to demonstrate the success that Florida has shown.

**An increasing number of single-district programs offer a full suite of online options to their students, generally with few enrollments from out-of-district students.** District-level activity is rapidly expanding, and blended learning in particular can now be found in traditional district schools across the country. As blended learning activity expands quickly, questions are being raised about whether or not it is disruptive, and how to ensure quality and accountability of these programs.

**At least 24 states and Washington DC have blended schools.** Many of these schools are charters, allowing them flexibility in how they serve their students. However, an increasing number of these schools are traditional public schools that are changing their teaching and learning models to better meet student needs and sometimes to cut costs.

**Multi-district fully online schools served an estimated 310,000 students in 30 states** in SY 2012-13. For the first time, *Keeping Pace* separates those states that support fully online schools with and without restrictions. In SY 2013-14 there are 20 states operating multi-district fully online schools without restrictions, and nine states operating them with restrictions such as available grade levels, and caps on the number of students per class / school / district / state.

**Consortium and education service agency programs are an increasingly important online learning access point for students and a way for districts to cost-efficiently invest in online blended programs.** *Keeping Pace* has identified at least 75 consortium programs operating across the country, linking districts across counties and local education agencies to offer locally facilitated online options to students.

**State-supported supplemental options include two categories of programs: state virtual schools and states that support course choice programs.** State virtual schools operated in 26 states in SY 2012-13, serving 740,000 course enrollments. Course choice programs are operating in seven states in SY 2013-14, expanding the number of students who have access to state-supported supplemental online courses. Course choice programs operating without a state virtual school remain very small, however.

**An increasing number of private / independent schools are including supplemental online courses and blended learning in their options for students** and as a result, *Keeping Pace* takes a closer look at Private / Independent schools in 2013. We count eight states that allow private students to take courses from state-supported supplemental programs while maintaining their status as private students.



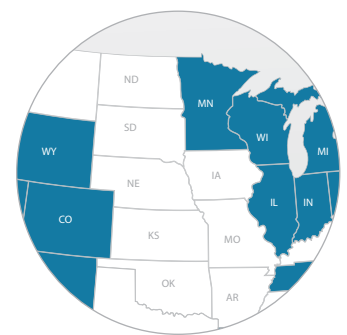
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## Policy

**Course choice programs** are the focus of much conversation and some legislation in 2013, and here we look closely at the policies that created course choice programs in seven states.

As of fall 2013, **four states have online course graduation requirements** in order for students to graduate from high school, and two more states have policies in development that are likely to be in place for students beginning in 2014. Online learning graduation requirements have not spread as much as some people expected when they were first explored and introduced in a couple of states half a decade ago.

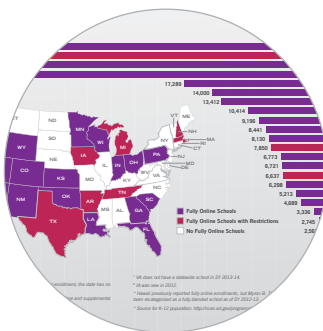
While **MOOCs** are getting a lot of attention in higher education, they are just beginning to be available to students in high schools in some states. We look at the promise and peril of MOOCs, and offer policy considerations.

**“Blended learning: Do we know it when we see it?”** digs into the issue of whether blended learning can be transformative.

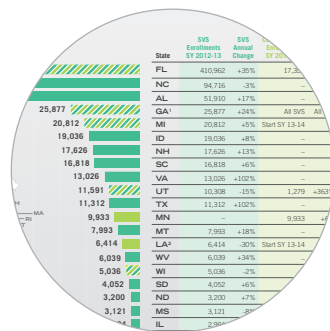
The **Conclusion** gives us an opportunity to take a look back at 10 years of *Keeping Pace*, as well as to look forward in anticipation of what might be coming over the next decade.

## Practice

The **Planning for Quality** section highlights key questions and project management timelines for program leaders who are developing online and blended learning programs. This section includes four key resources:



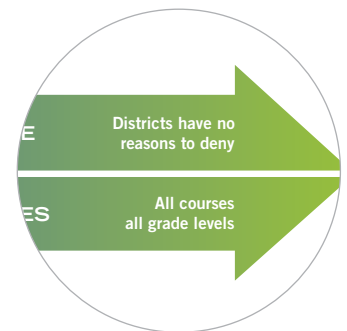
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**Course choice programs**  
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- Key questions involved in planning a blended program
- Timeline for development of a “Traditional time” blended program
- Timeline for development of a “Time-shifted” blended program
- Timeline for development of a Comprehensive district-wide online and blended program

## Profiles

The final 100 pages are dedicated to profiling program and policy activity in each state. Each profile begins with a **State Snapshot** that highlights major programs and identifies key policy issues, as shown below.

**Florida**  
ONLINE & BLENDED LEARNING STATE SNAPSHOT

Florida is a true course choice state, with an estimated 240,000 K-12 students choosing funded online courses from many fully online and supplemental providers in SY 2012-13.

Florida Virtual School, the largest state virtual school in the country, served 410,962 supplemental course enrollments and 5,366 fully online students in grades K-12 in SY 2012-13.

Availability of online learning options	Y	N
Any FULLY BLENDED schools?	●	
Student choice at the school level?	●	
Student choice at the course level?	●	
SFS or another publicly funded option for private / homeschool students?	●	
Prior public school attendance requirement for online schools?	●	
Online caps by class, school, district, or statewide?	●	
PD requirement for online teachers?	●	
State approval process required for online providers?	●	
State approval process required for online courses?	●	
Online learning requirement for students?	●	
End-of-course exams?	●	

Availability of if info: Great, Good, Fair, Poor, Minimal

At least 1, iPrep Academy (Miami).  
Yes, eligible for some PT programs in K-1 and 6-12, and some FT options in K-12.  
Some students must have been enrolled the prior year in a FL public school.  
For VIP for PT and FT providers and virtual charters; includes all courses.  
For standard diploma.

Whether or not a student has access to high-quality online and blended learning options depends on a variety of factors, including state policy; availability of statewide, regional, and local programs; whether that student is public, private, or homeschooled; and what grade levels are served by which options.

The profile narrative provides details on key programs in the state and any policy activity. In states where there is extensive policy history, additional information is available at [www.kpk12.com/states/](http://www.kpk12.com/states/).

**MOOCs in K-12**  
MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses) are courses from organizations including universities. That is the number of students that universities have created MOOCs as an alternative to traditional classroom instruction.

**MOOCs in K-12**  
p. 39

**Planning for Quality – questions**  
A flowchart diagram with three main focus areas: CONTENT, TEACHING, and TECHNOLOGY. Each area has several sub-questions related to curriculum, instruction, and technology integration.

**Planning for Quality – questions**  
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**Planning for Quality – timelines**  
A flowchart diagram showing various stages and timelines for planning and implementation, including sections for 'PLANNING' and 'IMPLEMENTATION'.

**Planning for Quality – timelines**  
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**State profiles**  
A circular graphic showing a state snapshot for a state with 17,289 unique course enrollments. It includes a table for availability of online learning options and a list of key questions.

Availability of online learning options	Y	N
Any FULLY BLENDED schools?	●	
Student choice at the school level?	●	
Student choice at the course level?	●	
SFS or another publicly funded option for private / homeschool students?	●	
Prior public school attendance requirement for online schools?	●	
Online caps by class, school, district, or statewide?	●	
PD requirement for online teachers?	●	
State approval process required for online providers?	●	
State approval process required for online courses?	●	
Online learning requirement for students?	●	
End-of-course exams?	●	

**State profiles**  
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# Definitions

*This section is primarily for readers relatively new to online and blended learning, as it reviews the basic elements of teaching and learning in online and blended formats. It also provides definitions for terms used in the report, while explaining the main categories of online programs highlighted in Keeping Pace. For a longer list of defined terms, see “The Online Learning Definitions Project,” published by iNACOL in October 2011.*

MANY TERMS IN THE FIELD—SUCH AS ONLINE LEARNING, BLENDED LEARNING, HYBRID LEARNING, ELEARNING, VIRTUAL SCHOOLS, AND CYBERSCHOOLS—do not have commonly understood definitions.<sup>1</sup> A complicating factor for a study that reports on state laws and publications from across the country is that many source documents use terms without defining them. *Keeping Pace* primarily uses the terms that we define in this section, but we also use terminology employed by various source documents when we reference states or sources and worry that switching to our preferred terms will create confusion.

**Online learning** is teacher-led education that takes place over the Internet, with the teacher and student separated geographically, using a web-based educational delivery system that includes software to provide a structured learning environment. It may be synchronous (communication in which participants interact in real time, such as online video) or asynchronous (communication separated by time, such as email or online discussion forums). It may be accessed from multiple settings (in school and/or out of school buildings).

**Supplemental online programs** provide a small number of courses to students who are enrolled in a school separate from the online program. Some states refer to these as part-time programs.

<sup>1</sup> iNACOL Online Learning Definitions Project, released October 2011; [http://www.inacol.org/cms/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/iNACOL\\_DefinitionsProject.pdf](http://www.inacol.org/cms/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/iNACOL_DefinitionsProject.pdf)

**Fully online schools**,<sup>2</sup> also called cyberschools, work with students who are enrolled primarily (often only) in the online school. Cyberschools typically are responsible for ensuring their students take state assessments, and are responsible for their students' scores on those assessments. Many fully online schools are charter schools, although there are a growing number of fully online district schools.

For **blended learning**, we use the Christensen Institute definition: "The Institute defines blended learning as a formal education program in which a student learns at least in part through online learning, with some element of student control over time, place, path, and/or pace; at least in part in a supervised brick-and-mortar location away from home; and the modalities along each student's learning path within a course or subject are connected to provide an integrated learning experience.<sup>3</sup> We define **blended schools** as stand-alone schools with a school code (as opposed to programs within a school) that deliver much of their curriculum in a blended format and students are required to show up at a physical site for more than just state assessments.

The ways in which *Keeping Pace* counts student numbers for supplemental programs and full-time programs differ:

**Course enrollments**—one student in one semester-long course—are used to count student numbers in supplemental programs.

**Student enrollments**—defined as one year-long full-time equivalent (FTE) student—are used to count student numbers in fully online schools and blended schools.

**State virtual schools** are created by legislation or by a state-level agency, and/or administered by a state education agency, and/or funded by a state appropriation or grant for the purpose of providing online learning opportunities across the state. (They also may receive federal or private foundation grants and often charge course fees to help cover costs.) Because online programs evolve, some programs are categorized as state virtual schools but do not currently fit the definition, though they may have done so at important stages of their development.

Some states draw a distinction between **single-district programs**, which serve students who reside within the district providing the online courses, and **multi-district programs**, which serve students from multiple districts. Single-district programs may serve a small number of students from outside the home district while retaining single-district status.

*The following abbreviations are found throughout this report.*

**ADA**  
Average daily attendance

**ADM**  
Average daily membership

**BOCES**  
Board of Cooperative Educational Services

**DOE**  
Department of Education

**FTE**  
Full-time equivalent

**FY**  
Fiscal year

**LEA**  
Local education agency

**LMS**  
Learning management system

**MOU**  
Memo of understanding

**PPR**  
Per-pupil revenue

**RFP**  
Request for proposals

**SEA**  
State education agency

**SY**  
School year

<sup>2</sup> In past years we have called these "full-time online schools" instead of "fully online schools." We have made the change to distinguish these fully online schools from blended learning schools.

<sup>3</sup> This updated definition of blended learning from the Christensen Institute was included in its May 2013 paper, "Is K-12 blended learning disruptive? An introduction to the theory of hybrids," available at <http://www.christenseninstitute.org/blended-learning-3/>.

# Landscape

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*This section explores the state of online learning in the summary National Snapshot Table (Table 1).*

## National Snapshot of Online Learning Activity

Table 1 presents all 50 states rated in six categories of online learning activity: fully online and supplemental online options for elementary school, middle school, and high school students.

For each category we assigned one of four ratings:

 Available to ALL students    
  Available to MOST students    
  Available to SOME students    
  NOT available

Ratings are based on expected availability of online learning options to students of all grade levels in all geographic areas of the state during SY 2013-14. Availability is, in turn, based on the existence and attributes of programs, state policy, and funding, and the proportion of the student population that took part in online courses and schools during SY 2012-13. Blended learning programs that rely on students being in a physical school are not included in the assessment because, by definition, they are not available to all students statewide, with some exceptions for large blended programs in sizeable districts if they serve a proportionally large number of students in the state.

The rating for each category in each state is based on a mix of objective metrics and subjective determination; several factors were taken into account. First and foremost, we asked the question:

If students (or their parents) from anywhere in the state are seeking a publicly funded online course or fully online school, how likely is it that they will have access to these opportunities?

The primary question was then subdivided into several subquestions:

1. Do fully online schools or supplemental online programs exist?
2. If such schools and programs exist, are they available to students across the entire state, or are they restricted by location or other factors? In particular, is their total enrollment limited at a level below demand, either explicitly by a cap on enrollments or students, or implicitly by funding constraints?
3. Does the decision to participate in online learning primarily rest with the student and parent or do individual school districts control the decision?
4. Are there other potential barriers, such as enrollment fees, that might discourage some students from participating?

We answered these questions based on the existence and attributes of programs and policies, including funding of online schools and courses. We recognize that our knowledge of policies is imperfect, so we looked at online school and program size relative to the state's school-age population to determine whether barriers, of which we are unaware, might exist. The percentage of the school-age population taking part in online learning in a handful of states with well-known and successful online schools (e.g., Florida and Alabama) created a benchmark against which other states were compared.

We also looked for evidence of significant district programs that provide options beyond state virtual schools and fully online charter schools. In cases where the presence and size of district programs would shift a state's rating, we researched district programs in more detail.

Any summary rating system must balance the competing needs of accurately describing as many data points as possible with keeping the number of categories and ratings low enough to be meaningful. States that have significant online programs that are not available across all grades or locations were particularly challenging. An empty circle does not necessarily mean there are no online learning opportunities in the state in that category. It does suggest that if such options exist they are restricted to a very small percentage of the student population.









































































**Table 1: National snapshot of online learning activity**

Ratings are based on the expected availability of online learning options to students of all grade levels in all geographic areas of the state for SY 2013-14. Availability is, in turn, based on the existence and attributes of programs, state policy, and funding, and the proportion of the student population that took part in online courses and schools during SY 2012-13.

State	GRADES >	SUPPLEMENTAL			FULLY ONLINE		
		K-5 (ES)	6-8 (MS)	9-12 (HS)	K-5 (ES)	6-8 (MS)	9-12 (HS)
<b>Alabama</b>							
<p>The state virtual school, ACCESS, is among the largest state virtual schools in the country. There are no statewide fully online schools. Alabama has an online learning graduation requirement.</p>							
<b>Alaska</b>							
<p>Alaska's Learning Network provides supplemental courses and is available to all districts in the state; there are few fully online schools.</p>							
<b>Arizona</b>							
<p>Arizona Online Instruction (AOI) program has approved 22 online charter schools and 52 districts to offer part- and full-time options; AOI served at least an estimated 42,000 part- and full-time students in SY 2012-13.</p>							
<b>Arkansas</b>							
<p>State virtual school (Arkansas Virtual High School) relaunched in 2012 as Virtual Arkansas, part of the Arkansas Distance Learning Consortium. One full-time virtual charter school served 500 students in grades K-8; its cap is raised to 3,000 in SY 2013-14.</p>							
<b>California</b>							
<p>Many online and blended district and charter schools serve students statewide. Although online schools are restricted by contiguous counties requirement, some educational management companies, such as K12 Inc., have strategically placed virtual charters so that all students in the state have access.</p>							
<b>Colorado</b>							
<p>There were 17,289 unique students served by 58 programs (including 26 multi-district fully online schools) in SY 2012-13, including Colorado Online Learning, the state virtual school.</p>							
<b>Connecticut</b>							
<p>Public Act (PA) No. 10-111 (2010) allowed online learning to be used for credit; two state-led programs offer supplemental courses at high-school level. There are no fully online schools.</p>							
<b>Delaware</b>							
<p>No major programs. An Online World Language Program offered by the DOE that started in SY 2012-13 served 700 students in 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades. There are no fully online schools.</p>							
<b>Florida</b>							
<p>Florida is the first state to provide full- and part-time funded options to all students in grades K-12; an estimated 240,000 students took at least one online class in SY 2012-13. FLVS is the largest state virtual school; it successfully served 410,962 course enrollments in SY 2012-13.</p>							
<b>Georgia</b>							
<p>Georgia Virtual School served 25,877 course enrollments in SY 2012-13. A constitutional amendment enables legislation HB797 (2012) to create a new State Charter Schools Commission and funding formula for virtual charter schools. Growing number of district programs.</p>							
<b>Hawaii</b>							
<p>Hawaii Virtual Learning Network is responsible for expanding online offerings throughout the state and includes the state virtual school. There are two fully blended schools, Hawaii Technology Academy (HTA) and Myron B. Thompson Academy (MBTA).</p>							
<b>Idaho</b>							
<p>Idaho has a large state virtual school, seven fully online schools, and some district programs. Voters overturned SB1184 (2011), a technology-driven education law, by state referendum in November 2012.</p>							

State	GRADES >	SUPPLEMENTAL			FULLY ONLINE		
		K-5 (ES)	6-8 (MS)	9-12 (HS)	K-5 (ES)	6-8 (MS)	9-12 (HS)
<b>Illinois</b>							
<i>Illinois Virtual School is the state virtual school. HB494 (2013) placed a moratorium on new virtual charter schools, but does not impact existing virtual programs, none of which are statewide.</i>							
<b>Indiana</b>							
<i>At least four fully online and five fully blended schools are complemented by numerous statewide (if often fee-based) supplemental programs.</i>							
<b>Iowa</b>							
<i>Iowa Learning Online and Iowa Online AP Academy are the state virtual schools. Iowa's first two fully online schools, Iowa Connections Academy and Iowa Virtual Academy, opened in SY 2012-13.</i>							
<b>Kansas</b>							
<i>There are 13 full-time virtual schools, 67 district/building programs, and eight service center programs serving students with supplemental and fully online options. Participating schools and programs may provide supplemental services.</i>							
<b>Kentucky</b>							
<i>The state closed its state virtual school, Kentucky Virtual Schools, in 2012, redirecting enrollments to other supplemental district programs. JCPSeSchool is one of the larger district programs in the country.</i>							
<b>Louisiana</b>							
<i>The statewide Course Choice program opened in SY 2013-14, expanding upon the Louisiana Virtual School, which served 6,414 course enrollments in SY 2012-13, its final year of operation. Two fully online charter schools operate in the state.</i>							
<b>Maine</b>							
<i>Maine Online Learning Program has eight approved providers that served at least 1,100 course enrollments in SY 2012-13. 17% of middle and high schools participate in The VHS Collaborative.</i>							
<b>Maryland</b>							
<i>State program provides online services to districts. SB674 (2012) set requirements for the review and approval of all online courses by the State Department of Education.</i>							
<b>Massachusetts</b>							
<i>A 2013 Commonwealth Virtual Schools law authorizes up to ten statewide virtual schools to operate at a time; one fully online school is operating under this legislation in SY 2013-14. 26% of middle and high schools participate in The VHS Collaborative.</i>							
<b>Michigan</b>							
<i>Michigan has seven cyber charter schools operating and at least six blended schools in SY 2013-14. Large supplemental online course providers are the state virtual school (Michigan Virtual School) and GenNET, a consortium of districts.</i>							
<b>Minnesota</b>							
<i>Many online charter schools and district programs offering part- and full-time options; 27 providers approved by the department of education.</i>							
<b>Mississippi</b>							
<i>Mississippi Virtual Public School, the state virtual school, served 3,121 course enrollments in SY 2012-13. No other major programs exist.</i>							
<b>Missouri</b>							
<i>State virtual school, Missouri Virtual Instruction Program (MoVIP), enrolls part- and full-time students primarily on a tuition model; it served 1,623 course enrollments in SY 2012-13. There is an increasing number of district and postsecondary-based programs.</i>							
<b>Montana</b>							
<i>Montana Digital Academy, the state virtual school, served 7,993 course enrollments in SY 2012-13. A few small district supplemental programs and one small blended school exist.</i>							

State	GRADES >	SUPPLEMENTAL			FULLY ONLINE		
		K-5 (ES)	6-8 (MS)	9-12 (HS)	K-5 (ES)	6-8 (MS)	9-12 (HS)
<b>Nebraska</b>							
<i>The Nebraska BlendED Initiative offers blended courses to grades 3-12; Omaha Public Schools (OPS) eLearning and other district programs offer online classes to their own students.</i>							
<b>Nevada</b>							
<i>Nevada has 11 online and blended charter schools and 15 district online programs approved by the Nevada Department of Education to offer online programs. Clark County served 28,391 supplemental course enrollments and 180 fully online students in SY 2012-13.</i>							
<b>New Hampshire</b>							
<i>The Virtual Learning Academy Charter School (VLACS) served 17,626 course enrollments in grades 6-12, and 125 fully online students in grades 9-12; it acts as the de facto state virtual school. Twenty middle and high schools (19%) are part of The VHS Collaborative.</i>							
<b>New Jersey</b>							
<i>New Jersey Virtual School and the NJeSchool offer supplemental courses for a fee to students; two blended charter schools open in SY 2012-13.</i>							
<b>New Mexico</b>							
<i>IDEAL-New Mexico is the state virtual school; some district programs including Albuquerque Public Schools' eCADEMY VIRTUAL and two fully online schools operating in SY 2013-14.</i>							
<b>New York</b>							
<i>In SY 2012-13 New York launched a Virtual Advanced Placement® Program involving 17 grantees from BOCES and both small and large school districts. Several other BOCES and iLearnNYC online and blended options exist.</i>							
<b>North Carolina</b>							
<i>North Carolina Virtual Public School has the second highest number of enrollments of any state virtual school (94,716 in SY 2012-13); there are no fully online schools although the State Board of Education has approved procedures for the operation of virtual charter schools.</i>							
<b>North Dakota</b>							
<i>North Dakota Center for Distance Education provides self-paced and scheduled courses to high school and middle school students in state and out of state.</i>							
<b>Ohio</b>							
<i>26 e-schools operating in SY 2013-14; they served 38,519 students in SY 2012-13. ilearnOhio is a state program that guides students to supplemental online courses from approved providers.</i>							
<b>Oklahoma</b>							
<i>Two fully online schools, two virtual charter schools, and two university-managed supplemental programs serve students statewide.</i>							
<b>Oregon</b>							
<i>Oregon has fully online schools, district-level part- and full-time online programs, and the Oregon Virtual School District, a state program. HB2301 (2011) and a series of education reform initiatives passed in 2012 gave students more flexibility in online learning options.</i>							
<b>Pennsylvania</b>							
<i>16 cyber charters served 34,694 students in SY 2012-13. Several school districts are now offering virtual classes and/or programs and many districts operate blended programs in partnerships with Blendedschools.net.</i>							
<b>Rhode Island</b>							
<i>Northern Rhode Island Collaborative offers 80 online courses to grades 3-12 and 24% of middle and high schools in the state participate in The VHS Collaborative. At least three fully blended schools are open in SY 2013-14.</i>							

State	GRADES >	SUPPLEMENTAL			FULLY ONLINE		
		K-5 (ES)	6-8 (MS)	9-12 (HS)	K-5 (ES)	6-8 (MS)	9-12 (HS)
<b>South Carolina</b>							
<i>South Carolina Virtual School Program is the state virtual school; there are six full-time virtual charter schools and some district programs.</i>							
<b>South Dakota</b>							
<i>South Dakota Virtual School (SDVS) is a consortium of course providers approved by the state department of education. There are also a statewide virtual alternative school and other statewide programs that focus on career and technical education and advanced courses via SDVS.</i>							
<b>Tennessee</b>							
<i>Tennessee has one fully online statewide school, at least two fully blended schools, and several district programs including Metro Nashville Public Schools, Memphis Virtual School, and Hamilton County Virtual School.</i>							
<b>Texas</b>							
<i>The Texas Virtual School Network (TxVSN) statewide course catalog served 11,312 course enrollments in SY 2012-13. The TxVSN Online Schools (OLS) program allows for fully online schools in grades 3-12; it served 8,441 students in SY 2012-13.</i>							
<b>Utah</b>							
<i>Four fully online statewide schools and many district programs offer courses through the Statewide Online Education Program. Utah Electronic High School was among the first state virtual schools in the country, and served 10,308 course enrollments in SY 2012-13.</i>							
<b>Vermont</b>							
<i>Vermont Virtual Learning Cooperative, the state virtual school, served 940 enrollments in SY 2012-13. 48% of high schools participate in The VHS Collaborative.</i>							
<b>Virginia</b>							
<i>Virtual Virginia is the state virtual school program; 20 providers who may provide multidivision fully online, supplemental, or blended courses through local school boards are approved for SY 2013-14.</i>							
<b>Washington</b>							
<i>There are 57 approved providers including 18 online course providers, 15 program providers, 19 multi-district online school programs, and 19 single-district online school programs (serving under 10% out-of-district students), serving 19,891 students in part- and full-time programs.</i>							
<b>Washington DC</b>							
<i>Students in K-12 have many blended learning options, and a fully online charter school serves students in grades K-8.</i>							
<b>West Virginia</b>							
<i>West Virginia Virtual School is the state virtual school which uses third-party course providers and local teacher facilitators. Few other options exist.</i>							
<b>Wisconsin</b>							
<i>Wisconsin Virtual School, the state virtual school, and the Wisconsin eSchool Network, a consortium of 19 districts, comprise the Wisconsin Digital Learning Collaborative. 29 virtual charters are authorized to operate in SY 2013-14.</i>							
<b>Wyoming</b>							
<i>The Wyoming Switchboard Network is a collection of distance learning programs that delivers numerous fully online and supplemental options to K-12 students.</i>							



# Program Types

*This section explores six types of online and blended learning program options: single-district programs, blended schools, multi-district fully online schools, consortium programs, state-supported supplemental options, and private / independent schools.*

## **SINGLE-DISTRICT ONLINE**

**PROGRAMS** ARE CREATED BY A DISTRICT PRIMARILY FOR STUDENTS WITHIN THAT DISTRICT. While they may be fully online, most provide supplemental online courses for students enrolled full-time in the district and accessing most of their courses in a physical school. Single-district programs are the fastest-growing segment of blended learning.

A **blended school** is standalone school with a school code where most of the school's curriculum is delivered in a blended form. Attendance is required at a physical site during the school year for more than just state assessments.

**Multi-district fully online schools** are the main education providers for their students, who do not need to go to a physical school to access any aspect of their education (although they may do so). This section of *Keeping Pace* focuses on fully online schools that operate across multiple school districts and often draw students from an entire state.

In 2013, *Keeping Pace* is grouping two significant program types under the category of **state-supported supplemental options**. Historically this category has focused on **state virtual schools**, which are created by legislation or by a state-level agency. They often are administered by a state education agency and funded by a state appropriation to provide online learning opportunities to students across the state. They also may receive federal or private foundation grants, and sometimes charge course fees to help cover operating costs. This category also now includes states with **course choice programs**,

which *Keeping Pace* defines as a program that gives students across a state the option to choose to take a supplemental course from one of multiple providers, does not allow a district to deny a student's request to enroll in an out-of-district course, and where funding follows the student at the course level.

**Consortium online programs** are often developed by districts or intermediate service units that wish to create efficiencies by combining resources. They usually serve students from multiple districts that join the consortium.

**Private/Independent schools** are non-public schools supported through tuition, grants, endowments, and other sources. Many schools in this segment are moving toward online and blended learning as a way to individualize instruction and reduce costs. They are covered in *Keeping Pace* for the first time in 2013.

## Single-district programs

District online and blended programs—those that are created by a school district, entirely or primarily for that district's students—are the largest and fastest-growing segment of online and blended learning, as they have been for several years. The numbers of programs and students, however, are not well known. In other categories of programs, data are generally more available because either 1) the schools are public schools that report data to the state and are identified as online (e.g., fully online charter schools); or 2) the number of programs is limited so we are able to track many of them down and contact them directly (e.g., state virtual schools and large consortium or district programs). Neither of these is true of district programs. Most states do not require single-district programs to report online or blended learning enrollments any differently than they would report traditional classroom enrollments.

In recent years the understanding of district programs has partially improved, although the picture remains murky. *Keeping Pace* 2012 looked at a series of studies that reviewed distance learning nationally, or online and blended learning regionally. These studies were done by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES),<sup>4</sup> the California Learning Resource Network (CLRN) in 2012 and 2013,<sup>5</sup> the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB),<sup>6</sup> and the Evergreen Education Group (for rural Colorado).<sup>7</sup> Taken together these reports painted a picture of a quickly growing field of options for many students across the country. Based on those numbers in *Keeping Pace* 2012 we said 'The total number of students taking part in [online and blended learning] is...likely several million, or slightly more than 5% of the total K-12 student population across the United States.' We believe that the number reported last year has continued to grow steadily, although not explosively, and that most of the students and most of the growth is in single-district programs.

It is clear that an increasing number of districts are making online and blended options available to their students, and that in SY 2013-14 we believe that more than 75% of districts have some online or blended options. It is also apparent that most districts have only a small percentage of students taking advantage of these online and blended opportunities, and many of those are in one category (e.g., recovering credit, taking online Advanced Placement or dual credit courses). Most of these districts are using a single provider for their online courses, which may be a state virtual school or a private provider furnishing course content, the LMS, and perhaps the teacher.

<sup>4</sup> Queen, B., and Lewis, L. (2011). Distance Education Courses for Public Elementary and Secondary School Students: 2009–10 (NCES 2012-008), (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2011), <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2012/2012008.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> California Learning Resource Network, California eLearning Census reports 2012 and 2013, <http://www.clrn.org/census/>

<sup>6</sup> Holly Lynde, Increasing Online Learning Options for K-12 Students: The Role of School Districts (Southern Regional Education Board Educational Technology Cooperative, April 2012), [http://www.sreb.org/cgi-bin/MySQLdb?VIEW=/public/docs/view\\_one.txt&docid=1786](http://www.sreb.org/cgi-bin/MySQLdb?VIEW=/public/docs/view_one.txt&docid=1786)

<sup>7</sup> John Watson and Amy Murin, Blended Learning in Rural Colorado: Status and Strategies for Expansion (Evergreen, CO, Evergreen Education Group, 2012), [http://www.cde.state.co.us/sites/default/files/documents/onlinelearning/download/ruralblendedlearning\\_evergreen.pdf](http://www.cde.state.co.us/sites/default/files/documents/onlinelearning/download/ruralblendedlearning_evergreen.pdf)

Often one or more schools in the district have a learning lab with computers where students access the courses. Districts that are implementing blended schools may not be using fully online courses, but instead may be using a digital courseware provider that is focused on developing skills, usually in mathematics or reading/writing.

At the other end of the spectrum are the relatively few districts offering a comprehensive set of online and blended courses to a significant percentage of the district's students. We estimate that less than 10% of all districts fall into this category. These districts are typically relatively large, and some of the largest district programs are filling in a gap in states that do not have state virtual schools.

Nashville supports supplemental online classes and a fully online program through its MNPS (Metro Nashville Public School) Virtual School. Students can choose from a comprehensive course catalog of core, elective, and Advanced Placement® courses, and all courses are taught by local teachers.

Clark County School District Virtual High School (a district program) launched in fall 2004. It served 28,391 supplemental course enrollments in SY 2012-13, an annual increase of 184%, as well as approximately 180 fully online students, an increase of 21%. The enrollment total included 6,349 course enrollments in summer 2013, an increase of 32%. The majority of its enrollments are in district.

Riverside Virtual School (RVS) offers comprehensive online and blended learning programs to Riverside Unified School District (RUSD) students as well as out-of-district students. It served 1,803 course enrollments for full-time students, a 4% annual increase, and 3,396 supplemental course enrollments, a 15% annual increase, for a total of 5,199 course enrollments during SY 2012-13. RUSD is one of the few districts in the country that tracks blended learning enrollments, serving 22,700 students in SY 2012-13, an increase of 27%.

These districts are among those that are offering a fully online option to students, often for students who are hospitalized or homebound, or who are unable to attend physical schools for some other reason. The creation of fully online schools by individual districts appears to be a growing trend, as in past years most fully online schools were charter schools serving students from multiple districts.

## Blended schools

Full-time blended schools are an increasingly important category of online learning activity. *Keeping Pace* identifies fully blended schools as schools that:

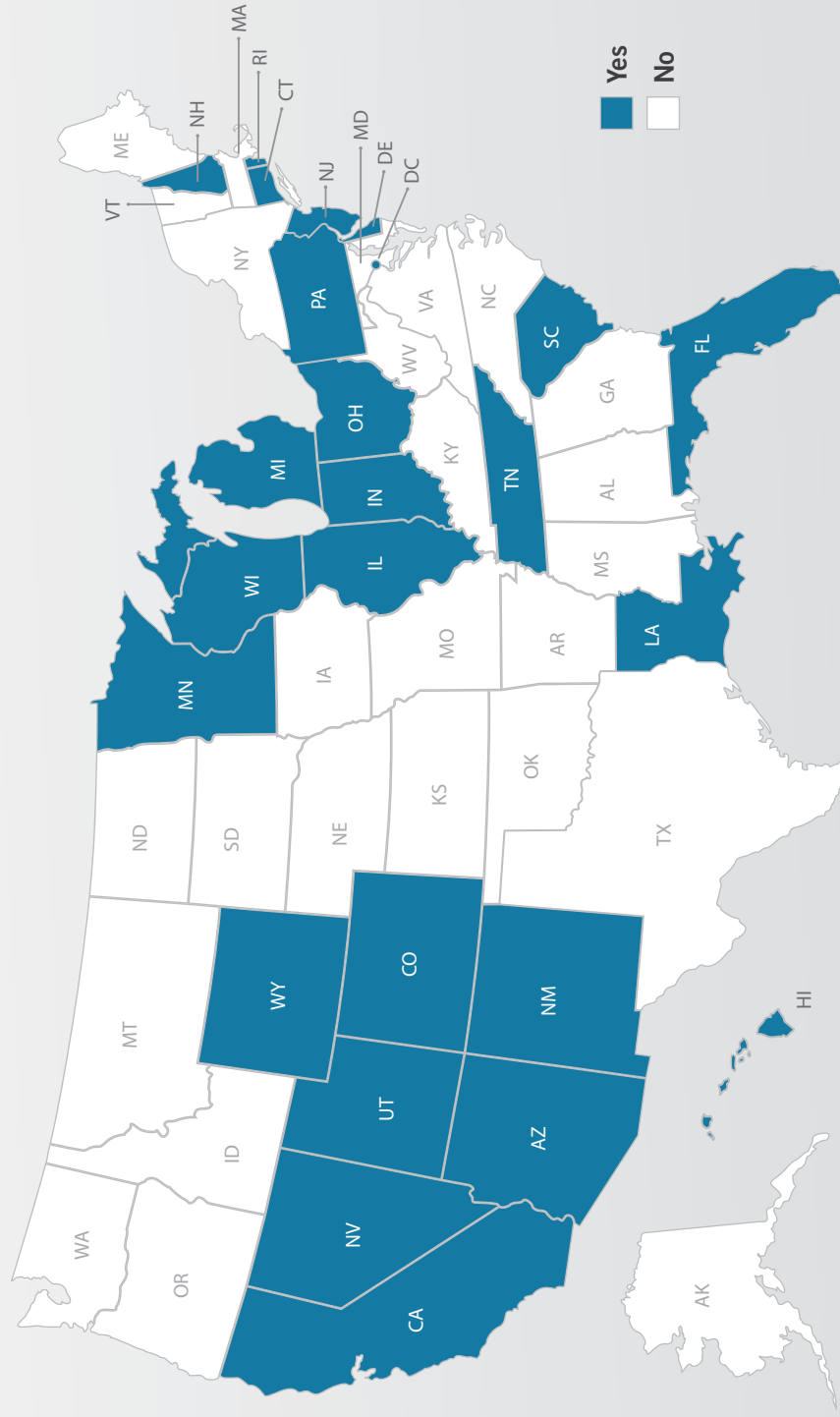
- Are a stand-alone school with a school code.
- Deliver much of the school's curriculum online.
- Require attendance at a physical site during the school year for more than just state assessments.

Consistent with the blended learning definition that *Keeping Pace* uses (see p. 9), these schools have an element of student control over time/pace/path/place that, in one or more ways, changes the instructional model away from one-to-many (teacher-to-students) instruction and toward a personalized, data-driven approach. Some of these schools have eliminated traditional bell schedules and allow students to attend the physical school for fewer hours or at non-conventional times. Other schools follow a fairly customary schedule.

Fully blended schools are often charter schools, although they may be non-charter district schools that take a whole-school blended approach to instruction. Charter or innovation status allows schools to meet student needs with more flexibility than in a traditional school, which is particularly important when students have some control over when they come to school.

# States with Blended Schools

Figure 1, Blended Schools



Keeping Pace defines a fully blended school as:	Fully blended schools are often:	This does not include:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A stand-alone school—not a program.</li> <li>• Much of the school's curriculum is delivered in a blended form.</li> <li>• Attendance is required at a physical site for more than state assessments.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Charter schools, as this gives them some flexibility in how they meet student needs.</li> <li>• Run by a network or education management organization such as Rocketship, Nexus Academies, or Flex Academies.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many alt ed programs, as they are not stand-alone schools.</li> <li>• The many schools that have blended their math departments or their freshmen classes.</li> </ul>

This definition does not include credit-recovery and alternative education programs within an existing brick-and-mortar school, as such data are typically not disaggregated from the larger traditional school, although they are often critical options for students. This definition also does not include schools that have blended curriculum for a department, such as the math department, or a grade level, such as all freshmen. Thousands of these examples exist around the country and are collectively serving millions of students (see the Single-District Programs discussion), but the blended experience may only occur in a fraction of the school's instructional time. Fully blended schools are an essential category for tracking, however, because they are at the vanguard of education innovation.

Data for the blended schools category as a whole are not readily available, because such schools are typically not recognized as a group in state reporting. However, *Keeping Pace* found an estimated 75 fully blended schools in 24 states and Washington DC in SY 2013-14 (see Figure 1). As this is a first effort to count these schools as a category, we believe it is likely an underestimate.

Many fully blended schools across the country are charter schools started by education management organizations or charter management organizations. Most of the largest online education management organizations have expanded their offerings to include blended schools. Connections Education operates seven Nexus Academy schools in Indiana, Michigan, and Ohio. K12 Inc. operates two Flex Public Schools in California, Hoosier Academies – Indianapolis, and the Hawaii Technology Academy, and it has opened learning centers in Arizona where students can seek individual assistance. Three Pivot Charter Schools in Florida, operated by Advanced Academics, give students flexibility in the hours they attend their schools.

Other schools are associated with charter management organizations that were begun as blended learning organizations and are beginning to expand outside of their original geographic areas. Rocketship Education operates eight schools in California, opened the first of what is expected to be eight schools in Milwaukee in August 2013, and has been approved to open schools in Nashville in 2014. Aspire Public Schools operates 34 schools in California and opened its first two schools in Memphis in fall 2013.

Other blended schools are traditional or charter schools that are not associated with a management organization or a network of schools.

- VOISE (Virtual Opportunities Inside a School Environment) Academy, a Chicago Public Schools (CPS) high school, uses a blended learning approach in which students attend the physical school, but online courses act as the primary source of course content. The VOISE Academy is a CPS performance school created under the CPS Renaissance 2010 initiative; it served about 350 students in SY 2012-13.
- Riverside Virtual School in California offers a blended option to students who want to work remotely. They are required to communicate with teachers electronically throughout the week, and some courses have face-to-face requirements.
- North Carolina has one blended school, Polk County Early College, that annually allows up to 20 students to complete high school while earning college credits, leading to early completion of an associate's degree while earning a high school diploma.
- Myron B. Thompson Academy in Hawaii is a blended charter school that serves about 500 full-time students statewide. Students take some courses face-to-face at the onsite location and other courses mostly online with some face-to-face requirements. The face-to-face requirements are unique to each island.
- The Village Green Virtual Public Charter High School and Sheila C. "Skip" Nowell Leadership Academy opened in fall 2013 and are the first two fully blended charter schools in Rhode Island. Village Green is serving grades 9 and 10 in SY 2013-14, and plans to expand to grades 11 and 12 over a three-year period. Nowell is serving grades 9-12 from two locations in SY 2013-14; students spend 15 hours in the classroom and 15 hours working online each week.

Schools identified as fully online in previous *Keeping Pace* reports may more closely fit the definition of a fully blended school due to face-to-face requirements beyond state assessments. Hawaii's Myron B. Thomson Academy has been considered a fully online school by *Keeping Pace* since 2008, although it was noted each year that there were face-to-face requirements. While those requirements haven't changed, *Keeping Pace* now considers the school to be a "fully blended" school using an "enriched virtual model."<sup>8</sup> In Washington, the state defines an "online course" as one where "More than half of the course content is delivered electronically using the Internet or other computer-based methods, and more than half of the teaching is conducted from a remote location through an online course learning management system or other online or electronic tools." Although Washington's fully online schools have not been reclassified, it is possible that some of the 2,515 enrollments in SY 2011-12 (the most recent year for which data are available) could be in what we now understand to be "blended" schools. As Washington does not separate the two in its reporting, we have reported these enrollments as fully online for many years. Until they are able to separate the enrollments, we will likely continue to do so.

## Multi-district fully online schools

*Keeping Pace* focuses on the fully online schools that draw students from across the states in which they operate as a key segment of the online and blended learning landscape for several reasons. First, these are the schools most likely to be fully online, without much (if any) onsite component, because the students are drawn from a large geographic area, making an onsite element difficult. Because they operate mostly or entirely at a distance, these schools have been pioneers in many elements of online instruction (along with state virtual schools, which provide fully online supplemental courses). Second, in most cases data for these schools are available, because they operate as separate schools with their own school codes. Third, these schools have been the focus of extensive media attention about online learning and therefore epitomize online learning for many people.

In SY 2012-13, multi-district fully online schools served about 310,000 students in 30 states plus Washington D.C., down from 31 states in SY 2011-12.<sup>9</sup>

For the first time in 2013, *Keeping Pace* identifies two categories of states with fully online schools: those that allow students statewide to enroll freely, and those that operate under one or more of a variety of restrictions. Figure 1 shows these two categories as well as the total number of enrollments in those states that make that data available.

## Attributes of multi-district fully online schools

Most multi-district fully online schools share the following attributes.

**Organization type:** Historically, many have been organized as charter schools, although the tide is shifting and many districts are creating virtual schools that serve students statewide.

**Affiliation:** The schools that serve more than half of all fully online students are operated by education management organizations (EMOs), such as Advanced Academics, Connections Academy, Insight Schools, K12 Inc., Mosaica, and Provost Academy. EMOs typically contract to provide courses, software, teacher professional development, and other key management and logistical support.

<sup>8</sup> Terminology taken from research by the Christensen Institute, <http://www.christenseninstitute.org/blended-learning-3/>

<sup>9</sup> We calculate the 310,000 students in fully online schools by counting slightly over 295,000 students and adding a 5% factor because we believe that we are missing some students. The uncounted factor has been applied each year to determine *Keeping Pace* estimates, and the factor is decreasing as we believe our counts are becoming more accurate.

**Geographic reach:** Most of these schools attract students from across the entire state in order to achieve scale; therefore, most of these schools are in states that allow students to enroll across district lines and have funding follow the student.

**Grade levels:** All grade levels are offered in online schools collectively, although individual schools may be limited to older or younger students, and a few states restrict online schools to fewer than all grade levels. The instructional model for younger students uses adult mentors (often, but not always, parents), who work with the students at home. The schools often send physical materials to students, including paper workbooks and science materials, to complement online offerings.

**Funding:** Funding usually is provided via state public education funds that follow the student.

**Enrollments:** Most have few or no part-time students, and most have enrollments of a few hundred to several thousand students (FTE).

**Accountability for student achievement:** Because these are full-time schools, they are accountable in the same ways as all other public schools and/or charter schools in the states in which they operate. They are responsible for facilitating state assessments for all students, regardless of geographic location, and report results of state assessments and adequate yearly progress (AYP).

## Fewer states, more students

In SY 2012-13, new fully online, statewide schools opened in Iowa and New Mexico. However, in Virginia, the only previously fully online statewide school is primarily serving students in two counties as of SY 2013-14. As a result, the total number of states that support statewide fully online schools is down to 29 in SY 2013-14. For the first time in many years, no new states allowed statewide fully online schools this school year, although several states continue to discuss opening fully online schools but have not yet done so, including Maine and New Jersey.

- LD1553 (2011)<sup>10</sup> allowed charter schools in Maine for the first time (limited to 10 charter schools over 10 years; five of those have already been approved, but none are virtual), and created a State Charter School commission as the only entity that can authorize virtual charter schools. (Other types of authorizing entities are allowed in the law, and they can authorize charter schools that have an online component.) The Commission rejected virtual charter proposals from Connections Learning (Maine Connections Academy) and K12 Inc. (Maine Virtual Academy) in January 2013,<sup>11</sup> and none were approved for SY 2013-14. These two schools have again applied for SY 2014-15; new policies outlined in the application process include different requirements for virtual charter schools, including face-to-face requirements for students and teachers.<sup>12</sup>
- The two virtual charters in New Jersey that were given extra “planning years” in SY 2012-13 were not approved to open in SY 2013-14.

However, overall enrollment in the states that allow these schools continues to increase. *Keeping Pace* estimates 310,000 students enrolled in multi-district fully online schools in SY 2012-13, an increase of 13% over last year’s count and equivalent to almost 1% of all students in all states that allow these schools.

Fourteen states saw enrollment increases of more than 18%, including five states that saw enrollment increases over 50%. Michigan, Wisconsin, and Indiana have all seen various caps lifted recently, allowing for easier student access and significant increases in student enrollment.

<sup>10</sup> LD1553; retrieved July 26, 2013, [http://www.mainelegislature.org/legis/bills/bills\\_125th/billtexts/SP049601.asp](http://www.mainelegislature.org/legis/bills/bills_125th/billtexts/SP049601.asp)

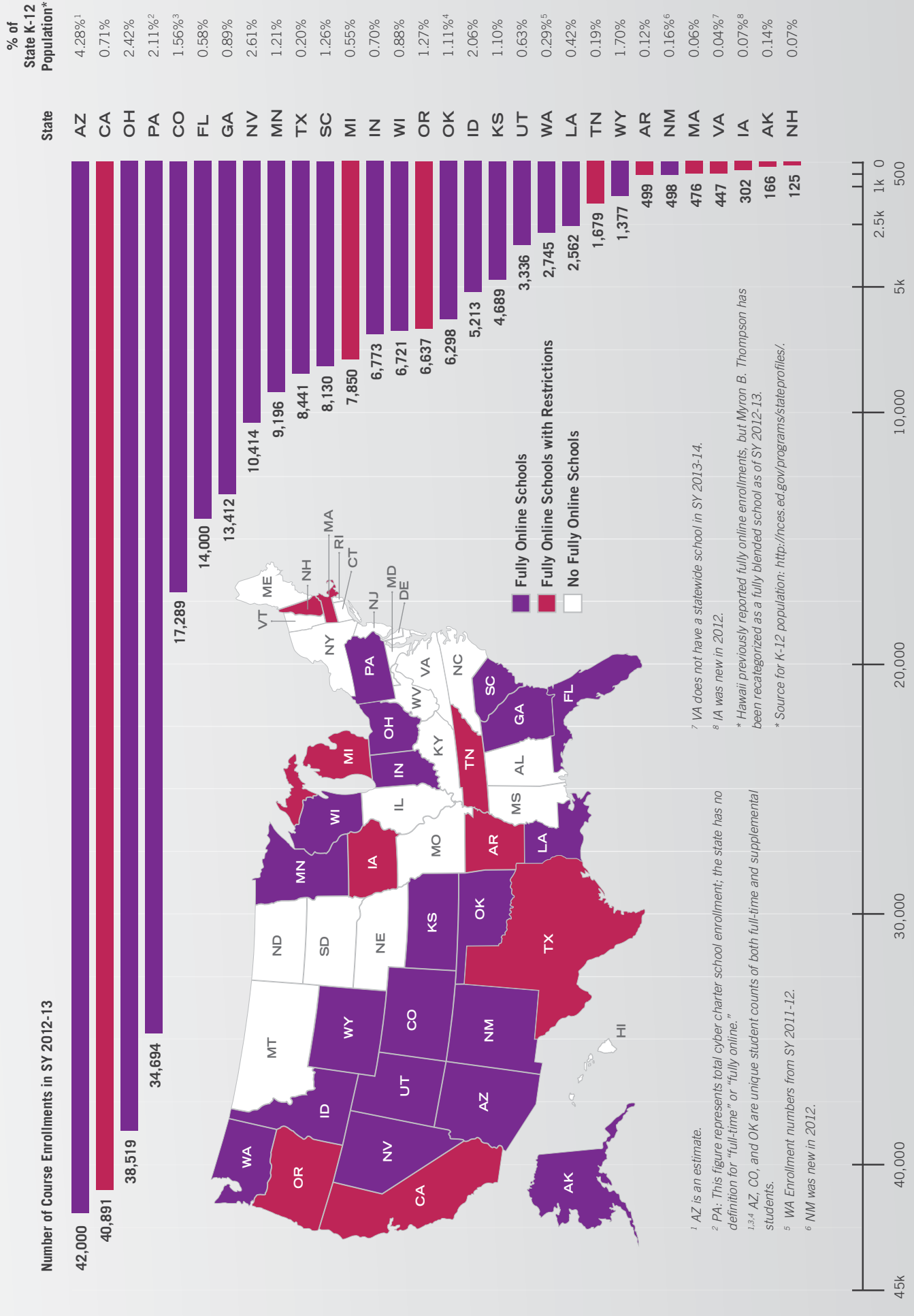
<sup>11</sup> Maine Charter School Commission January 8, 2013 meeting notes; retrieved August 6, 2013, <http://www.maine.gov/csc/meetings/01082013minutes.html>

<sup>12</sup> Maine Charter School Commission; retrieved August 6, 2013, <http://www.maine.gov/csc/index.html>

# States with Multi-district Fully Online Schools

Figure 2, States with Multi-district Fully Online Schools

NUMBER OF ENROLLMENTS RELATIVE TO STATE K-12 POPULATION



<sup>1</sup> AZ is an estimate.

<sup>2</sup> PA: This figure represents total cyber charter school enrollment; the state has no definition for "full-time" or "fully online."  
<sup>3,4</sup> AZ, CO, and OK are unique student counts of both full-time and supplemental students.

<sup>5</sup> WA Enrollment numbers from SY 2011-12.

<sup>6</sup> NM was new in 2012.

<sup>7</sup> VA does not have a statewide school in SY 2013-14.

<sup>8</sup> IA was new in 2012.

\* Hawaii previously reported fully online enrollments, but Myron B. Thompson has been recategorized as a fully blended school as of SY 2012-13.

\* Source for K-12 population: <http://nces.ed.gov/programs/stateprofiles/>.



On the other end of the spectrum, the three states that saw their enrollment numbers decrease have restrictions in place that make it challenging for students to enroll in existing schools. Massachusetts allowed its first virtual innovation school in 2009-10, the Massachusetts Virtual Academy (MAVA) at Greenfield. That school was capped at 500, and enrollments have neared that cap every year since. In 2013, “An Act Establishing Commonwealth Virtual Schools” (Chapter 379) was signed into law;<sup>13</sup> it defines “Commonwealth virtual school” (CMVS) as a public school, operated by a board of trustees, whose teachers teach primarily from a remote location using the Internet or other computer-based methods and whose students are not required to be located at the physical premises of the school.<sup>14</sup> MAVA was required to apply for CMVS status, which it received in summer 2013. However, a CMVS approval process for new schools was not created prior to SY 2013-14, so no other schools were approved for this school year. In addition, CMVS will continue to operate under extensive restrictions:

- No more than 2% of students statewide may enroll in virtual schools.
- At least 5% of students in each CMVS must be from the sponsoring district or collaborative.
- The board may authorize no more than three CMVS for the 2013-16 school years, and 10 total CMVS by 2020.

In Virginia, one fully online statewide school has been open for the last two school years, but as of SY 2013-14, it is primarily serving students in two counties, and all other students must pay an enrollment fee. In Virginia, a student’s local education agency (LEA) or school must contract with each approved multidivision provider separately for online courses or programs, and the state reimburses the enrolling school division at that division’s state funding level (which averages \$4,400 per student annually). Repeated attempts to alter funding mechanisms for fully online education failed in the 2011-13 legislative sessions.

Finally, legislation passed in Tennessee this year that adds a variety of restrictions to public virtual schools. SB157 (2013)<sup>15</sup> states that:

- Initial enrollment is limited to 1,500 students.
- No more than 25% of a virtual school’s students may come from outside the LEA.
- No school shall exceed 5,000 students.

Existing virtual public schools may continue to serve students who were enrolled as of January 1, 2013. The first two restrictions will be lifted when a “virtual public school demonstrates student achievement growth at a minimum level of ‘at expectations’ as represented by the Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System.” The legislation also states that if a school demonstrates “student achievement growth at a level ‘significantly below expectations’ for two consecutive years ... the commissioner shall have the authority to reinstitute the enrollment caps ... or direct the LEA to close the school.” This last requirement is in effect as of SY 2012-13.

Table 2 provides a list of states with multi-district fully online schools, enrollment counts in states where the data are available, and a short description of the restrictions that are limiting student enrollment in some states.

<sup>13</sup> Chapter 379 (2013); retrieved August 1, 2013, <https://malegislature.gov/Laws/SessionLaws/Acts/2012/Chapter379>

<sup>14</sup> Virtual Schools: Report on New Legislation and Proposed Delegation of Authority to Commissioner; retrieved August 8, 2013, <http://www.doe.mass.edu/boe/docs/2013-01/item4.html>

<sup>15</sup> SB157 (2013); retrieved September 11, 2013, <http://www.capitol.tn.gov/Bills/108/Bill/SB0157.pdf>

	Enrollments 2012-13	Annual growth SY 2011-12 to SY 2012-13	5-year growth (2008- 2013)	2013 % of state K-12 population	Restrictions
Alaska	166	+95%	-53%	0.14%	
Arizona	42,000	+8%	+40%	4.28%	
Arkansas	499	0%	0%	0.12%	One school, capped at 3,000 in SY 2013-14.
California	40,891	+76%	+289%	0.71%	Schools limited to serving students in contiguous counties.
Colorado	17,289	+7%	+49%	2.31%	
Florida	14,000	+45%	+1,197%	0.58%	
Georgia	13,412	+27%	+212%	0.89%	
Idaho	5,213	0%	+44%	2.06%	
Indiana	6,733	+80%	n/a	0.7%	
Iowa	302	New in 12-13	n/a	0.07%	.018 % (approximately 900) student cap statewide for full-time schools; no more than 1% from any one district.
Kansas	4,689	+18%	+51%	1.1%	
Louisiana	2,562	+28%	n/a	0.42%	
Massachusetts	476	-2%	n/a	0.06%	No more than 2% of students statewide in virtual schools. At least 5% of students from sponsoring district or collaborative. No more than 10 virtual schools.
Michigan	7,850	+94%	n/a	0.55%	SB619 (2012) limited the number of cyber charters and their enrollments.
Minnesota	9,196	+13%	+82%	1.21%	
Nevada	10,414	+19%	+126%	2.61%	
New Hampshire	125	+21%	n/a	0.07%	Cap on number of VLACS charter school FTEs based on state appropriation.
New Mexico	498	New in 12-13	n/a	0.16%	
Ohio	38,519	+9%	+42%	2.42%	
Oklahoma	6,298	31%	473%	1.11%	
Oregon	6,637	+19%	n/a	1.27%	3% cap on the number of students in virtual schools from each district.
Pennsylvania	34,694	+7%	+56%	2.11%	
South Carolina	8,130	+2%	+310%	1.26%	
Tennessee	1,679	-7%	n/a	0.19%	Initial enrollment is limited to 1,500 students. No more than 25% of a virtual school's students may come from outside the LEA. No school shall exceed 5,000 students. Restrictions are lifted or schools closed based on school performance.
Texas	8,441	+36%	+323%	0.2%	TxVSN Online Schools serves grades 3-12.
Utah	3,336	+8%	+567%	0.63%	
Virginia	447	-8%	n/a	0.04%	Inequitable funding.
Washington	2,745	+9%	+49%	0.29%	
Wisconsin	6,721	+50%	+117%	0.88%	
Wyoming	1,377	+21%	+1,277%	1.7%	

**Table 2:**  
Multi-district fully  
online schools

## Consortium and educational service agency programs

Many districts are increasingly recognizing that they do not have the resources to invest in an online school or courses on their own, but they still want to offer online options to their students. Some of these districts are creating consortia to create online schools or courses, with the costs and benefits spread among member districts. These programs may be run by a group of school districts, by a nonprofit organization that works with schools, or by an intermediate education agency. They are usually funded by member schools or by course fees, and may be supplemental, fully online, blended, or some combination of program types. In most cases, the consortium works across part or all of a state, although The VHS Collaborative (VHS) operates in 31 states and internationally. Some consortium programs, such as VHS and the Wisconsin eSchool Network, have been operating for many years, while others have started recently, such as a group of districts working together in Illinois. *Keeping Pace* is aware of at least 75 consortium programs serving students with a wide variety of online and blended options.

One of the larger and older consortium programs operating in a single state is the Wisconsin eSchool Network (WEN).<sup>16</sup> WEN is a consortium of 19 partnering school districts, including those with no prior experience in online learning, those running statewide online charter schools, district-level supplemental programs, and blended learning programs; and some which have been in operation for more than 10 years. WEN served 10,219 course enrollments in SY 2012-13, doubling its number over the prior year. In 2012 it restructured the organization as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. WEN also has taken steps to increase its reach by adding a newly revamped Affiliate Membership. Just as with an Invested Member, an Affiliate Member is able to access the consortium program offerings. However, instead of gaining access to WEN as an Invested Member with a large upfront investment fee, Affiliate Members are able to join with a two- or four-year commitment, paying much smaller annual membership fees based on their projected enrollment.

WEN and the Wisconsin Virtual School (WVS) signed an MOU with the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) in 2012 to operate under the umbrella of the Wisconsin Digital Learning Collaborative<sup>17</sup> and meet the statutory requirement of the Wisconsin Web Academy, the state virtual school. The collaboration allows the DPI to expand the offerings of the Web Academy and provide a single point of access to online courses and blended learning options, although both organizations are continuing to operate autonomously in SY 2013-14. WVS and WEN are using a common LMS and SIS, and are using multiple content providers.

Other consortium models have leveraged pooled resources in creative ways:

- SUPERNet Virtual High School offers supplemental online courses to students at no cost to 20 rural districts who pay a membership fee; courses may be Texas Virtual School Network courses that are scheduled synchronously at computer labs for all SUPERNet students, or may be locally built. It served 736 course enrollments in SY 2012-13.
- The Arkansas Distance Learning Consortium includes five providers who served 12,000 students in grades K-12 in SY 2012-13. Many of the providers rely on interactive video, but the primary online provider is Virtual Arkansas, the state virtual school, which served roughly 2,000 supplemental online course enrollments in SY 2012-13, a 33% annual decrease. Arkansas school districts pay a \$2,500 annual membership fee to schedule courses with any of the state-funded providers. The fee allows unlimited enrollment on a first-come/first-serve basis. In addition, the consortium streamlines policies and procedures statewide, coordinates a master schedule, and centralizes billing for school districts.

<sup>16</sup> We are grateful to the cooperation of the Wisconsin eSchool Network (<http://www.wisconsineschool.com/>) in helping us to create this description. Extensive details about the WEN structure and model can be found in the Consortium Program section of *Keeping Pace 2012*.

<sup>17</sup> Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, press release; retrieved July 30, 2013, [http://www.wisconsinvirtualschool.org/about/dpinr2012\\_87\\_WIDigitalLearningCollaborative.pdf](http://www.wisconsinvirtualschool.org/about/dpinr2012_87_WIDigitalLearningCollaborative.pdf)

- A consortium of California public and private agencies came together to fund the Leading Edge Certification in an effort to address a perceived statewide need for professional development related to online learning. The project offers 21<sup>st</sup> century training programs for online teachers, classroom (blended learning) teachers, administrators, teacher librarians, and lead learners (course developers) seeking certification in digital skills.<sup>18</sup>
- In Florida, two regional consortia represent 56 out of 67 districts statewide in operating franchises of Florida Virtual School. The Panhandle Regional Consortium represents 27 districts and the North East Florida Regional Consortium represents 29 districts.
- In Michigan, a large consortium program, GenNET, operated by the Genesee ISD with over 400 districts participating, processed over 22,749 course enrollments supplied by multiple providers in SY 2013-14.

## State-supported supplemental online course options

In the last two years, supplemental course offerings have evolved in two different directions: an increase in district-provided supplemental options (discussed in the Single-District Programs section) and an evolution in state-supported supplemental options. Historically, the focus of the state-supported options has been on state virtual schools, which operated in as many as 31 states at their peak. They provide supplemental courses to students in an attempt to expand course catalogs and level the playing field for students from a variety of schools across a state. In the last two years, an increasing number of states have launched statewide “course choice” programs intended to provide a similar service, but typically with multiple providers.

While most states allow students to take supplemental online courses through their resident districts or through out-of-district agreements, 29 states support statewide supplemental options for their students through either state virtual schools or state-supported course choice programs (see Figure 3). This section will profile these two types of statewide supplemental online course options.

### State virtual schools

State virtual schools remain an important part of the online learning landscape, serving 742,728 total enrollments in 27 schools in SY 2012-13. The largest of these continues to be Florida Virtual School (FLVS), which served 410,962 successful enrollments in SY 2012-13.

*Keeping Pace* defines state virtual schools as programs created by legislation or by a state level agency, and/or administered by a state education agency, and/or funded by a state appropriation or grant for the purpose of providing online learning opportunities across the state. (They also may receive federal or private foundation grants and often charge course fees to students or their districts to help cover costs.)

Primarily as a result of the funding methods in each state, state virtual schools continue to bifurcate into two different groups: those that are large and growing, and those that are small and either shrinking or, at best, maintaining their enrollment numbers. State virtual schools in Alabama, Georgia, Montana, Vermont, and Virginia grew by at least 17% in SY 2012-13, whereas in Colorado, Connecticut, and Iowa, the state virtual schools shrank by at least 13%. For many others, enrollment totals stayed within about 3% of the prior year.

<sup>18</sup> Leading Edge Certification; retrieved August 2, 2013, <http://www.cue.org/leadingedge>

The largest 10 state virtual schools served 92% of the total enrollments served by state virtual schools in SY 2012-13; FLVS served about 55% of the enrollments served by all state virtual schools.

Alabama ACCESS has been serving students since fall 2005; it served 51,910 course enrollments in SY 2012-13, a 17% increase over SY 2011-12. ACCESS is unique in that most students take its courses at their school sites during set time periods. Alabama was one of the first states to pass an online learning requirement, which many students meet through ACCESS, essentially the only online option for students. North Carolina Virtual Public School (NCVPS) served 94,716 course enrollments in SY 2012-13; it is expanding to serve non-public North Carolina students as well as out-of-state students, and to sell its courses and content to out-of-state organizations. While many of the newer state virtual schools have struggled to get their footing, Montana launched Montana Digital Academy in 2010 and has seen double digit student enrollment growth percentages in each year. It served 7,993 course enrollments in SY 2012-13, one of the highest ratios of the state high school student populations of any state virtual school in the country.

Florida SB1514 (2013) changes the funding structure for all schools, traditional and virtual, including FLVS. Previously, districts received full funding for up to six courses for each student, and FLVS received funding for all courses completed by students, whether that was a student's sixth course or courses beyond one FTE. With the passage of SB1514, students can no longer generate more than one FTE; instead, a student's FTE will be distributed proportionally by the department of education (DOE) to each district (FLVS is considered a district) for as many courses as a student takes. This creates an incentive for districts to encourage students to take in-district traditional or virtual courses as they potentially can lose money if students take any out-of-district courses, or if a student takes a virtual course and does not complete it, thereby not generating funding.

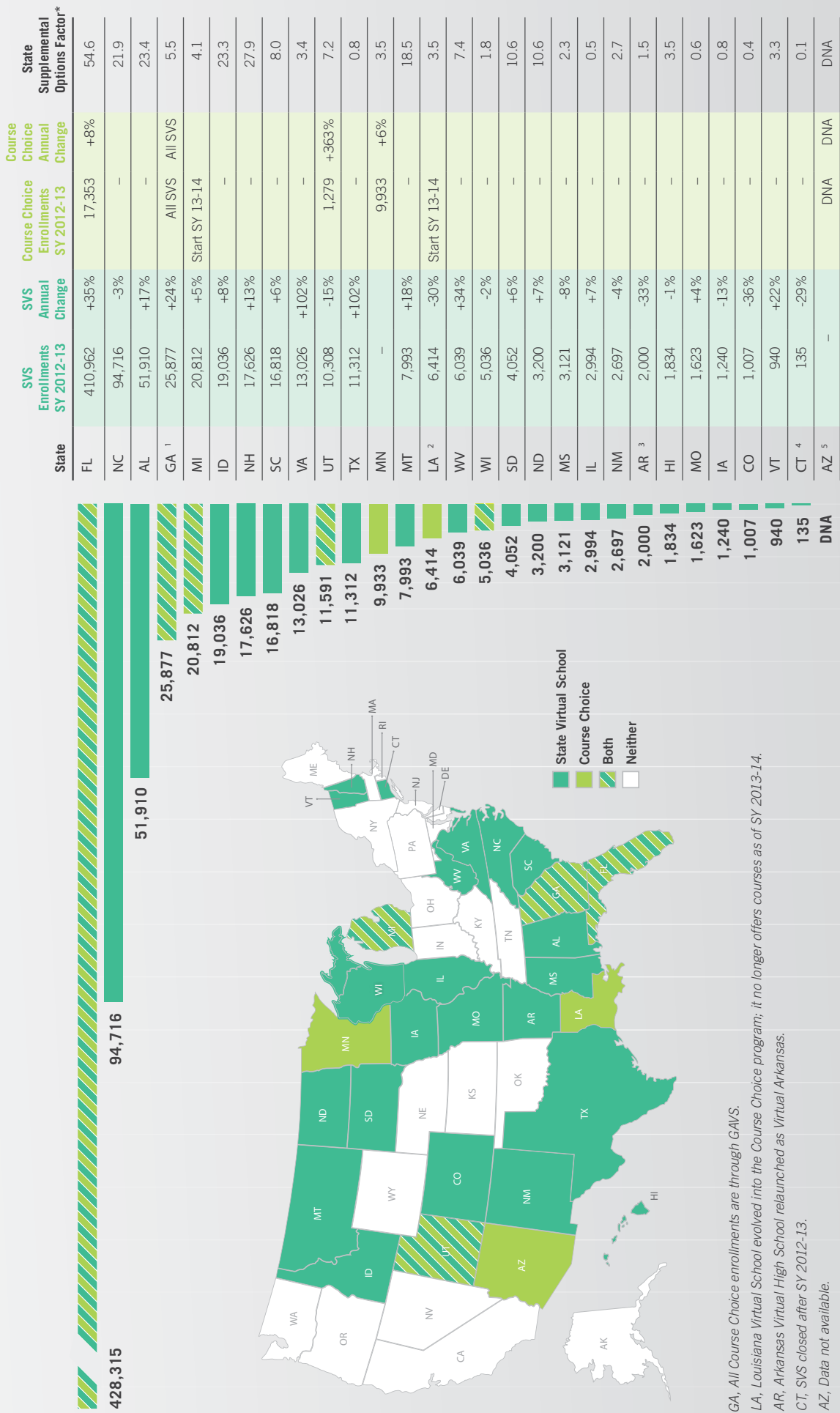
While some state virtual schools are shrinking or stagnating, a few are no longer operating, for a variety of reasons:

- Connecticut Virtual Learning Center experienced decreasing enrollments because of reduced funding over the last few years. It closed at the end of SY 2012-13 after serving 135 course enrollments.
- Louisiana Virtual School (LVS) closed at the end of SY 2012-13, and all resources have been redirected into the state Course Choice program. LVS served 6,414 course enrollments in SY 2012-13.
- Effective Engaging E-learning Environment for Tennessee (e4TN) was funded through Enhancing Education Through Technology (E2T2) funds and served 5,000 course enrollments in SY 2010-11, but in 2011 it lost funding and has not operated since.
- Kentucky Virtual Schools transitioned from being a course provider to serving as a source of information for distance programs and students after SY 2011-12.

# State-supported Supplemental Options

Figure 3, State-supported Supplemental Options

PROGRAM TYPE AND ENROLLMENTS RELATIVE TO HIGH SCHOOL POPULATION



<sup>1</sup> GA, All Course Choice enrollments are through GAVS.

<sup>2</sup> LA, Louisiana Virtual School evolved into the Course Choice program; it no longer offers courses as of SY 2013-14.

<sup>3</sup> AR, Arkansas Virtual High School relaunched as Virtual Arkansas.

<sup>4</sup> CT, SVS closed after SY 2012-13.

<sup>5</sup> AZ, Data not available.

\* Source for HS population: <http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/data/ipedsfiles/>. The state supplemental options factor calculates the number of course enrollments, divided by the state's high school student population, multiplied by 100. This allows for a quick comparison between states of different sizes.

## Course choice programs

Another way states are offering supplemental options to students statewide is through state-supported course choice programs, which are designed to allow students to choose the course and provider that best meets their needs. *Keeping Pace* defines a course choice program as one in which:

- students can choose to take a course from one of multiple providers,
- a district cannot deny a student's request to enroll in an out-of-district course, and
- funding follows the student at the course level.

*Keeping Pace* has identified seven course choice programs (see Figure 3, State-supported Supplemental Course Options map), although many of the identified programs give students course choice but with a variety of restrictions. Most of these programs are still in their infancy, and are achieving the goal of giving students choice in their course providers with mixed success. The programs in Florida and Utah are the most frequently discussed in regard to course choice legislation, as they are the two states that have passed laws giving students choice of providers and allowing funding to follow the student at the course level. These two programs fit the full definition of course choice in which students are meant to have significant control over their online courses options. The remaining programs have restrictions in place that stretch along a continuum. In some programs, restrictions exist based on grade levels, number of funded courses, whether the course is core or elective, whether multiple providers are authorized, and the funding type. In other programs, districts have a variety of reasons in policy that they can deny students their online course preferences. Some of these are related to funding or educational goals (e.g., students can't retake a course that they already passed, or students can take online courses only if the courses are consistent with the students' educational plans), but they may be used to restrict options when students do not have a course of appeals if their online course choice is denied. The different types of restrictions are discussed in depth in the Course Choice policy analysis section on p. 34.

The states with course choice programs have reported relatively low numbers in these programs through SY 2012-13 and into SY 2013-14. Utah's course choice program served 1,279 course enrollments in SY 2012-13, its second year of operation. In contrast, Utah's state virtual school, the Electronic High School, served 10,308 course enrollments in the same period. One theory behind the low enrollments in the course choice program is that many districts create online programs in response to the legislation, whether because the framework is in place to sign on with providers or in an effort to serve out-of-district students, but in the end serving their own students with more options.

Louisiana has shifted its state resources from Louisiana Virtual School, the state virtual school that operated since SY 2000-01, to the state's new Course Choice program. LVS served 14,000 course enrollments at its peak in SY 2009-10; it then added a per student course fee and its enrollments decreased to 6,414 course enrollments in SY 2012-13. The school is closed as of SY 2013-14, and all students are directed to 45 authorized course choice providers. As of September 2013, Course Choice funding has been secured for 3,500 course enrollments, and future funding is undetermined.

## Private / Independent schools

Private schools, whether independent or associated with another organization, are beginning to adopt online and blended courses, and some online and blended private school consortia are being created as well. Although *Keeping Pace* has in the past been focused primarily on public schools, the ways in which private schools are embracing online and blended learning is increasingly of interest, and we believe that the private and public sectors can learn from one another.

Public K-12 education has generally been slower than post-secondary institutions to embrace online and blended learning. In addition, different states and regions of the country have tended to adopt online and blended learning faster than others, with the south and west generally moving more quickly into online learning than the Middle Atlantic and New England states. Private schools appear generally to have been slower to adopt than many public schools, with interest and adoptions now expanding rapidly, but from a base that is perhaps five years behind the public sector.

We believe that there are several reasons why private schools have generally been slower than public schools to embrace blended and online learning. First is the perceived need, or a lack of it. We believe that public schools in the middle Atlantic and New England states have been slower to adopt blended and online learning than the southern states, in part, because student performance in the northern states has generally been better. States with poorer performance were more likely to experiment than states that were generally satisfied with their outcomes. This dynamic likely extends to private schools. Many private schools have felt that students and parents were largely satisfied with their schools, so pressure to innovate and experiment was light.

Second, some online programs in public schools have evolved from distance education offerings, particularly in Midwestern and Western states. These include, for example, the North Dakota Center for Distance Education and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, which has a program for high school students. Private schools have not typically had such distance education programs to build from.

Third, in many private schools, and especially independent schools, parents and students place a particularly high value on the personal connection between teachers and students, and between the school and the family. The perception that online courses lack the same level of personal connection has slowed their acceptance, and online learning pioneers have had to demonstrate high levels of teacher involvement in online courses—much as they have done in the public school sector.

The slow move into online and blended learning is changing, as more students and families are coming to accept, and expect, online and blended learning options. In some cases the adoptions have come recently and rapidly, and in other cases they have been building for several years. Examples and characteristics of these developments include the following:

- The National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS) is reporting on its member schools' digital learning options, with case studies on blended learning, flipped classrooms, the use of Khan Academy, and other examples.<sup>19</sup> As is the case with public schools, some of these examples are perhaps better termed web-enhanced or technology-rich classrooms and schools instead of true blended learning, but other cases are certainly blended or online learning. A conference that was offered for the first time in early 2013, the Online Education Symposium for Independent Schools (OESIS), attracted hundreds of attendees and in SY 2013-14 is now offering two conferences, split between the east and west coasts.
- *The 2013-2014 Trendbook Overview*,<sup>20</sup> published by NAIS, says this about the “education technology outlook:”

<sup>19</sup> <http://www.nais.org/Articles/SiteAssets/Pages/Stories-of-Excellence/NAIS-Excellence-Booklet-0924.pdf>

<sup>20</sup> <http://www.nais.org/Bookstore/Documents/2013TrendbookExcerpt.pdf>



- “Ubiquitous access to mobile devices is creating new opportunities for schools.
- Students in online courses report improved learning outcomes.
- Students report high levels of engagement with flipped learning.
- Teachers have been integrating new material into lessons with “augmented reality,” using handheld devices to layer information about a specific location with information or data from virtual resources.”

The first three of these statements have been made about many public schools as well as private.

- The Global Online Academy is a consortium of 10 founding independent schools, and more than 20 member schools, that create and share online courses. Most courses are electives, and the consortium model is similar to the approach used by the VHS Collaborative—which also has dozens of private schools.
- The Virtual Independent School Network (VISNET) is a consortium of schools in North Carolina, Virginia, California, Florida, and elsewhere, designed to provide member schools with affordable resources, tools, and professional development opportunities to support innovative teaching and learning.
- Schools affiliated with religious institutions, such as Jewish Day Schools and Catholic schools, are looking to online and blended learning as a way to increase their course offerings and cut costs. For example, BOLD Day Schools, a cooperative project of the AJE Project, The AVI CHAI Foundation, and the Kohelet Foundation, aims to create demonstration proofs of successful blended learning in Jewish day schools. The Phaedrus Initiative seeks to “use technology to halt the disappearance of urban Catholic schools.”<sup>21</sup> Success is defined, in part, on reducing instructional costs.
- The fully online private schools that were begun by companies such as Connections and K12 Inc. are gaining traction. Examples of these are schools include the International Connections Academy and K12 International Academy, and also schools that use Connections and K12 Inc. content and technology in partnership with another organization, such as The Keystone School. In the early days of these schools it appeared that parents were generally less willing to pay for a private fully online school than for a private onsite school, but as online learning is increasingly accepted more parents see a private online school as a worthwhile opportunity, particularly for students who live in states that don’t allow fully online public schools.
- Because private schools are often smaller than their public counterparts, their course options may be limited compared to larger public schools. They may look to online courses to expand course offerings, and to blended learning to more efficiently manage teachers.

A few fully blended private schools have been created, and they are often using the same providers for courses and learning technologies as their public counterparts. For example, Cambridge Prep Academy in Florida is a small school with students in grades 6-12 who use courses from Florida Virtual School and teachers from both FLVS and Cambridge.

One of the key issues of interest to educators in private schools, particularly in parochial schools, is whether private school students are eligible to take any publicly funded online courses. Almost all students can take online courses by becoming public school students,<sup>22</sup> either as part-time or full-time public schools students, and nuance exists in the mechanisms by which states allow access to publicly funded courses or schools for private or homeschooled students. In Montana, for example, a student could enroll as a part-time student in a school district and take a Montana Digital Academy course. In doing so, however, the student would be

<sup>21</sup> <http://www.setonpartners.org/phaedrus-initiative-a2985>

<sup>22</sup> In the past some states had imposed a “prior public” requirement on students entering online schools, mandating that students entering online schools had been in the public school system previously, but most states that had this requirement have done away with it.

considered a public school student, and would be included in state reporting, making it difficult to quantify the number of private or homeschooled students taking publicly funded courses.

Further, some public programs provide online courses to students who are primarily non-public school students—but the courses are available only if parents pay for them. These become, effectively, private-pay options for non-public school students.

Still, there are a few states that explicitly allow private school students to take publicly funded online courses or otherwise subsidize online course options. These include:

- iLearnOhio authorizes courses and providers for K-12 students. Although most courses require a fee, there is limited funding for a one-time tuition waiver for Advanced Placement courses that is available to all students in Ohio, including private school and homeschooled students.
- Utah's Statewide Online Education Program makes online courses from multiple providers available to private school and homeschooled students free of charge.
- South Carolina's Virtual School Program makes supplemental online courses available for free to students in public and private schools, and homeschooled students.
- Florida allows students at most grade levels to take online courses for free if they are Florida residents, and they retain private school/student status.
- Georgia Virtual School received a funding allotment from the state for private and homeschooled students. Once the appropriation is exhausted students may pay \$250 per semester course. Vermont's state-supported supplemental courses are also available to private school students, although availability is limited.
- Alabama ACCESS, the state virtual school, makes supplemental online courses available to private school students as of SY 2013-14, but the student must pay for the courses.
- The Texas Virtual School Network allows students who attend private schools to enroll in online courses through their district of residence. These students must pay for TXVSN courses and they continue to be considered non-public school students.

In contrast, a few states, including Oklahoma and Nevada, explicitly deny students attending private schools the opportunity to take publicly funded online courses.

States, therefore, fall into one of three categories in terms of options for private and homeschooled students:

1. 21 states do not offer state-supported supplemental online courses for any students through either a state virtual school or a course choice program, so there are no public options for private and homeschooled students.
2. 8 states that offer state-supported supplemental online courses and explicitly make them available to private and homeschooled students.
3. The remaining states have some state-supported online course options and often have some mechanism by which private and homeschooled students can pay for online courses, but the mechanisms are based on specific schools or programs instead of on state policy.

These attributes of individual states are reviewed in each state profile.

# Policy

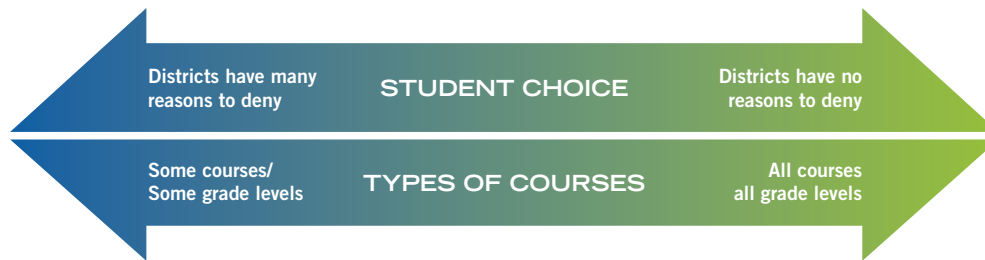
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*This section reviews several key policy and practice issues in online and blended learning: Course Choice Policy Analysis, Online Course Graduation Requirements, MOOCs, and Blended Learning. These are just a few of the policy issues being faced in K-12 online and blended learning; to read more about these issues and others important to the field, please see the Keeping Pace blog at [www.kpk12.com/blog/](http://www.kpk12.com/blog/).*

## Course choice policy analysis

COURSE CHOICE PROGRAMS ARE PROFILED IN THE LANDSCAPE SECTION ON PAGE 30, which also includes a map of all state-supported supplemental options. As these programs are a relatively new development in the K-12 online learning world, they warrant a deeper analysis of the policy issues.

While states such as Florida, Utah, and Louisiana have passed course choice-specific legislation, *Keeping Pace* has identified seven states (Arizona, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Michigan, Minnesota, and Utah) that have a framework in place that attempts to accomplish the same objective (see Table 3). However, it is not a clear-cut category, but rather a gray grouping of programs that typically include restrictions at various points in the enrollment process, as noted in Figure 4. States may restrict the grade levels that can enroll in supplemental online courses (Louisiana and Utah are limited to high school), the providers from which students can choose (Georgia has one authorized provider in SY 2013-14, Georgia Virtual School), the schools from which students have full access (Louisiana's program is free to students in C, D, and F schools), or the number of courses students can take (Michigan and Georgia limit students to two).



**Figure 4: Types of restrictions in State-supported Course Choice Programs**

All states' course choice laws give districts some ability to restrict student course choices, but the relative control of the district compared to the student varies widely. In addition, how the policies are enacted and interpreted will determine how widespread these programs become in ways that are not predictable simply by reviewing the policies.

Elements of Michigan's Public Act 60 (2013)<sup>23</sup> that give districts some control over a student's enrollment in online courses are illustrative. The law allows a district to deny a student enrollment in an online course if any of the following five conditions is met:

1. The pupil has previously gained the credits for the course.
2. The online course is non-credit.
3. The online course is inconsistent with the remaining graduation requirements of the student.
4. The student does not possess the prerequisite knowledge and skills to be successful in the online course or has failed in previous online coursework in the same subject.
5. The online course is of insufficient quality or rigor.

While a student denied enrollment in an online course has the right to appeal to the superintendent of the student's resident intermediate district, it is unclear whether students will take advantage of this appeal process, if they are even aware of it.

Quite a few states have passed legislation with the intention of giving students course choice, but have allowed for so many restrictions that the locus of control remains with the student's resident district. These include:

- **Oklahoma:** The original legislation stated that local board policies must not deny a student's request to enroll in "educationally appropriate" courses, but that while students may have input as to the selection of supplemental online course providers, the final determination and selection of the provider(s) is left to the discretion of the local district.
- **Texas:** The legislation states that districts and charter schools are not required to pay for more than three year-long courses each year, may deny access to courses if the district or charter school offers a substantially similar course, and have the final say over which course provider a student chooses.
- **Kansas, Oregon, and Wyoming:** legislation is not in place to support a student's right to choose at the course level. While there are mechanisms for students to split their course loads among multiple providers, a district can deny a student's request to enroll in an out-of-district course.

<sup>23</sup> Public Act 60 (2013); retrieved July 9, 2013, <http://legislature.mi.gov/documents/2013-2014/publicact/pdf/2013-PA-0060.pdf>

In fact, what is happening “on the ground” is another obstacle that must be overcome if course choice programs are to be successful. Educating students and parents about the option to take an online course and when it is a good idea, how to choose the best provider for each student’s needs, how to enroll in the courses, and what the student’s rights are in regard to enrollment or denial of enrollment are all challenges faced each day, regardless of what the legislation attempts to put in place. In Utah, legislators believe that Utah students are not being directed to out-of-district courses by district counselors (as shown by the low enrollment numbers) and are considering legislation to establish independent high school counselors. The funding changes in Florida have resulted in a 32% reduction in pre-enrollments for SY 2013-14 as of August 2013, although the chancellor of public schools released a memo in June 2013 reminding districts that they may not restrict students from taking FLVS courses.<sup>24</sup>

## Funding

One of the biggest roadblocks to the success of course choice programs is funding, because true sustainable course choice exists only if course-level funding follows the student to the course of choice. In 2012, Act 2 (HB976) introduced the Course Choice program in Louisiana,<sup>25</sup> allowing all students to select their own online and hybrid courses from authorized private and district providers, and having funding follow the student.<sup>26</sup> Early challenges to the program’s legality, and particularly of its funding model, were raised, and following a Louisiana Supreme Court ruling mid-2013 that per-pupil allocation funds could not be diverted outside of public schools, funding shifted and is now based on a state appropriation and grant funding (instead of the program tapping into the public education funding formula) for SY 2013-14. As of September 2013, there was funding for at least 3,500 course enrollments. However, a sustainable funding source will need to be found in order to continue the program beyond this school year.

Some states have implemented completion or performance-based funding methods as part of their course choice programs. In Louisiana and Utah, 50% of a course fee is paid upon student enrollment, and 50% is paid upon timely completion (providers may receive 40% if a student eventually completes and receives credit for the course). In Michigan, a district pays 80% upon enrollment and 20% upon completion, as determined by the district. Minnesota programs may report based on course completion or seat time; funding is not generated if course is not completed. Students in Florida only generate funding for virtual courses upon course completion. Because students in these states are funded based on completions, districts are incentivized to keep students in traditional courses so as to guarantee funding for all courses in which a student is enrolled.

<sup>24</sup> FL DOE Memo; retrieved August 13, 2013, <http://www.fldoe.org/schools/virtual-schools/pdf/schoolchoiceafflvs.pdf>

<sup>25</sup> HB976 (Act 2); retrieved June 29, 2013, <http://www.legis.la.gov/Legis/BillInfo.aspx?i=220608>

<sup>26</sup> Louisiana Course Choice; retrieved June 28, 2013, <http://www.louisianacoursechoice.net/>

**Table 3: State-supported Course Choice Programs**

State	Year applicable; grade levels served	Key elements and restrictions	Funding details	SY 2012-13 course enrollments
Arizona	2009-10 Grades K-12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>State authorizes providers.</li> <li>74 charter schools and districts in SY 2013-14.</li> <li>Students may enroll PT or FT and may choose multiple providers.</li> <li>No restrictions in legislation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students cannot exceed 1 FTE.</li> <li>Online schools funded at 85% of base for PT students.</li> <li>Funding prorated to providers based on percentage of ADM.</li> <li>No performance-based or completion funding.</li> </ul>	AZ cannot separate PT course enrollments from unique student count.
Florida	2002, expanded in SY 2011-12. Grades K-12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students have the right to choose FLVS courses.</li> <li>Districts must make available at least 1, and often 3, online options.</li> <li>State authorizes many types of providers that districts may use.</li> <li>No restrictions in legislation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Each provider (online or brick-and-mortar) receives prorated portion of FTE based on number of courses taken.</li> <li>Funding based on completions.</li> </ul>	428,315
Georgia	2012-13 Grades 9-12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students may choose courses only from Georgia Virtual School.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GAVS is paid \$250 per student per course. It also received a \$1.5 million appropriation for SY 2013-14.</li> <li>No performance-based or completion funding.</li> </ul>	25,877 course enrollments
Louisiana	2013-14 Grades 9-12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>State authorizes providers; 45 public, private, district, online, f2f, blended providers in SY 2013-14.</li> <li>Courses are funded for students from schools graded C, D, or F; limited for students from A &amp; B schools.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>State appropriation and grant money for 2013.</li> <li>50% upon enrollment; 50% upon timely completion, or 40% for eventual completion.</li> </ul>	New in SY 2013-14
Michigan	2013-14 Grades 5-12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students may take up to 2 courses without district approval.</li> <li>Districts can deny enrollment for 5 reasons in legislation.</li> <li>Courses from MVS or statewide course catalog launching in SY 2013-14.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>District cost cannot exceed 1/12 of the district's foundation allowance per pupil funding for a semester-length course (\$589 max or an amount that exceeds 1/18 of the district's foundation allowance for a trimester course (\$393 max).</li> <li>80% upon enrollment; 20% upon completion.</li> </ul>	New in SY 2013-14
Minnesota	2003-04 Grades K-12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>State approves providers.</li> <li>27 approved providers in SY 2013-14 that are a mix of consortia, intermediate districts, charter school programs, and multidistrict programs.</li> <li>Students need district permission to enroll in &gt;50% of courses online.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Only approved providers can generate online course funding. Initial online learning ADM equals 1/12 for each semester course.</li> <li>Funded at .88 ADM; remaining .12 goes to the local district.</li> <li>Programs may report based on course completion or seat time; funding is not generated if course is not completed.</li> </ul>	9,933
Utah	2011-12 Grades 9-12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Providers must be authorized by the state.</li> <li>Any LEA—charter or district—can apply to be an online provider, or can contract with private providers.</li> <li>No restrictions in legislation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Providers receive 50% after the withdrawal period and 50% upon credit earned. Reduced payment if student eventually completes.</li> <li>Full funding based upon successful completion within 1 year for a 1.0 credit course and 9 weeks past the end of the semester for a .5 credit course.</li> <li>Different funding levels for core and elective courses ranging from \$200 to \$350.</li> <li>Students can advance based on competency.</li> </ul>	1,279 course enrollments; 664 unique students in SY 2012-13

# Online learning requirements

As of September 2013, four states require students to complete an online course to graduate (Alabama, Florida, Michigan, and Virginia) and two more (North Carolina and Arkansas) are in the process of implementing such a requirement (Table 4). The State Board of Education in North Carolina has passed a requirement that is expected to be implemented in SY 2014-15. Arkansas is piloting its requirement with a handful of districts and charter schools in SY 2013-14 to allow the state to learn implementation lessons before the requirement expands statewide in SY 2014-15.

**Table 4: States with online learning requirements**

State	Requirement details	Year effective
Alabama	<p>"...beginning with the ninth grade class of 2009-10, students shall be required to complete one online/technology enhanced course or experience in either a core course (mathematics, science, social studies, or English) or an elective with waivers being possible for students with a justifiable reason(s)."</p> <p><i>Alabama State Code, 290-3-1-.02-(8) (d)4; <a href="http://www.alabamaadministrativecode.state.al.us/docs/ed/290-3-1.pdf">http://www.alabamaadministrativecode.state.al.us/docs/ed/290-3-1.pdf</a></i></p>	Graduating class of 2012-13
Arkansas	<p>"Each high school student shall be required to take at least one (1) digital learning course for credit to graduate." The courses shall be of high quality, meet or exceed state standards, and be made available in a "blended learning, online-based, or other technology-based format tailored to meet the needs of each participating student."</p> <p><i>Act 1280 (2013); <a href="http://www.arkansased.org/public/userfiles/Legislative_Services/Quality%20Digital%20Learning%20Study/Facts/Act%201280%20Digital%20Learning%20opportunities.pdf">http://www.arkansased.org/public/userfiles/Legislative_Services/Quality%20Digital%20Learning%20Study/Facts/Act%201280%20Digital%20Learning%20opportunities.pdf</a></i></p>	Pilot program in SY 2013-14; all districts and charter schools in SY 2014-15.
Florida	<p>"At least one course ... must be completed through online learning ... an online course taken during grades 6-8 fulfills this requirement. This requirement shall be met through an online course offered by the Florida Virtual School, an online course offered by the high school, or an online dual enrollment course ... A student enrolled in a full-time or part-time virtual instruction program under s.1002.45 meets this requirement."</p> <p><i>CS/CS/HB7197 (2011) added Section 6. Paragraph (c) to subsection (2) of 893 section 1003.428; <a href="http://www.myfloridahouse.gov/Sections/Documents/loaddoc.aspx?FileName=_h7197er.docx&amp;DocumentType=Bill&amp;BillNumber=7197&amp;Session=2011">http://www.myfloridahouse.gov/Sections/Documents/loaddoc.aspx?FileName=_h7197er.docx&amp;DocumentType=Bill&amp;BillNumber=7197&amp;Session=2011</a></i></p>	Students entering 9 <sup>th</sup> grade in 2011-12 who are seeking a Standard Diploma
Michigan	<p>To graduate from high school, students must meet the online course or learning experience requirements as follows: "(i.) Has successfully completed at least 1 online course or learning experience that is presented online, as defined by the department; (ii) The pupil's school district or public school academy has integrated an online experience through the high school curriculum ..."</p> <p><i>ESB1124 Sec. 1278a (1) (b) (i and ii); <a href="http://www.michigan.gov/documents/PA_123_and_124_159920_7.pdf">http://www.michigan.gov/documents/PA_123_and_124_159920_7.pdf</a></i></p>	Students entering 8 <sup>th</sup> grade in 2006
North Carolina	<p>The State Board of Education directed the North Carolina Virtual Public School to develop a plan "requiring each student in North Carolina to successfully complete a teacher-led online course before they graduate beginning with the class of 2020."</p> <p><i>SBE meeting, December 2012; <a href="https://eboard.eboardsolutions.com/Meetings/ViewMeetingOrder.aspx?S=10399&amp;MID=728">https://eboard.eboardsolutions.com/Meetings/ViewMeetingOrder.aspx?S=10399&amp;MID=728</a></i></p>	Implementation is expected to begin in 2014, and apply to students graduating in 2020.
Virginia	<p>SB489 / HB1061 (2012) states that beginning with the 9<sup>th</sup> grade class in 2013-14, the Virginia State Board of Education will modify graduation requirements to earn a standard or advanced studies diploma to include the "successful completion of one virtual course. The virtual course may be a noncredit-bearing course."</p> <p><i>Virginia State Code, Chapter 642 22.1-253.13.4; September 29, 2012, <a href="http://leg1.state.va.us/cgi-bin/legp504.exe?121+ful+CHAP0642">http://leg1.state.va.us/cgi-bin/legp504.exe?121+ful+CHAP0642</a></i></p>	Students entering 9 <sup>th</sup> grade in 2013-14

Other states have passed legislation or other rules that encourage, but not require online learning.<sup>27</sup> The West Virginia State Board of Education recommends all students complete an online learning experience during grades 9-12. New Mexico's SB0561 (2007) included a requirement that "at least one of the 24 units required for graduation must be an Advanced Placement, honors, dual enrollment or distance learning course." MassCore recommends subject areas and additional learning opportunities for high school students to study in order to arrive at college or the workplace well prepared, including taking an online course.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>27</sup> Some of these have at times been described as online learning requirements; they are not.

<sup>28</sup> MassCore; retrieved September 11, 2013, <http://www.doe.mass.edu/ccr/masscore/summary.pdf>

In addition, some school districts are considering adding—or have implemented—online learning requirements. These include Cedarburg School District (WI), Kenosha School District (WI), Marietta City Schools (GA), Memphis City Schools, Putnam County Schools (TN), and Sugar Salem High School (ID). Kiel High School (WI) students take a required health class online, but have face-to-face components on topics such as first aid and CPR.

Idaho repealed its online learning requirement along with many other provisions affecting online learning in SB1184.

## MOOCs in K-12 education

MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses) have garnered considerable attention in post-secondary education, as courses from organizations including Udacity, edX, and Coursera have attracted tens of thousands of students. That is the number of students who start some courses—far fewer complete them. Colleges and universities have created MOOCs and MOOC-sponsoring organizations, and in some cases turned to MOOCs as an alternative to traditional remediation.

MOOCs are not nearly as prevalent in any part of K-12 education, but the attention they have received has not escaped the attention of K-12 educators and policymakers. For example, Michigan Virtual University (MVU) is working with Kent State University to pilot a MOOC for K-12 students (among others) during SY 2013-14. The course, “*K-12 Teaching in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*,” is aimed at in-service teachers, pre-service teachers, and high school students interested in teaching as a profession. MVU expects that the course will be provided for certificate only, but that it might be used to fulfill the online learning experience high school graduation requirement in Michigan if the local school that the student attends supports it.

Similarly, iLearnOhio, a state-funded online learning platform, is listing 14 MOOCs offered by Coursera in elective subjects. The course descriptions state “There is no academic credit for taking any Coursera online course, but completing a course offered through Coursera may qualify a student for Flex Credit”<sup>29</sup>—a competency-based path by which schools in Ohio can grant credit.<sup>30</sup>

Among the key issues in how MOOCs would be offered to high school students is how credit would be granted, and whether school administrators would grant credit for the courses. Because in most cases MOOCs don’t provide a mechanism to demonstrate seat-time or its equivalent, the paths by which schools can grant credit while meeting funding and other requirements are limited—although they do exist.

Amplify is piloting a MOOC in Advanced Placement Computer Science in SY 2013-14 that attempts to address both of these issues. By choosing an AP course, schools are given the option of granting credit based on competency, which can be demonstrated by a student receiving a 3 or better on the exam (if the state has a competency-based mechanism for granting credit). Amplify is also offering a “MOOC local” option that aims to provide the school enough information about student activity in the course to allow the school to claim funding in states that allow for such funding mechanisms.

The Florida legislature in 2013 recognized that MOOCs are deserving of study, and required that the “Department of Education shall...review and provide recommendations for online courses, including massive open online courses, and competency-based online courses for K-12 and postsecondary education.”<sup>31</sup> The legislation requires that the department consider processes for “approving, funding, holding providers accountable, and awarding credit for such courses” including “measures of quality based upon student

<sup>29</sup> iLearnOhio, <http://ilearnohio.org/search/courses/>

<sup>30</sup> Ohio Flex Credit policy, <http://education.ohio.gov/getattachment/State-Board/State-Board-Reports-and-Policies/Ohio-s-Credit-Flexibility-Plan/FINAL-CreditFLEX-8-4-ExSummarySPREADS.pdf.aspx>

<sup>31</sup> Florida HB7029; retrieved September 18, 2013, <http://www.fldoe.org/GR/pdf/2013/hb7029.pdf>.



outcomes, such as completion and achievement rates correlated appropriately to each delivery model; measures for students to demonstrate competency, such as prior learning assessments, end-of-course exams, assessments established by regionally accredited public institutions which may be applied as one whole assessment or as two or more discrete subassessments such that when combined, the subassessments are equivalent to a whole assessment...”

We don't envy the task that the Florida Department of Education has been given by the legislature, because these are challenging questions that get at the very core of where the innovation and promise that MOOCs hold intersects with legitimate concerns about whether such courses could be abused and be a way in which students are granted credit without having earned it.

The promise is apparent: MOOCs could be a vehicle by which students who don't currently have access to certain courses gain such opportunities. These students might have to be highly motivated, given the lack of teacher-led support in most MOOCs, or the student's local school would have to provide that support. But for AP courses or any others for which an independent final exam exists, the potential is that students would have a way to learn online and therefore be able to take courses that they wouldn't otherwise have.

The peril is apparent as well, however. Teacher-less online courses have been tried by many schools, and while they have sometimes been successful for students, all too often they have yielded poor outcomes. Most students need the attention and support of a teacher or, at a minimum, a responsible adult who is involved in some way. The teacher may be online or onsite, but courses without teachers do not have high success rates. Exacerbating the situation is that many of these courses, which have often been used in credit recovery, have no independent assessments, so that there is no externally validated way that the student can demonstrate mastery. These types of courses have led numerous organizations to question the validity of online courses and, in the case of the NCAA, to require an approval process for online courses demonstrating that a teacher is leading the course.

From a policy perspective, the key question may be: what is a MOOC, and how is it different than a non-MOOC online course? MOOCs aren't based on any new technologies, in fact many of them are largely based on old-school talking head videos (likely because of their roots in post-secondary institutions). The common definition of a MOOC is merely that it is designed to attract large numbers of students, in large part by being free, and also by focusing on topics that are of interest to students. But a policy that puts one online course into a different category than others because of the number of students taking the course makes no sense—that approach would mean that when 10 students take the course a set of policies applies, and when 10,000 students take it another set of policies applies.

We expect that the Florida Department of Education's study will find that the same policy issues that would make sense for MOOCs in fact apply to all online courses, all blended courses, and perhaps eventually, all courses. These include allowing students to advance based on demonstrated competency; creating common assessments external to providers so that results are validated (as Florida is doing by developing end-of-course exams); and allowing schools to be funded based on student success. These are the policies that would make sense for MOOCs. They would also make sense for all other courses.

## Blended learning: Do we know it when we see it?

Defining and characterizing blended learning continues to be a main challenge to educators, policymakers, and indeed the overall field. The Clayton Christensen Institute for Disruptive Innovation has created a useful and often-cited definition of blended learning, and *Keeping Pace* 2012 added to the characterization of blended learning. Still, there is a large grey area of classrooms, programs, and schools that are using some digital resources, but in ways that do not clearly fall into or out of the blended learning definition.

The Christensen Institute's May 2013 report—*Is K-12 Blended Learning Disruptive?*<sup>32</sup>—touches on the issue that we believe is among the most important topics in online and blended learning today: whether blended learning, as conceived and implemented in many schools, will be transformative, meaning will it produce significant improvements in student outcomes. The Christensen Institute (formerly the Innosight Institute), as it so often does, provides a valuable theoretical grounding to this question.

[Some] industries experience a hybrid stage when they are in the middle of a disruptive transformation. A hybrid is a combination of the new, disruptive technology with the old technology and represents a sustaining innovation relative to the old technology... The models of blended learning that follow the hybrid pattern are on a sustaining trajectory relative to the traditional classroom. They are poised to build upon and offer sustaining enhancements to the factory-based classroom system, but not disrupt it.

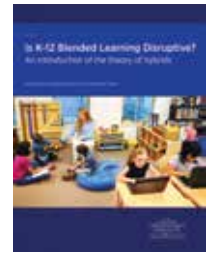
The report goes on to suggest ways in which education leaders can “foster disruptive innovation,” starting with 1) “Create a team within the school that is autonomous from all aspects of the traditional classroom,” and 2) “Focus disruptive blended-learning models initially on areas of nonconsumption.”

We see many educators and policymakers who believe the first step toward a blended school is providing tablets to students, or electronic whiteboards to teachers. A review of the online and blended learning landscape, however, suggests it's not clear those steps are either necessary or sufficient precursors to a blended school.

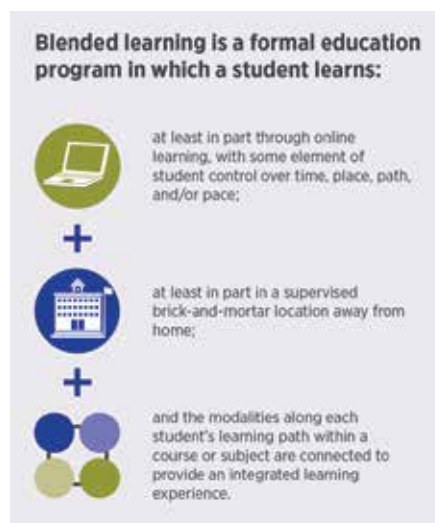
When we tell educators that we don't believe certain developments are considered “blended learning,” the response is often along the lines of “but those items (tablets, digital textbooks, etc.) are helpful!” Here again, the Institute provides valuable commentary:

A common misreading of the theory of disruptive innovation is that disruptive innovations are good and sustaining innovations are bad. This is false. Sustaining innovations are vital to a healthy and robust sector, as organizations strive to make better products or deliver better services to their best customers.

The theory doesn't suggest that these sustaining innovations are worthless, or bad. The key, however, is that the “best customers” benefit. These changes will largely serve students who are already doing fairly well. This is a good thing, but only to the extent that it does not keep the school from also creating truly disruptive, blended schools or classrooms as well, to serve the students who are most in need.



For a more detailed discussion of these issues see *Is K-12 Blended Learning Disruptive?*



**Figure 5: Definition of Blended Learning, The Clayton Christensen Institute**

<sup>32</sup> Clayton Christensen, Michael B. Horn, Heather Staker. (2013) *Is K-12 Blended Learning Disruptive?* (The Clayton Christensen Institute), <http://www.christenseninstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Is-K-12-Blended-Learning-Disruptive.pdf>

## What does a long look back—and ahead—suggest?

*Keeping Pace 2013* is our 10<sup>th</sup> edition of the report. A landscape changing as rapidly as K-12 online and blended learning sometimes forces us to narrow our focus to the path immediately ahead and behind, but this decade anniversary provides a vantage point from which to look back with a longer lens than we often use, and to look further ahead as well. What does this longer view suggest?

### The complexity of change is accelerating

Ten years ago, the world we surveyed in *Keeping Pace* was mostly contained within a few well-defined dimensions: there were state virtual schools and fully online charter schools, but essentially no blended learning and very little district-level activity. When we wrote nearly a decade ago that “Pennsylvania has experienced significant public conflict between cyber charter schools and school districts” while “Illinois has a centralized approach in which most online education activity is by the statewide virtual high school,” we pretty much summed up the landscape as a whole. We envisioned more of the same expanding across the nation over time, and advocated for policy frameworks to ensure quality through growth along both dimensions.

The landscape is not nearly as simple now, from the standpoint of either policy or practice. While there are some constants—for example, the strains in Pennsylvania continue, resulting in both annual legislative battles and a proliferation of district cyber programs—nearly every aspect of the online and blended landscape has become more complex, more interconnected, and more volatile. Providers have multiplied and diversified: yesterday’s virtual charter school operator is also today’s course vendor and blended learning consultant, while the leading state virtual schools now serve fully online and blended students. The image of the massively open and free holds a powerful lure. As customers, schools are aiming for a wide range of virtual, blended, part-time, full-time, and mobile offerings. Multiply this by thousands of districts, private schools, education agencies, and all 50 states, and the source of the proliferation becomes clear.

Policy is still not keeping pace with practice in our field—how could it? At least in part because of the speed and complexity of online and blended learning development, state legislatures have moved in uneven bursts to create course choice programs, build online schools into charter laws, and incent districts to create opportunities for students. But tackling the really big issues, such as equitable funding and true measures of quality, would mean looking at these same issues for all forms of education, and only a few states have had the wherewithal to even try.

### Change runs in both directions

While many states have created more online and blended opportunities for students, some policy changes take us a step backwards. For example, *Keeping Pace* has documented the reduced funding or closing of several state virtual schools. What looked a decade ago like an inevitable replication across the nation of the state virtual school model foundered with the Great Recession; only the most resourceful (or fortunately funded) have managed to thrive, and most of the prominent state virtual schools were created at least a decade ago. Whether or not a single public online course provider is the best option—some thoughtful advocates argue for allowing multiple providers—these changes have resulted in net fewer high-quality options for students, at least in the short term.

### And yet...

Despite some places tied in Gordian knots and others regressing, online and blended learning is undoubtedly more common, of higher quality, and providing more opportunities than it was a decade ago. For example:

- Blended schools are offering new opportunities to students, many of whom are low-income or at-risk, in inner-city areas of California, New Jersey, Ohio, Illinois, Colorado, and many other states. These schools did not exist 10 years ago.

- More students have access to fully online schools, and hundreds of thousands of students are choosing this option. Although the percentage of students for whom a fully online school is the best option will likely always remain small, for some students online learning is their best—and possibly their only—option.
- Some individual school districts, such as Riverside, Clark County, and Washington DC, are showing that a traditional district can be among the most innovative of organizations. Countless others are offering new options to their students. Converting an existing school to a blended approach, or adding online options in an existing district, is in many ways more challenging than opening a new school. Educators from existing schools and districts are showing it can be done.
- State virtual schools continue to demonstrate how a public investment in supporting students with online courses can pay off for students statewide, and course choice programs are beginning to show that private providers can offer a viable option as well.
- New research, primarily funded by the federal government and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation; improved state-level reporting; and course reviews by organizations such as the California Learning Resource Network are allowing educators to have a much improved sense for what works.

## Lessons learned

The 50 states have taken 50 different approaches to policy. Some are similar to each other, but none are the same. What do these different examples show us from the past 10 years, and what does it suggest for the future?

**Policy matters:** The online and blended learning options available to students vary widely among states because of the policy environment that legislators, governors, and state boards of education create. Now that there are many examples of successful online and blended courses and schools, there is no reason to restrict student access to anything less than a full array of digital learning options. In many cases, creating opportunity doesn't mean passing new complex laws and regulations, but instead simplifying, cutting out archaic underbrush, and establishing common principles.

**Funding must be equitable:** Policy that allows a wide assortment of online and blended learning options must be tied to funding formulas and levels that provide an adequate level of funding for all students, regardless of the mode of instruction that they choose.

**Quality through accountability is critical:** Access for students must be tied to accountability for providers, with a focus on quality outcomes. However, few states are making the investment in both the data systems and the culture of data usage to allow for adequate information on results of individual schools and courses, particularly when taking into account that so many students using online schools are outside the mainstream. The fate of the Common Core assessments may further hinder useful quality metrics.

**Existing schools and teachers are critical:** The most recent innovations often capture the most attention, whether they are online courses in years past, blended schools in the more recent past, or MOOCs today. For the foreseeable future, most students will obtain most of their education primarily by attending a physical school that is using existing teachers. Many of these schools and teachers are experimenting with new digital approaches, often in response to competition. Policymakers and education advocates should ensure that innovations are replicable and scalable, and understand that “new” isn't inherently “better.”

## A new digital divide ahead?

For students, there is a substantial difference between going to school in a state committed to quality online and blended learning opportunities, and a state without. This difference is large and growing, and threatens to open a new educational digital divide: one separating students who have access to 21<sup>st</sup> century learning opportunities, and those who do not. In its second decade, *Keeping Pace* will be dedicated to shining a bright light on this divide and arming policymakers and practitioners with the data they need to bridge it.

# 2 PRACTICE

## Planning for Quality

*Data on student outcomes show that online and blended schools can be high-quality, low-quality, or in between. These results demonstrate the need for planning and investment by educators who wish to create an online or blended school, or add an online or blended component to an existing school. This section suggests key planning questions and then provides some possible paths to implementation.*

THE CRITICAL INITIAL QUESTION THAT ALL EDUCATORS AND STAKEHOLDERS SHOULD ASK WHEN STARTING OR EXPANDING AN ONLINE AND BLENDED PROGRAM IS: **WHAT EDUCATIONAL GOALS ARE WE TRYING TO MEET?**

Those goals may include personalizing learning and improving college readiness for all students; creating new options for credit recovery and at-risk students; expanding the school day; providing innovative alternatives to challenge advanced students; and ultimately transforming the instructional model being used with a goal of improving student outcomes. Educational goals must be prioritized and grounded in an understanding of existing constraints.

### **Strategic planning key issues and questions:**

The first 10 pages in this section provide an outline of major strategic planning key issues and questions to consider in the early stages of development. They are organized around four key categories: **Content, Teaching, Technology, and Operations.**

## Implementing a new program

After the Questions, we offer three scenarios and accompanying project development Timelines for blended learning program leaders. Each presents a different development schedule based on a specific set of initial decisions. Each presents key milestone events by month or quarter, and provides a general sequence for starting specific tasks. The time to complete each step in the implementation process varies based on available resources and expertise, so the timelines generally do not recommend a duration for each task.

**Developing a Blended Learning Program—Standard Time or Time-Shifted:** This first timeline applies to two different blended learning program scenarios, both of which rely on existing district teachers and content supplied by an external provider, and both of which seek a program launch in one year.

The top half of the pages explores a scenario in which the blended program operates within the existing academic calendar and bell schedule. We call this a “Standard Time Blended Learning Program.”

The bottom half of the page details a situation in which the blended learning program does not operate on the school’s usual bell schedule or academic calendar. Students may come to school on some days and work from home other days, or be at school all day but not operate on the usual bell schedule. We call this “Time-Shifted Blended Learning Program.” These scenarios build on the information on the top half of each page, and add additional detail on the bottom half of each page.

**Developing a Comprehensive District Blended and Online Learning Program:** This three-year timeline presents key milestones leading to the launch of a comprehensive district-wide blended and online learning program. This timeline assumes there are existing pockets of innovation happening in the district, but there is no district-level coordination to ensure quality, streamline the student experience, or strongly support teachers. Some teachers, primarily at the middle and high schools, are blending their classes, although some may simply be using educational technology as opposed to truly blending their classrooms. The district does not yet offer extensive supplemental online classes or a fully online program, although students may be enrolling in online classes through a state virtual school or neighboring district.

All three scenarios follow the same color code for the four focus areas: **Content**, **Teaching**, **Technology**, and **Operations**. Each timeline begins with a planning period, represented in black, that highlights the importance of the strategic planning process.

These timelines are intended to provide a starting point for planning and implementing your online and blended learning program and will vary, sometimes only slightly and sometimes significantly, based on your human resources, funding, facilities, and need. The timing and durations are based on the experience of *Keeping Pace* authors and sponsors. Your timing is likely to be different. As the car salespeople say—your mileage may vary.

*Abbreviations found in this section*

**BL**  
Blended learning

**ELA**  
English language arts

**F2F**  
Face-to-face

**LMS**  
Learning management system

**OL**  
Online learning

**OER**  
Open educational resources

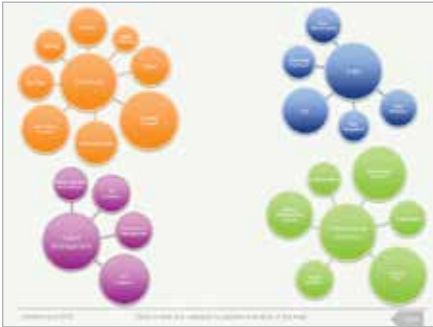
**PD**  
Professional development

**PLC**  
Personal learning communities

**RFP**  
Request for proposals

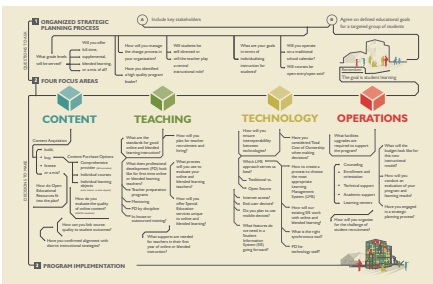
**SIS**  
Student information system

*The New Schools Venture Fund has created an interactive Ed Tech Market Map that will help you understand the provider landscape.*



See it at <http://www.newschools.org/entrepreneurs/edtechmap>

*Keeping Pace 2012 included three timelines geared toward the launch of online programs in three scenarios:*



**District Courses and Teaching**  
– 18 month timeline

**Provider-supplied Courses and District Teaching** – 12 month timeline

**Provider-supplied Courses and Teaching** – 9 month timeline

## Navigating the provider landscape

Program administrators creating online or blended programs face a large and confusing array of providers of content, technology, instruction, professional development, and other products and services. The confusion stems from at least three sources:

1. **Many providers offer more than one type of product or service.** The largest organizations, such as K12 Inc., Connections, and Advanced Academics, run entire schools but also offer courses, with or without instruction included. Course providers such as Edmentum, Apex, Florida Virtual School, Pearson, and eDynamic Learning offer course content with or without instruction, as well as many other services.
2. **Providers offer different trade-offs between flexibility and integration.** Providers vary in terms of the ability they give educators to put content into a variety of technology platforms, allow content editing by teachers, and integrate with data systems. The trade-off is that higher flexibility often means some loss of streamlining and may require greater investment in local systems or training. Think Apple vs PC. Apple's approach makes most applications work together easily and well, but limits the user mostly to Apple's options. Microsoft-based computers offer more software alternatives, but introduce new challenges as well. Neither approach is inherently better; each has its advantages and proponents.
3. **The players change regularly.** New providers are constantly entering the online and blended learning arena, and existing companies are merging, acquiring others, or moving into new areas. If six months have passed since you last surveyed the field, something has changed.

## What should an administrator do to understand the provider options?

Being very clear about your program requirements helps you avoid going in directions that won't fit your needs, and helps providers by limiting the number of proposals they write that will not be successful. Given the nearly limitless possibilities, consider the following issues and questions for prospective providers:

1. Understand the differences between providers who focus on blended or online learning, and those that are more closely aligned to classroom-based educational technology.

### Key questions include:

How does your product/service address a situation where at least some instruction is done at a distance?

How does your product/service allow for individualized instruction for all students?

2. Start by determining your online or blended learning program plan (as described in the following pages), and then issue an RFP based on key parameters of the program.

**Key questions include:**

Can our teachers modify your content to meet our instructional approaches?

Can you supply teachers for courses where we don't have highly qualified teachers available?

3. Determine if you will use your own technology platform that allows for content creation and editing, or if you are seeking content tied to a technology platform.

**Key questions include:**

Is your online content editable?

Can your content be put into a variety of technology platforms?

4. Require an online demonstration from a subset of providers. Good providers don't want to just tell you what they can do, they want to show you as well. Require a demonstration. Require that it be online (not just in slides). Allocate at least 90 minutes for each provider's demonstration, and drive the presentation to cover what you want to see, which may or may not be what the provider wants to show. Include a variety of staff that will be involved in decision-making and/or daily operation of the online and blended learning program.

5. Watching a demonstration is important, but it's also a bit like having a salesperson test drive a car for you. Have your review team spend time in the courses and compare notes about what you like and what doesn't work as well, keeping in mind the attributes of the students most likely to be taking the courses.

**Key question:**

Can we access your courses as a teacher, and as a student?

This process takes time, as you will see in the timeline pages that follow. If you are starting or growing an online program, however, you know—or will soon find out—that the ways in which teaching, content, and technology interact, and the services offered by different providers in each of those areas, can vary in important ways. You also know, or will soon find out, that even if you are developing most of the program in-house you will still be using some outside providers for learning objects, professional development, evaluation, or other services. Time spent learning the provider landscape is time well invested, paying off in a better program for students.

*Two useful blended learning implementation guides have been created by Digital Learning Now and iNACOL/Next Generation Learning Challenges. Readers should review those guides along with Keeping Pace to determine which combination of resources is most useful to their school or district.*



**Planning and Designing for K-12 Next Generation Learning**



**Blended Learning Implementation Guide**



**1 ORGANIZED STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS**

**A** Include key stakeholders

QUESTIONS TO ASK

- What grade levels will be served?
  - Will you offer blended learning, supplemental, full-time, or a mix of all?
- How will you manage the change process in your organization?
- Have you identified a high quality program leader?
- How will the blended program impact teacher and student roles and the use of time?

**2 FOUR FOCUS AREAS**



**CONTENT**



**TEACHING**

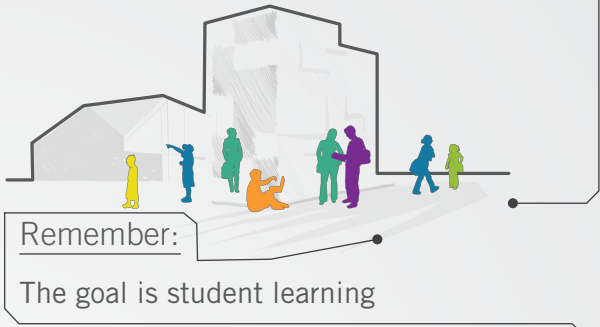
DECISIONS TO MAKE

- Content Acquisition
  - build,
  - buy,
  - or a mix?
- Content Purchase Options
  - Comprehensive provider *(full curriculum)*
  - Individual courses
  - Individual learning objects *(units, lessons, or other objects)*
- How do Open Educational Resources fit into the plan?
  - How do you evaluate the quality of online content? *(iNACOL standards)*
  - How can you link course quality to student outcomes?
  - Have you confirmed alignment with district instructional strategies?
- What are the standards for good online and blended learning instruction?
  - How will you plan for teacher recruitment?
- What does professional development (PD) look like for first-time online or blended learning teachers?
  - Teacher preparation programs
  - Mentoring
  - PD by discipline
  - In-house or outsourced training?
- What process will you use to evaluate your online and blended learning teachers?
  - How will you offer Special Education services unique to online and blended learning?
- What supports are needed for teachers in their first year of online or blended instruction?

**3 PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION**

**B** Agree on defined educational goals for a targeted group of students

- What are your goals in terms of individualizing instruction for students?
- Will you operate on a traditional school calendar?
- Will courses be open entry/open exit?



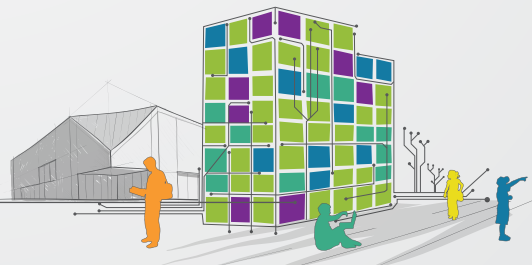
# TECHNOLOGY



# OPERATIONS

- How will you ensure interoperability between technologies?
- Which platform or LMS approach serves us best?
  - Commercial LMS
  - Open source LMS
  - Proprietary content platform(s)
- Internet access?
- End-user devices?
- Do you plan to use mobile devices?
- What features do we need in a Student Information System (SIS) going forward?
- Have you considered Total Cost of Ownership when making decisions?
- How to create a process to choose the most appropriate LMS or platform
- How will our existing SIS work with online and blended learning?
- Do we need a synchronous tool?
- PD for technology staff?

- What facilities upgrades are required to support the program?
  - Counseling
  - Enrollment and orientation
  - Technical support
  - Academic support
  - Learning centers
- What will the budget look like for this new instructional model?
- How will you conduct an evaluation of your program and learning results?
- Have you engaged in a strategic planning process?
- How will you communicate the new blended approach or program to students, parents, and teachers?





# CONTENT

## Content Acquisition

- build,
- buy,
- or a mix?

### Content Purchase Options

- Comprehensive provider *(full curriculum)*
- Individual courses
- Individual learning objects *(units, lessons, or other objects)*

Many content providers offer turnkey blended solutions pairing a complete online curriculum with technology and services. This comprehensive approach is relatively quick and easy, but can limit options and precludes content ownership.

How do **Open Educational Resources** fit into the plan?

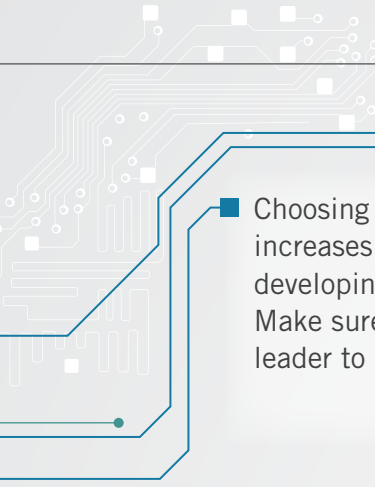
Take the iNACOL National Standards of Quality for Online Courses and localize them for your use. Apply these standards to both content you develop internally or acquire externally.

How do you evaluate the **quality of online content**?

Will your content support **individualized instruction**?

Plan to track courses, units, lessons, and even learning objects to gains in student outcomes. Leverage the longitudinal tracking built into your LMS and SIS to retire ineffective content.

Have you confirmed alignment with **district instructional strategies**?



■ Choosing a mix of build or buy increases your options while also developing internal expertise. Make sure you have a vision and leader to champion the effort.

■ Online instructional design is not a skill inherent in all teachers. Building online content requires staff expertise, the commitment of resources, and an extended time horizon for development, but you maintain control and ownership. Engage outside course reviewers to evaluate homegrown content.

■ Buying gives you access to high quality online content with immediate availability, but costs can be high and customization can be limited.

■ Acquiring complete courses offers convenience and an organized instructional approach, while seeking individual learning objects offers course design flexibility along with the responsibility to bring it all together.

■ Free always seems better, but quality can vary and the responsibility for search and retrieval requires dedicated staff time and expertise.

■ Establish a review committee with various skill sets to examine content, instructional design, online assessment, technology interoperability, and usability. Make it better than the textbook committee.

■ Can be an effective component of the content acquisition mix. To best utilize these resources requires a commitment to the community that supports and fosters Creative Commons licensing. You should add if you take.

■ Use formative and summative assessments in your blended program to demand more from your digital content. Challenge students to maturely rate online content. Engagement counts.

■ Content aligns with district instructional strategies, including Common Core implementation. Strive for equal course rigor through shared assessments across instructional environments. Blended courses are not the easy way out.

# TEACHING

What are the **standards** for good online and blended learning instruction?

Take the iNACOL National Standards for Quality Online Teaching and localize them for your use. Quantify standards where possible and establish an evaluation rubric for teachers. Help them know what is expected.

How will you plan for **teacher recruitment**?

Avoid the myth, “any regular classroom teacher is qualified to teach online.” Some teachers will thrive using the new tool set offered online while others will struggle.

What does **professional development (PD)** look like for first-time online or blended learning teachers?

- Teacher preparation programs
- Mentoring
- PD by discipline
- In-house or outsourced training

The first online teaching experience can feel like starting over for many teachers. Push them towards a community of peers to share success strategies and work through tough times. Provide a formal structure, but encourage informal connections.

What supports are needed for teachers in their **first year of online or blended instruction**?

How will you offer **Special Education services** unique to online and blended learning?

Most of the teacher activities to support learning are documented in the LMS. Equip and train your administrators to understand online learning so they know good online and blended instruction when they see it. So much better than a brief classroom observation.

What process will you use to **evaluate** your online and blended learning teachers?

■ In blended learning environments, commit to instruction that gives students an increased level of control over the time, place, path and pace of their instruction. Help them take responsibility for their learning.

■ Know your program type, academic goals, and targeted student population. Develop a local profile of an excellent blended learning teacher. Challenge existing teachers and new hires by using online instructional tools in review and hiring processes.

■ Get ahead and have your own required, in-depth, rigorous PD offering available to teachers prior to their first online or blended teaching experience. Don't rely on teacher preparation programs. Make PD your first thought, not an afterthought.

■ Be willing to look outside your organization for quality online and blended learning PD expertise. Consider organizing by discipline. Math teachers unite!

■ Online and blended environments call for teacher as facilitator. Support those who are making a big shift in their instructional style. Help them master the new communications tools and requirements. Communicate, communicate, communicate.

■ Plan ahead to support special education students and Individual Education Programs (IEPs). Include special education staff members in professional development that allows them to engage students in support of their online instruction. Support a culture that involves special education staff early in the online course.

■ Work with master teachers to establish a teacher evaluation rubric using nationally accepted standards, combined with local learning goals. Keep this group together to update the expectations based on successful online teaching techniques. Reward excellence.



# TECHNOLOGY

How will you ensure **interoperability** between technologies?

Have you considered **Total Cost of Ownership** when making decisions?

As online and blended learning becomes an essential part of instruction, the need for technologies to seamlessly work together becomes critical. Truly integrated systems save money.

Which **platform or LMS** approach serves us best?

- Commercial LMS
- Open source LMS
- Proprietary content platform(s)

How to create a process to choose the most appropriate LMS or platform

How will students **access** their online tools?

- Internet access?
- End-user devices?
- Do you plan to use mobile devices?

Get ready for a large jump in school-based Internet bandwidth use and consider the access issues for all students outside the school building.

Always consider your instructional goals when purchasing end-user devices or establishing Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) programs. Have a plan to support multiple types of end-user devices. Leverage online and blended learning to support 1:1 laptop initiatives or BYOD.

What features do we need in a **Student Information System (SIS) going forward?**

**How will our existing SIS work** with online and blended learning?

Engage your SIS provider in a discussion about online and blended learning. Urge them to add features that support the unique nature of online learning. The bell schedule and defined academic terms may no longer apply.

Do we need a synchronous tool?

**PD** for technology staff?

■ Always calculate the indirect and non-budgeted costs associated with the implementation of an online/blended learning technology. Low initial investments can be misleading.

■ Make sure the educational goals of your program drive your LMS choice. Create a review committee of LMS users in your organization to ensure that various use cases are considered.

■ If you purchase or license content, understanding how your online content will function in each LMS is an important part of the evaluation process. Choosing an LMS that supports the “native” importation of content will save you time and money while taking full advantage of the LMS features.

■ Leveraging the instruction and achievement data gathered by your LMS requires a tight integration with your Student Information System (SIS). Look for solutions that are real-time and require less manual intervention.

■ Generally, a strong technical staff is needed to support an Open Source solution, especially if you choose to customize the LMS for your needs. Always understand the long-term costs of a commercial LMS contract. Programs grow and costs increase.

■ Commercial LMS solutions support organizations with limited technical resources. Understand what support is offered with an LMS contract.

■ The evolved and flexible SIS supports delivery of student data from an LMS to an achievement “dashboard,” easy and cost effective customization for unique blended learning programs, and proven scalability for when your program grows.

■ Establishing a scalable online or blended learning program requires unique technology expertise. Support those who support your quality instruction.





# OPERATIONS

How will you offer **student support services** unique to online/blended learning?

- Counseling
- Enrollment and orientation
- Technical support
- Academic support
- Learning centers

■ What facilities upgrades are required to support the program?

Involve your guidance counselors in the planning and implementation process for any online or blending learning program. Give them a view into some representative online courses, so they can properly advise students.

• What will the **budget** look like for this new instructional model?

■ Be aware of the pitfalls of underfunding a new blended learning program in the first year of operation. Investment may be higher than initial revenues. Your best marketing is referrals from successful students in year one.

• How will you conduct an **evaluation of your program** and learning results?

• Have you engaged in a **strategic planning process**?

■ Start your strategic planning process with a needs assessment to help identify targeted educational goals that will affect student outcomes, especially where you are presented with unique educational challenges.

• How will you **communicate** the new blended approach or program to students, parents, and teachers?

■ Change the internal culture that assumes students are geographically bound.

## Facilities • Administration • Student Services • Communications

■ Develop an online orientation course for students to set performance expectations, familiarize the students with the technology and gauge their commitment. Consider successful completion a requirement to gain access to registered courses.

■ Plan ahead for facilities upgrades needed to support your chosen style of blended learning. This might include, but not be limited to, room configurations, flexible furniture, power availability and providing non-traditional student work spaces.

■ Blended learning offers an opportunity to consider new staffing models including teachers, instructional coaches, graders, lab monitors and other roles. Commit the resources needed to hire a dynamic leader.

■ Consider offering non-traditional Learning Center environments in support of blended or credit recovery programs. Support student success with access to blended courses outside of school buildings and during extended hours.

■ Work your program evaluation into your strategic planning and initial budget. Develop an integrated approach that allows you to monitor student outcomes, stakeholder satisfaction, and the quality of your content and teaching.

■ Plan to use data from LMS to inform your evaluation process. Put the systems in place that support commitment to longitudinal data. Establish transparency to the community through your stakeholder group.

■ Complete a vision, mission, and educational goals exercise and then use the outcome to drive key decisions. Involve diverse stakeholders, and post the results in a prominent place for all to see, don't file them away.

■ If you operate in an environment of choice, make sure you engage in a competitive market analysis. Outreach and marketing to parents and students is more important than ever.



CONTENT



TEACHING



TECHNOLOGY



OPERATIONS

timeline  
#1

TRADITIONAL TIME

1-year timeline

Maintain a traditional schedule

(TOP HALF OF PAGE)

# Developing a Blended Learning Program

For details about the timelines, see the Planning for Quality introduction.

## District Teachers and Provider Content

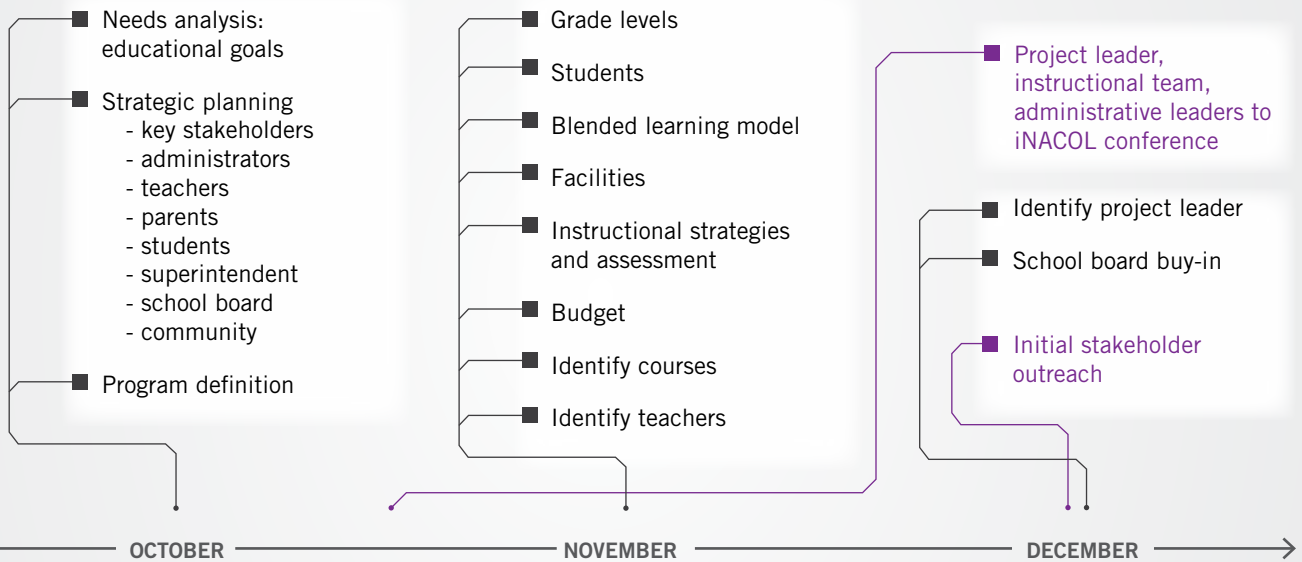
THESE FOUR PAGES INCLUDE TWO ONE-YEAR TIMELINES: the top half of each page applies to both timelines (above the line with months), while the information below applies only to the second timeline. Each timeline presents key milestones leading to the launch of a blended learning program that will use a district's teachers with provider content.

**Traditional Time Blended Learning Program:** The top timeline introduces a blended learning program that will maintain a traditional semester schedule and bell schedule while blending student learning by giving them flexibility in path and/or pace.

QUARTER 1

page 1 of 4

3-month Strategic Planning Process



TIME Shift

timeline  
#2

TIME-SHIFTED

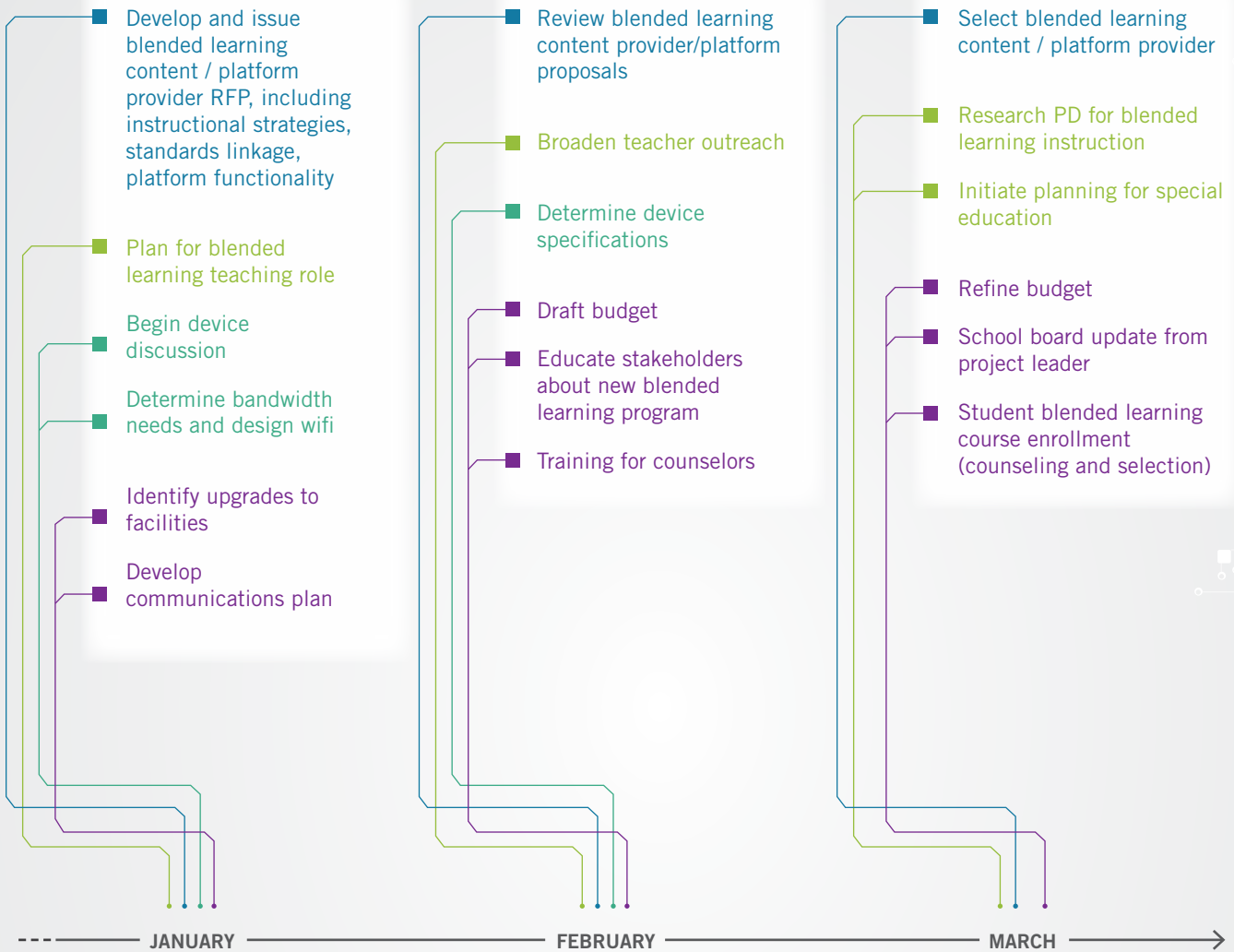
Flexible time schedule

(ENTIRE PAGE)

**“Time-Shifted Blended Learning Program:”** Building on the top timeline, the events under the months build a blended learning program that gives students flexibility in time or place. While historically these types of programs have been created in charter schools that have more flexibility in how they meet educational goals, traditional public and private schools are moving toward these models in order to personalize learning paths, create cost efficiencies, and push innovation. They often start on a smaller scale.

Because planning and implementing blended learning programs that do not adhere to a bell schedule creates its own set of challenges, additional milestones are noted below the names of the months.

**QUARTER 2**



**QUARTER 2 TIME Shift**

**CONTENT**

Content / platform provider decision is made based on significant reduction in traditional classroom time for students

Reduction in traditional classroom time requires that content / platform have strong tools for communication at a distance

Content / platform providers must foster independent learning

**TEACHING**

Plan for modification of instructional staffing models

PD must cover distance learning strategies, remote communication, and the best instruction for classroom time

Determine which special education accommodations are appropriate for online

**TECHNOLOGY**

Access outside of the classroom impacts device choice

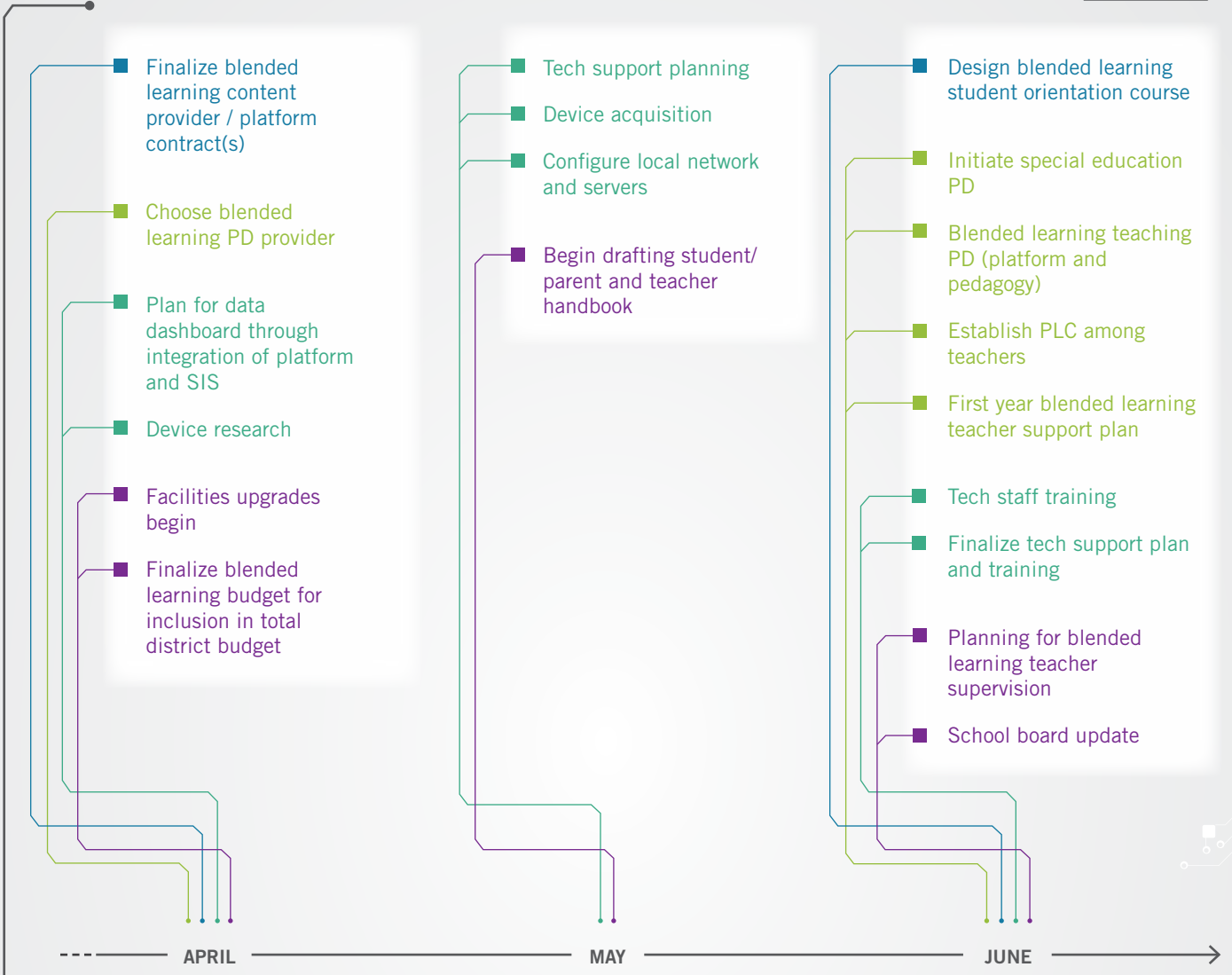
Ensure Internet access for all students outside the classroom

**OPERATIONS**

Design facilities to accommodate flexible learning spaces, including individuals, and small and large groups

Educate parents about how to better support their child's independent learning

Counselors and students must understand blended student commitment and responsibilities



QUARTER 3  
TIME Shift

**CONTENT**

- Contract includes home access for independent learning
- Orientation course customized for independent learning

**TEACHING**

Online teacher PD allows teachers to experience the role of online learner

**TECHNOLOGY**

Prepare for after-hours and remote tech support

**OPERATIONS**

- Address flexible schedule and different roles in student / parent and teacher handbooks
- Supervisor planning includes evaluating teachers' roles in remote instruction
- Don't forget to tell campus security not to chase students who may be leaving campus at strange hours!

**QUARTER 4**



FOUR FOCUS AREAS



CONTENT



TEACHING



TECHNOLOGY



OPERATIONS

ABBREVIATIONS

**BLÉN** - Blended

**SUPP** - Supplemental

**FULL** - Fully Online

3 year timeline

ARE YOU HERE?

Some blended learning — or is it ed tech?

Inconsistent student experience

Unknown quality

No fully online program

## Developing a Comprehensive District Blended and Online Program

THIS THREE-YEAR TIMELINE PRESENTS KEY MILESTONES LEADING TO THE LAUNCH OF A COMPREHENSIVE DISTRICT-WIDE BLENDED AND ONLINE LEARNING PROGRAM.

This timeline assumes there are existing pockets of innovation happening in the district, but there is no district-level coordination to ensure quality, streamline the student experience, or support teachers. Some teachers, primarily at the middle and high schools, are blending their classes, although some may simply be using more educational technology as opposed to blending classrooms.

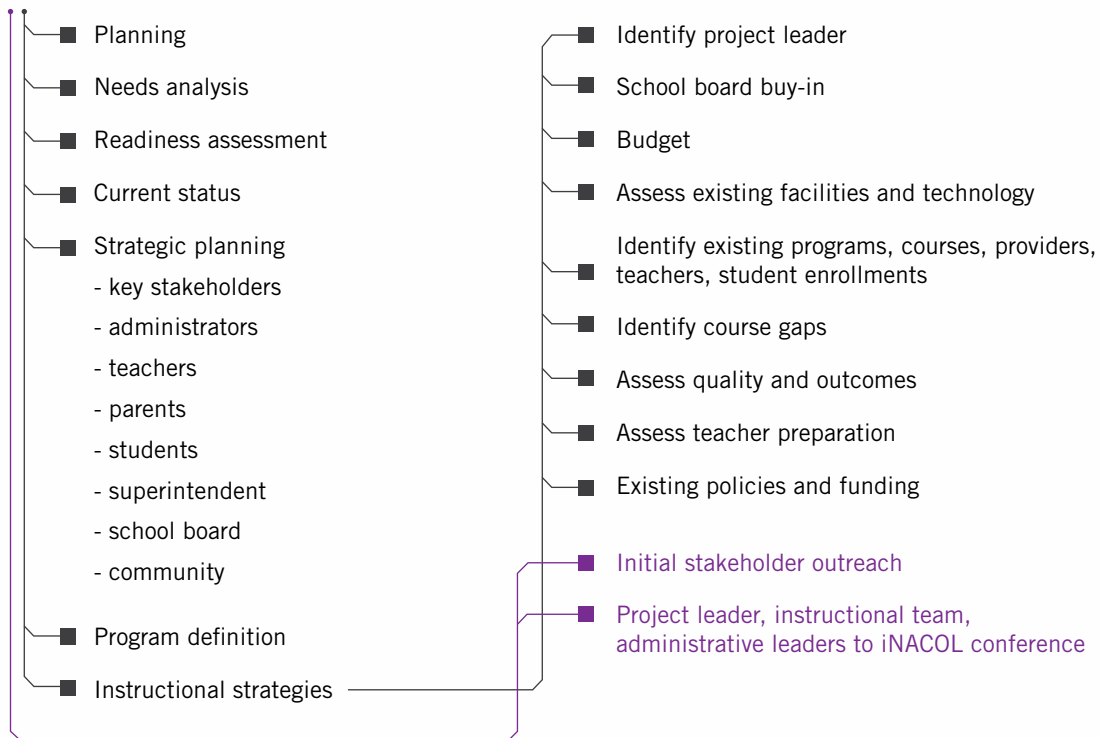
The district does not yet offer supplemental online classes or a fully online program, although students may be enrolling in online classes through a state virtual school or neighboring district.

The initial full year strategic planning process is particularly important in this scenario, as it is important to assess existing offerings and unite them under one program leader. The timeline then organizes key events over the next two years using the Four Focus Areas: **Content**, **Teaching**, **Technology**, and **Operations**.

YEAR 1



### Summer / Fall Strategic Planning Process



**YEAR 1** *Continued***Spring Semester**

- Identify courses, content, and platforms shared between FULL and SUPP

**BLÉN:** Identify math content and platform unique to blended learning

**SUPP:** Goal: fill course gaps

**FULL:** Goal: full curriculum

- Identify teachers

**BLÉN:** Existing teachers; no change to schedule or contract

**SUPP:** Existing teachers who will teach some online and some F2F

**FULL:** Teachers are likely to be new and fully online

- Select and begin PD for teachers unique to blended or online

**BLÉN:** PD is math-specific as well as covering BL pedagogy

- Prepare for school and home access for students

**BLÉN:** Configure classrooms and bandwidth

**SUPP:** Identify school-level facilitators

**FULL:** Expect students to access courses from home

- Develop device specs

- Develop communications plan and website

- Begin outreach to students and parents

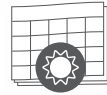
**BLÉN:** explain BL to families

**FULL:** outreach to non-district families

- Counselor training

- Create pilot year budget

- Update school board

**Summer Semester**

- Configure and prepare courses/content

■ Continue teacher PD with focus on special education accommodations

■ Plan for providing off-school Internet access for all students

**SUPP:** Train school-level facilitators

■ Communicate device specs

■ Plan for tech support

■ Continue outreach to students and parents

**FULL:** summer push to non-district families

■ Configure flexible learning spaces

■ Create PD for building leaders and district administrators





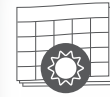
**Fall Semester**

- Launch unified SUPP program
- Launch fully online HS
- Launch blended learning pilot in math across schools
- Identify additional courses for each program
  - **BLLEN:** Identify ELA content and platform
  - **SUPP:** Fill gaps in electives
  - **FULL:** Add middle and elementary school courses
- Identify additional teachers
- Create teacher PLC and mentoring
- Establish quality teaching standards in each instructional modality
- Plan for enterprise integration of platform and existing SIS
  - **BLLEN:** Test bandwidth and network configuration
  - **SUPP:** Test bandwidth and network configuration again
- Provide tech support
- Plan for program evaluation



**Spring Semester**

- Assess courses/providers
- Continue PD for both new and experienced teachers
  - **BLLEN:** PD is ELA-specific as well as covering BL pedagogy
- Identify new local facilitators
- Continue outreach using successful student stories
- Expand counselor training
- Expand learning spaces
- Refine budget to plan for scaling
- Revisit and update strategic plan
- Update school board



**Summer Semester**

- Identify courses/content to develop in-house
- Identify data integration and reporting strategy
- Continue PD for both new and experienced teachers
- Train / mentor local facilitators
- Issue first year evaluation report
- Expand PD for building leaders and administrators and create PLC

**FOUR FOCUS AREAS**



CONTENT



TEACHING



TECHNOLOGY



OPERATIONS

**YEAR 3**



**Fall Semester**

- Grow unified SUPP program
- Launch fully online middle school and elementary schools
- Extend blended learning to ELA courses across schools
- Add courses to provide full course catalog
  - **BLEN:** Identify content and platform in additional disciplines
- Identify teachers to develop courses
- Extend teacher PLC and mentoring to new teachers and new disciplines
- **BLEN:** PD is specific to new disciplines as well as covering BL pedagogy
- Plan for increasing numbers of users accessing system.
  - **BLEN:** Test bandwidth and network configuration
  - **SUPP:** Test bandwidth and network configuration again
- Scale for growth of tech support
- Continue all elements of program evaluation
- Open courses to out-of-district students
- Continue outreach using successful student stories
- Design next generation learning spaces



**Spring Semester**

- Assess courses/providers
- Provide course development PD
- Integrate into district budget
- Integrate with district strategic plan
- Update school board



**Summer Semester**

- Remove ineffective courses
- Develop courses/content
- First online teacher conference
- Issue second year evaluation report
- Configure next generation learning spaces

**END GOAL**

Myriad supplemental options for all students, all grade levels, all schools

Fully online school open; available for drop in / out as necessary

Non-time shifted blended courses across all math and ELA courses

**YEAR 4**



**Fall Semester**

- Implement college and career readiness assessments
- SUPP is providing full course catalog to all students in all schools
- Fully online school grades K-12, with drop-in learning center(s)
- Blended learning is offered across schools and disciplines

# 3 PROFILES

## State Profiles

The state profiles that follow capture an overview of key programs and policies in each state. Major laws pertaining to online learning are detailed, particularly those that passed in 2013. For some states that have had extensive online and blended learning activity over several years, the history and additional details are provided on the Keeping Pace website at [www.kpk12.com/states](http://www.kpk12.com/states).

EACH PROFILE BEGINS WITH A STATE SNAPSHOT THAT GIVES A QUICK OVERVIEW OF THE ONLINE AND BLENDED LEARNING POLICY LANDSCAPE AND KEY PROGRAMS IN EACH STATE. The questions in the center table are the same for all 50 states, and are specific to online and blended learning. Additional details are usually included wherever a Yes answer is indicated. Two other sections warrant additional description:

### Availability of online learning options:

These ratings are an assessment of opportunities available to students across the state. These are the same ratings collected for all states in Table 1; a full explanation of how the ratings were created is given on p. 11.

**Availability of info:** This rating acknowledges there is likely activity happening that we don't know about, or for which data are not available. This is our assessment of the "known unknowns." We recognize our assessments may be off, and it is likely we are missing "unknown unknowns," especially activity at the district level.

### Colorado

ONLINE & BLENDED LEARNING STATE SNAPSHOT

Supplemental courses are available through the state virtual school, Colorado Online Learning (COL), which served **1,007 course enrollments** in SY 2012-13, as well as some district programs.

Colorado reported **17,289 unique students** taking online courses in SY 2012-13, the majority of which were in fully online programs. There are **58 online schools** and programs recognized by the state.

#### Availability of online learning options

	SUPPLEMENTAL			FULLY ONLINE		
	K-5 (ES)	6-8 (MS)	9-12 (HS)	K-5 (ES)	6-8 (MS)	9-12 (HS)
	NONE	NONE	SOME	ALL	ALL	ALL

Does this state have...	Y	N
Any <b>FULLY BLENDED</b> schools?	●	
Student choice at the school level?	●	
Student choice at the course level?	●	
SVS or another publicly funded option for private / homeschool students?	●	
Prior public school attendance requirement for online schools?	●	
Online caps by class, school, district, or statewide?	●	
PD requirement for online teachers?	●	
State approval process required for online providers?	●	
State approval process required for online courses?	●	
Online learning requirement for students?	●	
End-of-course exams?	●	

Availability of info:  
Great  
**Good**  
Fair  
Poor  
Minimal

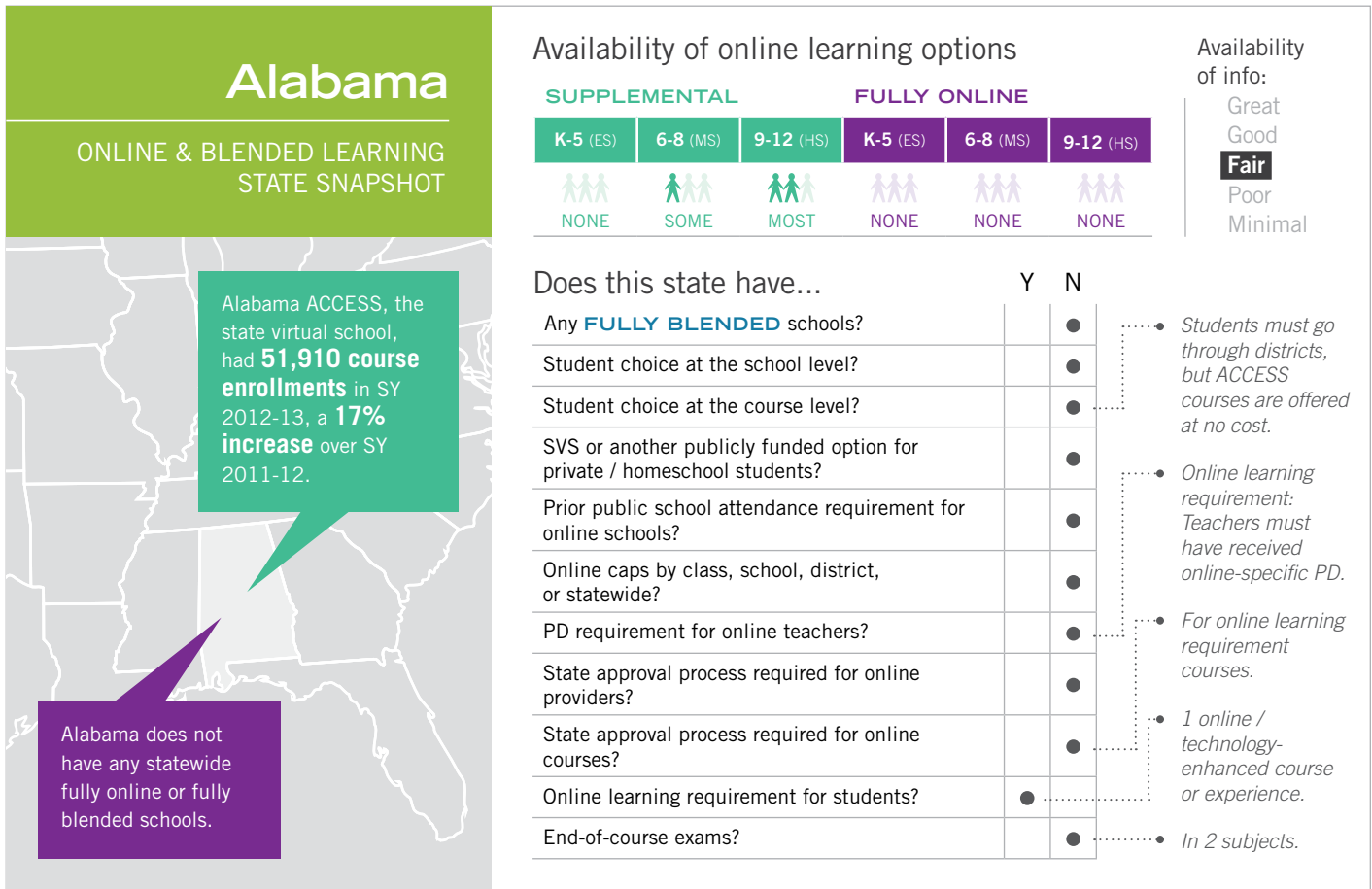
At least 3 fully blended schools.

26 multi-district schools and single-district programs and schools available.

For multi-district programs only.

In 5 subjects.

For more information about our research methodology, please see Appendix A on p. 164.



**Essentially all of the online education activity in Alabama is through the state virtual school, ACCESS (Alabama Connecting Classrooms, Educators, & Students Statewide) Distance Learning.** Alabama does not have a charter school law. In 2008, Alabama became the second state to establish an online learning requirement.

ACCESS is a supplemental program that started in fall 2005 and served 51,910 course enrollments in SY 2012-13, a 17% increase over SY 2011-12; it is the third largest state virtual school in the country. ACCESS began offering 19 credit recovery courses for the first time in SY 2013-14. Students take ACCESS courses from delivery school sites during set time periods.<sup>33</sup> About 5% of courses are offered by interactive videoconferencing. As of SY 2013-14, private school students may now take ACCESS courses on a fee basis. The ACCESS state appropriation for SY 2013-14 is \$18.5 million, the same as that for SY 2012-13.

Hailed as Alabama's first public virtual high school, the Baldwin County Digital Renaissance High School opened in SY 2013-14 using Alabama ACCESS courses. The school has been given pilot status in its first year and is limited to 30 students.

The online learning requirement mandated by the state board stated: "Effective for students entering the ninth grade in the 2009-2010 school year, Alabama students will be required to complete one on-line/technology enhanced course or experience prior to graduation. Exceptions through Individualized Education

<sup>33</sup> AAC Rule 290-3-1-.02(12); retrieved August 10, 2013, <http://www.alabamaadministrativecode.state.al.us/docs/ed/290-3-1.pdf>

Plans will be allowed.”<sup>34</sup> The State Department of Education (SDE) has published guidelines on the essential characteristics of a quality online learning experience, specific course standards to meet the graduation requirement, and guidelines for online teachers. A student may satisfy the online requirement for graduation by either taking an online course, or by participating in blended “online experiences incorporated into courses used to fulfill requirements for graduation.”<sup>35</sup>

In 2012, HB165<sup>36</sup>, the Alabama Ahead Act encouraged the use of digital textbooks and tablet or mobile computing devices for public 9<sup>th</sup> grade students and teachers. Beginning with SY 2012-13, “students in grades 9-12 shall be provided in electronic format to the local boards of education schools which choose to participate in Alabama Ahead, to the extent practicable and obtainable from the publisher, textbooks ... and other instructional materials.” It also stated “Where feasible, each [year] public 9<sup>th</sup> grade students and teachers will be provided in lieu of or in addition to hardbound textbooks and other instructional materials ... a pen-enabled: tablet, mobile computer, or other similar wireless electronic device for storing, reading, accessing, exploring, and interacting with digital textbooks.” The legislation allowed the Alabama Public School and College Authority to issue up to \$100 million in bonds to pay for the program.<sup>37</sup> Assignment of tablet devices is phased in over a four-year period. The legislation tasked the SDE with developing an implementation plan and providing oversight for the program. Additional legislation regarding funding and other changes to the initial law was proposed in 2013 but did not pass.

In 2010, Alabama created a limited allowance<sup>38</sup> for each student in grades 9-12 to receive one credit based on mastery of the content without specified instructional time. The seat-time waiver applies to all delivery methods.

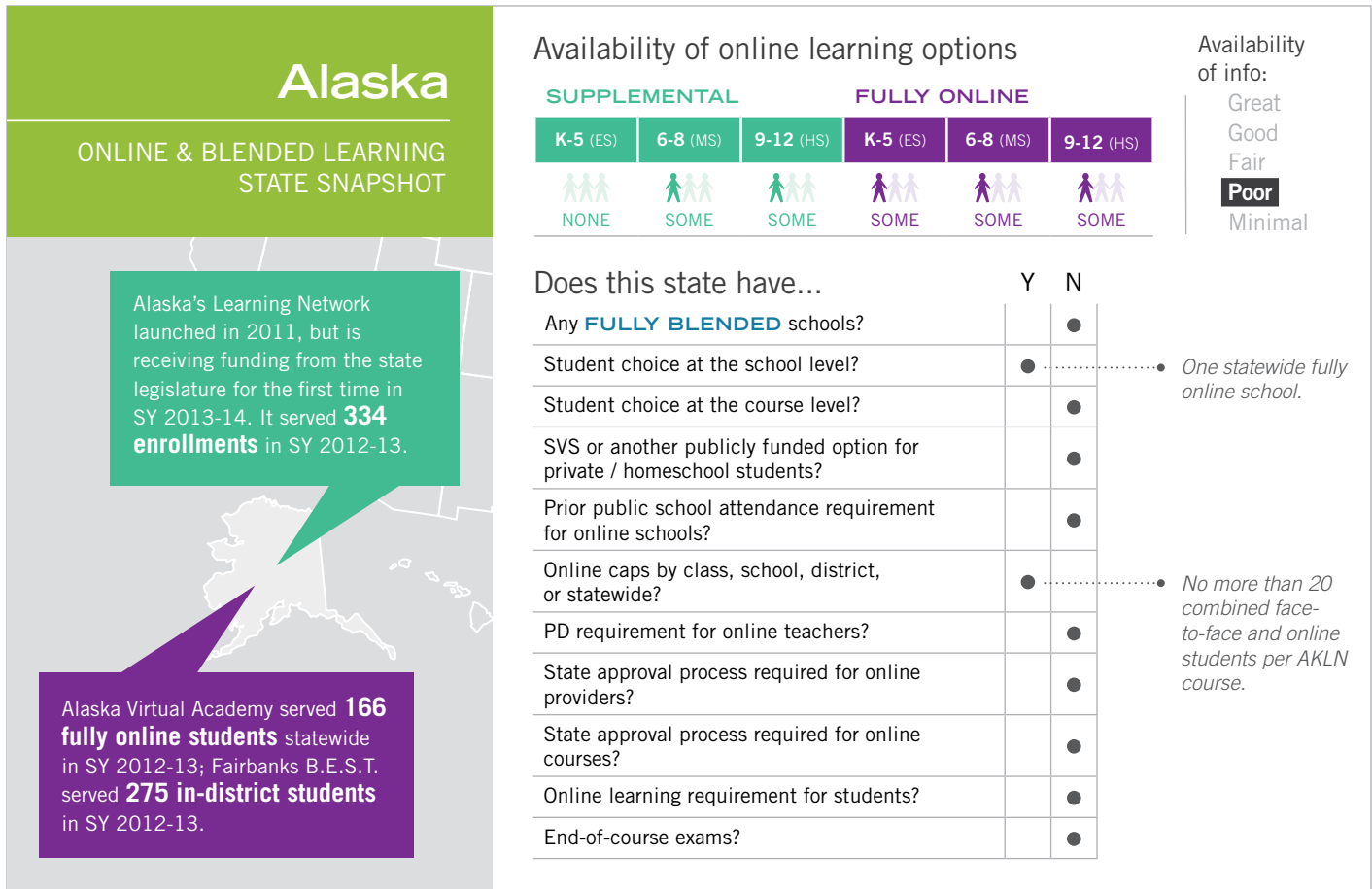
<sup>34</sup> Alabama State Code, 290-3-1-.02-(8)(d)4; retrieved August 10, 2013, <http://www.alabamaadministrativecode.state.al.us/docs/ed/290-3-1.pdf>

<sup>35</sup> High School Distance Learning: Online/Technology Enhanced Course or Experience Guidance; retrieved August 10, 2013, <ftp://ftp.alsde.edu/documents/61/OnlineGuidance.pdf>

<sup>36</sup> HB165 (2012); retrieved August 10, 2013, <http://alisondb.legislature.state.al.us/acas/SearchableInstruments/2012RS/PrintFiles/HB165-enr.pdf>

<sup>37</sup> Processes and procedures for the Alabama Public School and College Authority’s issuing and sale of bonds, payments to suppliers, and its interaction with the State Department of Finance and the State Treasurer’s Office are detailed in HB165.

<sup>38</sup> Alabama State Code, p. 3-1-39, retrieved August 10, 2013, <http://www.alabamaadministrativecode.state.al.us/docs/ed/290-3-1.pdf>



**Alaska has offered a variety of distance (not just online) options to its students for many years.** The 2011 launch of Alaska's Learning Network (AKLN) sought to expand course options for all Alaska students by bringing together many of the distance programs scattered around the state.

AKLN was established with \$1.2 million of Enhancing Education Through Technology (E2T2) funds in late 2010. Its primary goals are to provide:

- distance courses taught and supported by Alaska-certified teachers.
- professional development coaching for teachers and administrators, both on-site and remotely.
- curricular resources for Alaskan educators (the Alaska Digital Sandbox).<sup>39</sup>

The work included the creation of 15 courses aligned to Alaska Content Standards and the Alaska Grade Level Expectations for SY 2012-13; seven new courses are being created for SY 2013-14.

In SY 2012-13, AKLN served 334 course enrollments from students in 33 districts, an increase of 115% from SY 2011-12. Districts pay \$150 per semester for each student's course enrollment and receive the student's full FTE from the state. All monies were cut from the AKLN final state budget in its first year (SY 2012-13), and it operated with \$150,000, considerably less than anticipated. The state legislature is providing additional funding, now about \$1.1 million, to AKLN for SY 2013-14.

<sup>39</sup> About Alaska's Learning Network; retrieved July 5, 2013, <http://www.aklearn.net/frequently-asked-questions-2/>

AKLN is a coalition of all 53 Alaska school districts and is managed by a 15-member Advisory Board representing five regions of the state. Through SY 2012-13 AKLN was overseen by the state's director of technology, but as of September 2013, the administrative structure is shifting; the University of Alaska Southeast (UAS) School of Education will operate AKLN under a memorandum of agreement with the Alaska Department of Education & Early Development.<sup>40</sup>

In SY 2012-13, AKLN offered 43 courses; courses that specifically meet requirements for the Alaska Performance Scholarship are targeted for inclusion in AKLN (to help pay for college or training after high school).<sup>41</sup> In SY 2012-13, AKLN worked with the International Association for K-12 Online Learning (iNACOL) to develop specific standards and rubrics for Alaska's online courses. Content for AKLN courses is available free of charge under Creative Commons licenses for open sharing and adapting by local instructors, although a teacher in the originating district is available through formal enrollment at \$150/student per semester.

### ***Online and blended programs***

Alaska Virtual Academy (AKVA), managed by K12 Inc., is offered through the Wrangell Public School District and is the only fully online school serving students statewide. It grew from 85 full-time K-8 students in SY 2011-12 to 166 students in SY 2012-13.<sup>42</sup> Fairbanks B.E.S.T. is a single-district online and blended program that served 275 students K-12 in SY 2012-13, reflecting little increase since SY 2011-12.<sup>43</sup> The Delta Cyber School, which offered an online public school open to all Alaskan students ages 5-19, closed at the end of SY 2011-12 after three years of steadily declining enrollments. A state listing of correspondence schools includes 32 programs.<sup>44</sup> Fourteen are statewide programs (a mix of full-time, homeschool and supplemental programs), with the majority offering some online resources.

The distributed nature of the Alaskan populace has led to extensive use of classroom videoconferencing to maximize course offerings and, more recently, to uptake of online learning in certain districts--and those enrolling large numbers of Native American students in particular (with the aid of federal funding, e.g. the Alaska Native Education Equity Program).<sup>45</sup> The Kodiak Island Borough School District pioneered the use of videoconferencing to deliver synchronous courses to remote sites,<sup>46</sup> a model that has been replicated in several districts.

### ***State policies***

AAC 33.405 – 4 AAC 33.490<sup>47</sup> apply to correspondence study programs offered by a school district, including statewide correspondence (such as online) study programs. Whether full-time or part-time enrolled, at least 50% of a student's remote coursework must be core courses.<sup>48</sup>

Districts receive 80% of the standard base per-pupil funding for all students served in a correspondence program based on the number of courses toward the student's full-time schedule; distance programs, however, are not eligible for other funds. Through AKLN, a district can enroll its students in online and blended courses that do not affect the per-student formula funding provided. Additional state policy information related to online learning is available at [www.kpk12.com/states/](http://www.kpk12.com/states/).

<sup>40</sup> UAS to Operate Alaska's Learning Network; retrieved July 27, 2013, [http://www.eed.state.ak.us/news/releases/2013/AKLN\\_release\\_July\\_2013.pdf](http://www.eed.state.ak.us/news/releases/2013/AKLN_release_July_2013.pdf)

<sup>41</sup> Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education; retrieved July 26, 2013, [http://acpe.alaska.gov/STUDENT-PARENT/Grants\\_Scholarships/Alaska\\_Performance\\_Scholarship](http://acpe.alaska.gov/STUDENT-PARENT/Grants_Scholarships/Alaska_Performance_Scholarship)

<sup>42</sup> 2013 K12 Academic Report; retrieved July 6, 2013, <http://www.k12.com/sites/default/files/pdf/2013-K12-Academic-Report-Feb6-2013.pdf>

<sup>43</sup> Personal communication with Kathy Hughes, Principal, Fairbanks B.E.S.T, July 30, 2013

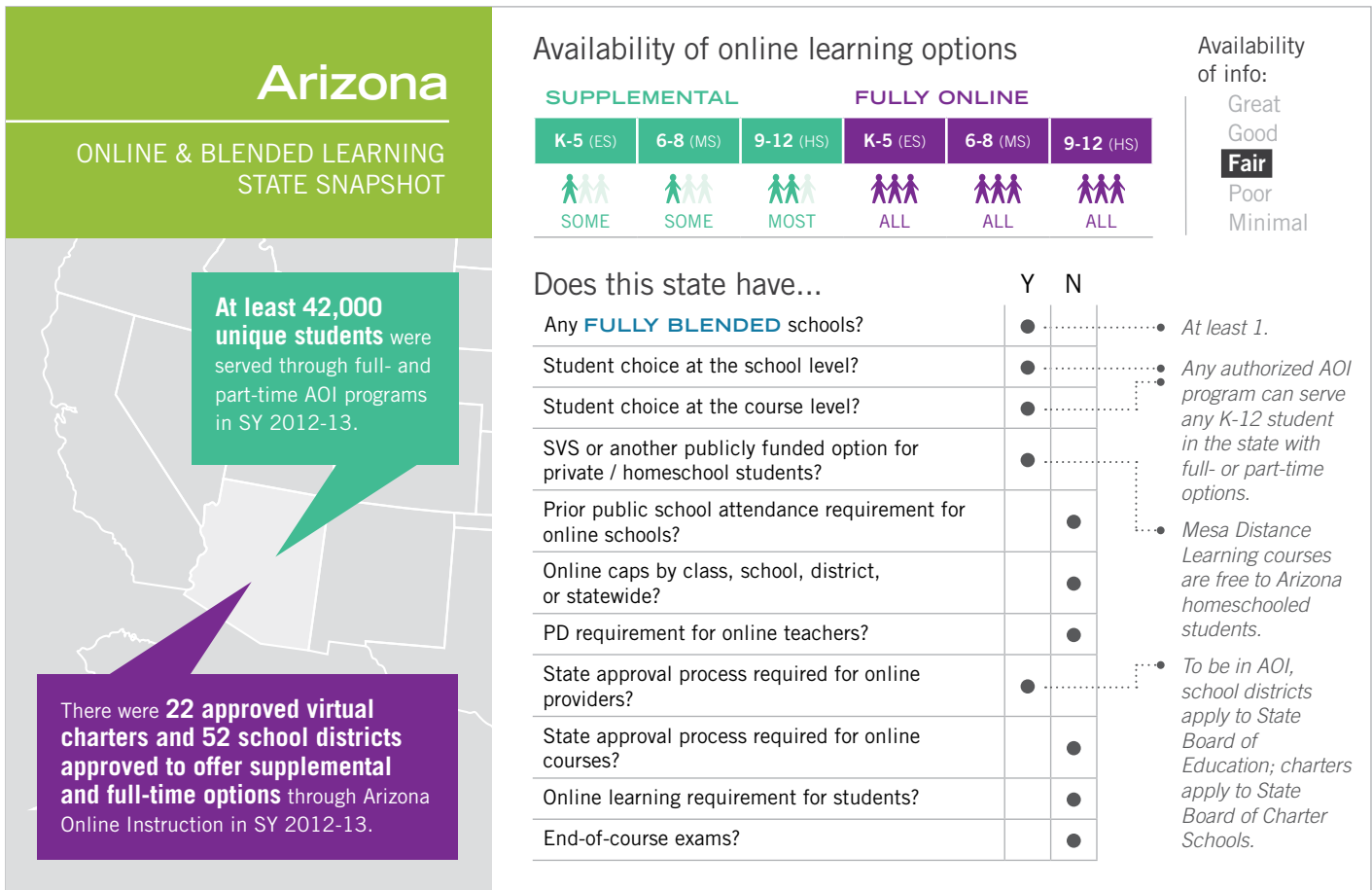
<sup>44</sup> Alaska Department of Education & Early Development, Correspondence Program Directory; retrieved July 5, 2013, [http://www.eed.state.ak.us/alaskan\\_schools/corres/pdf/correspondence\\_school\\_directory.pdf](http://www.eed.state.ak.us/alaskan_schools/corres/pdf/correspondence_school_directory.pdf)

<sup>45</sup> Alaska Native Education Equity 2012 grant awards; retrieved July 18, 2013, <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/alaskanative/2012awards.html>

<sup>46</sup> Innovation in Rural Alaska; retrieved July 7, 2013, <http://www.districtadministration.com/article/innovation-rural-alaska>

<sup>47</sup> AAC 33.405 - 4 AAC 33.490; retrieved July 5, 2013, [http://www.legis.state.ak.us/basis/folioiproxy.asp?url=http://www.jnu01.legis.state.ak.us/cgi-bin/folioisa.dll/aac/query=\[group+274+aac+33|2E40527|3A\]/doc/@1/hits\\_only](http://www.legis.state.ak.us/basis/folioiproxy.asp?url=http://www.jnu01.legis.state.ak.us/cgi-bin/folioisa.dll/aac/query=[group+274+aac+33|2E40527|3A]/doc/@1/hits_only)

<sup>48</sup> Correspondence Program Rights and Expectations; retrieved July 5, 2013, [http://education.alaska.gov/Alaskan\\_Schools/corres/pdf/parental\\_rights.pdf](http://education.alaska.gov/Alaskan_Schools/corres/pdf/parental_rights.pdf)



**There are 52 school districts and 22 charter schools providing both fully online and supplemental online options authorized through the Arizona Online Instruction (AOI) program.** Those programs reported 42,423 unique students in full- and part-time programs in SY 2011-12.<sup>49</sup> Arizona does not have a state virtual school, but the Mesa Distance Learning Program provides a fully online option and supplemental courses (including teachers), primarily to students in other districts in Arizona. It served 25,164 course enrollments in SY 2012-13.

### Online programs

What started as the Technology Assisted Project-Based Instruction (TAPBI) pilot program evolved into the AOI program in 2009; the history of that transition can be found on the *Keeping Pace* website. Any of the state's 227 districts or 600+ charter schools in the state can apply to start an online program, although new applications were not accepted for SY 2013-14, as proposed legislation would have changed the state's approval process (the bill was not approved). All 74 approved programs can serve any student in the state. Public school districts apply to the State Board of Education (SBE); charter schools apply to the Arizona State Board of Charter Schools (ASBCS). As of September 2013, 52 public school districts were approved, eight of which were authorized to serve students beginning in kindergarten; the remaining programs typically

<sup>49</sup> Annual Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction 2011-12, released January 2013; retrieved August 29, 2013, <http://www.azed.gov/superintendent/files/2013/04/2011-2012-volume-1.pdf>



serve high school students.<sup>50</sup> In addition, there are 22 authorized virtual charter schools, most of which serve students in K-12.<sup>51</sup>

In SY 2012-13, 74 programs served at least an estimated 42,000 students in full- and part-time programs (state reporting identifies unique students enrolled in any distance learning program, but does not distinguish between students enrolled full or part time).<sup>52</sup> Any student can apply to any approved provider in the state (and to multiple providers) for up to three individual courses or whole programs, as long as the provider has capacity to serve that student.

Mesa Distance Learning Program was one of the first online programs in the state, and it is one of the largest. It served 947 full-time and 13,169 part-time students for a total of 14,116 unique students in SY 2012-13, an increase of 9%. Of these, 61% were from outside the Mesa district boundaries, while less than 1% were from out-of-state.

### **State policies**

State policies are based on SB1196 (2009),<sup>53</sup> modifying ARS 15-808.<sup>54</sup> In addition, HB2129<sup>55</sup> (2010) changed the definitions of full- and part-time students. Additional policy and funding details are available at [www.kpk12.com/states/](http://www.kpk12.com/states/).

### **Funding**

- Average daily membership (ADM) of a pupil in an AOI program cannot exceed 1.0 full-time equivalent (FTE). Online schools receive funding at 85% of the normal base support level for part-time students and 95% of the normal base support level for full-time students.
- FTE funding follows the student and may be split between an AOI school and another charter school or district based on the attendance data that determines the percentage of instructional time the student spends in each school.<sup>56</sup>
- Pupils enrolled in an AOI program may generate ADM for online instruction during any day of the week. Programs must maintain a daily student log describing the amount of time spent by each pupil on academic tasks.
- Virtual charter schools receive funding based on current-year enrollments (ARS 15-185-B-2),<sup>57</sup> whereas virtual public schools receive funding based on prior-year enrollments (ARS 15-901-A-13).

### **Governance, tracking, and accountability**

- Schools participating in AOI must provide an annual report describing the program and how student achievement is measured. Schools also must survey students annually and include survey information in their reports. The SBE and ASBCS deliver individual reports to the ADE for review; a compilation of all reports is then presented to the governor and legislature annually on November 15.
- Students must participate in state assessments. If a student does not take the state assessment and the school has less than 95% participation in the assessments, the student may not continue in the online program.

<sup>50</sup> Approved Arizona Online Instruction (AOI) Programs; retrieved August 15, 2013, <http://www.azed.gov/state-board-education/files/2012/11/list-of-aoi-districts-2012.pdf>

<sup>51</sup> List of virtual charters; retrieved August 15, 2013, <http://www.asbcs.az.gov/userfiles/file/March%202013/Distance%20Learning%20Schools%20List%20Revised%20format%203-25-2013.pdf>

<sup>52</sup> The final SY 2012-13 enrollment number will be posted at [www.kpk12.com/states](http://www.kpk12.com/states) when available.

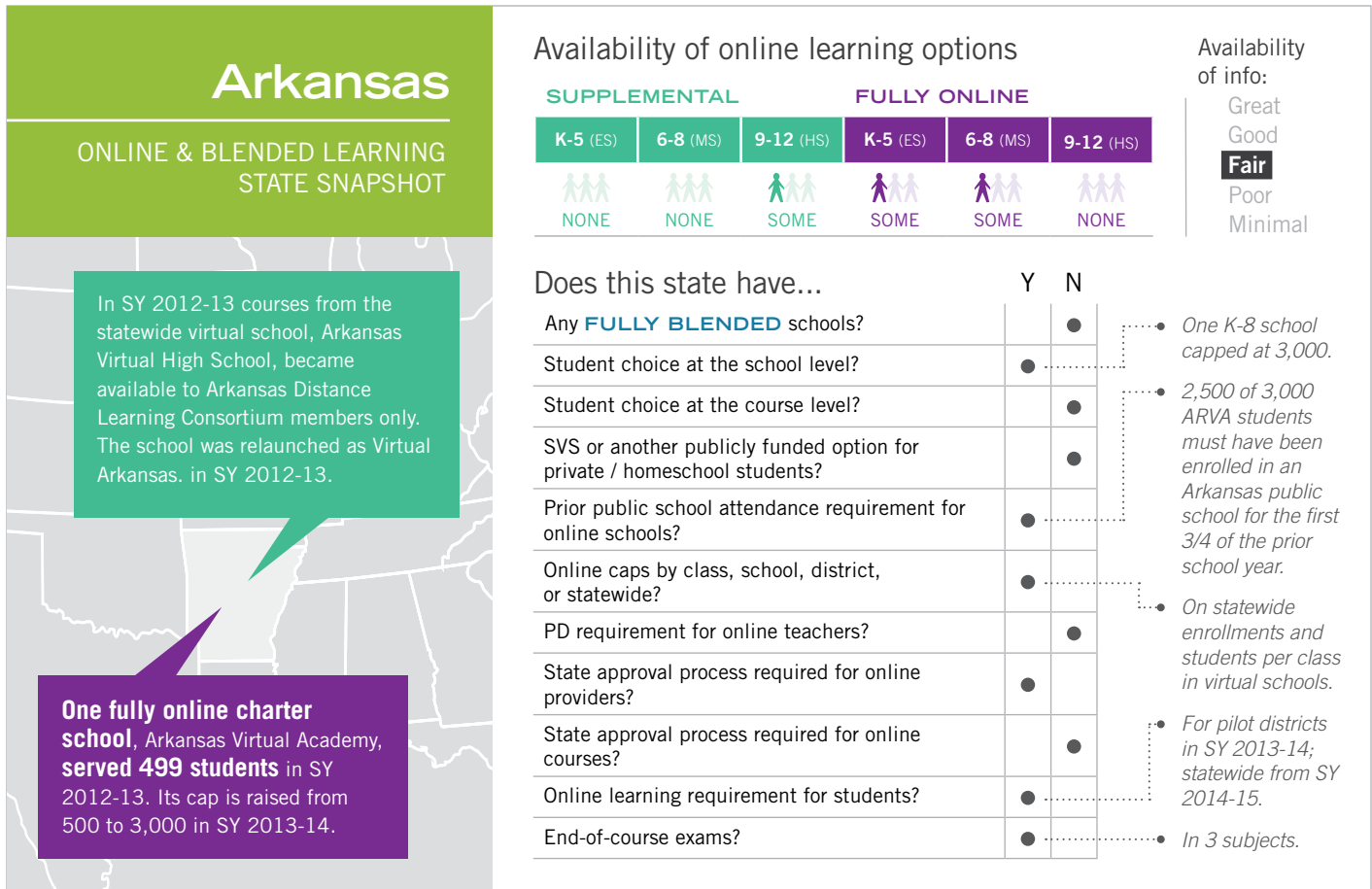
<sup>53</sup> SB1196 (2009) summary; retrieved August 20, 2013, [http://www.azleg.gov/legtext/49leg/1r/summary/s.1196\\_house%20changes%20memo.doc.htm](http://www.azleg.gov/legtext/49leg/1r/summary/s.1196_house%20changes%20memo.doc.htm)

<sup>54</sup> ARS 15-808; retrieved August 15, 2013, <http://www.azleg.gov/FormatDocument.asp?inDoc=/ars/15/00808.htm&Title=15&DocType=ARS>

<sup>55</sup> HB2129; retrieved August 15, 2013, <http://www.azleg.gov/legtext/49leg/2r/bills/hb2129s.pdf>

<sup>56</sup> FTE funding; retrieved August 15, 2013, [http://www.azauditor.gov/ASD/PDF/Charter\\_Schools/USFRCS\\_Memo\\_%2083.pdf](http://www.azauditor.gov/ASD/PDF/Charter_Schools/USFRCS_Memo_%2083.pdf)

<sup>57</sup> ARS 15-185; retrieved August 15, 2013, <http://www.azleg.gov/FormatDocument.asp?inDoc=/ars/15/00185.htm&Title=15&DocType=ARS>



## Arkansas' state virtual school, Arkansas Virtual High School (AVHS), relaunched in SY 2012-13 as Virtual Arkansas, serving online<sup>58</sup> supplemental courses to member districts of the Arkansas Distance Learning Consortium (ARDL). Act 1280 (2013)

implements a new digital learning provider approval process and puts in place a statewide online learning requirement beginning in SY 2014-15. There is one fully online statewide charter school, the Arkansas Virtual Academy (ARVA), which served 499 students in grades K-8 in SY 2012-13.

The ARDL consortium served 12,000 students in SY 2012-13.<sup>59</sup> Arkansas school districts pay a \$2,500 annual membership fee to schedule courses with any of the state-funded providers. The fee allows unlimited enrollment on a first-come/first-serve basis. In addition, the consortium streamlines policies and procedures statewide, coordinates a master schedule, and centralizes billing for school districts. ARDL includes five providers who serve a range of students in grades K-12. In 2013, Virtual Arkansas<sup>60</sup> replaced the statewide AVHS, which had been the state virtual school since spring 2000. It served roughly 2,000 supplemental online course enrollments in SY 2012-13, a 33% annual decrease. Virtual Arkansas is funded through an annual Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) grant; it provides online courses delivered with both synchronous and asynchronous components. Virtual Arkansas is managed by the Arch Ford Education

<sup>58</sup> Virtual Arkansas refers to these asynchronous courses, which are supplemented by synchronous online meetings, as "blended," but for the purposes of this report these are considered to be "online."

<sup>59</sup> Personal communication with Arch Ford Education Cooperative, August 21, 2013

<sup>60</sup> Virtual Arkansas; retrieved August 7, 2013, <http://virtualarkansas.org/index.php>

Cooperative; courses are available only to students in districts that have joined the ARDL consortium. There were 180 such districts as of August 2013, about three-quarters of the districts in the state.<sup>61</sup>

The other four ARDL providers (Arkansas Department of Education Distance Learning Center, Arkansas Early College High School, Dawson Center for Distance Learning, and the Arkansas School of Mathematics, Sciences & the Arts) deliver courses synchronously using compressed interactive video.

ARVA is an open-enrollment virtual charter school serving grades K-8; it is operated by K12 Inc. and overseen by the ADE (prior to 2013 legislation, oversight was from the Arkansas State Board of Education). In SY 2012-13 it served 371 fully online students at elementary level and 128 students in middle school, for a total enrollment of 499 K-8 students. The ARVA enrollment cap was raised to 3,000 for SY 2013-14. ARVA operates as its own school district and is funded through the same student average daily membership (ADM) formula as other open-enrollment public charter schools. It received \$6,267 per ADM for SY 2012-13, and it expects that to increase to \$6,393 in SY 2013-14 through the state's student growth calculation.<sup>62</sup> An internal evaluation of Arkansas Virtual Academy released in 2012 by the University of Arkansas found positive results for ARVA students. Details can be found at [www.kpk12.com/states](http://www.kpk12.com/states).

Act 1280 (2013)<sup>63</sup> expands digital learning opportunities to all Arkansas public school students. Act 1280:

- Requires that the ADE annually publish a list of approved digital learning providers.
- Presents criteria for becoming an approved digital provider, including mapping to state standards and utilizing teachers not necessarily certified by the state.
- Eliminates a seat-time requirement for digital learning courses.
- Creates an online learning requirement that will be piloted in a few districts in SY 2013-14, and expanded statewide in SY 2014-15, when all public school districts and public charter schools must provide at least one online or blended learning course with outcomes measurable through student assessment.
- Prevents the SBE from limiting the number of digital learning courses for which a student may receive credit through a public school or a public charter school and ensures that courses may be used as both primary and secondary methods of instruction.
- Directs the House Committee on Education and the Senate Committee (in collaboration with the ADE, the Department of Information Systems, and Arkansas service providers) to prepare a study on methods to deliver a quality digital learning environment in each school district and public charter school. The report will be delivered in December 2014.<sup>64</sup>

Act 1309 (2013)<sup>65</sup> alters caps to any open-enrollment public virtual charter school. In SY 2013-14, it raises the cap for ARVA from 500 to 3,000; 2,500 of these students must have been enrolled in an Arkansas public school for the first three quarters of the prior school year.

The ADE published formal rules in 2005 covering the Arkansas Virtual High School (now Virtual Arkansas) and distance learning. It updated them with the Arkansas Department of Education Rules Governing Distance Learning in February of 2012.<sup>66</sup> They established guidelines requiring a calendar and bell schedule aligned with local schools to allow students to “optimally participate in synchronous distance learning and local courses.”

<sup>61</sup> Arch Ford Annual Report 2012-13; retrieved August 7, 2013, <http://www.afsc.k12.ar.us/vimages/shared/vnews/stories/46d83d9594c6a/Annual%20Report%202012-13.pdf>

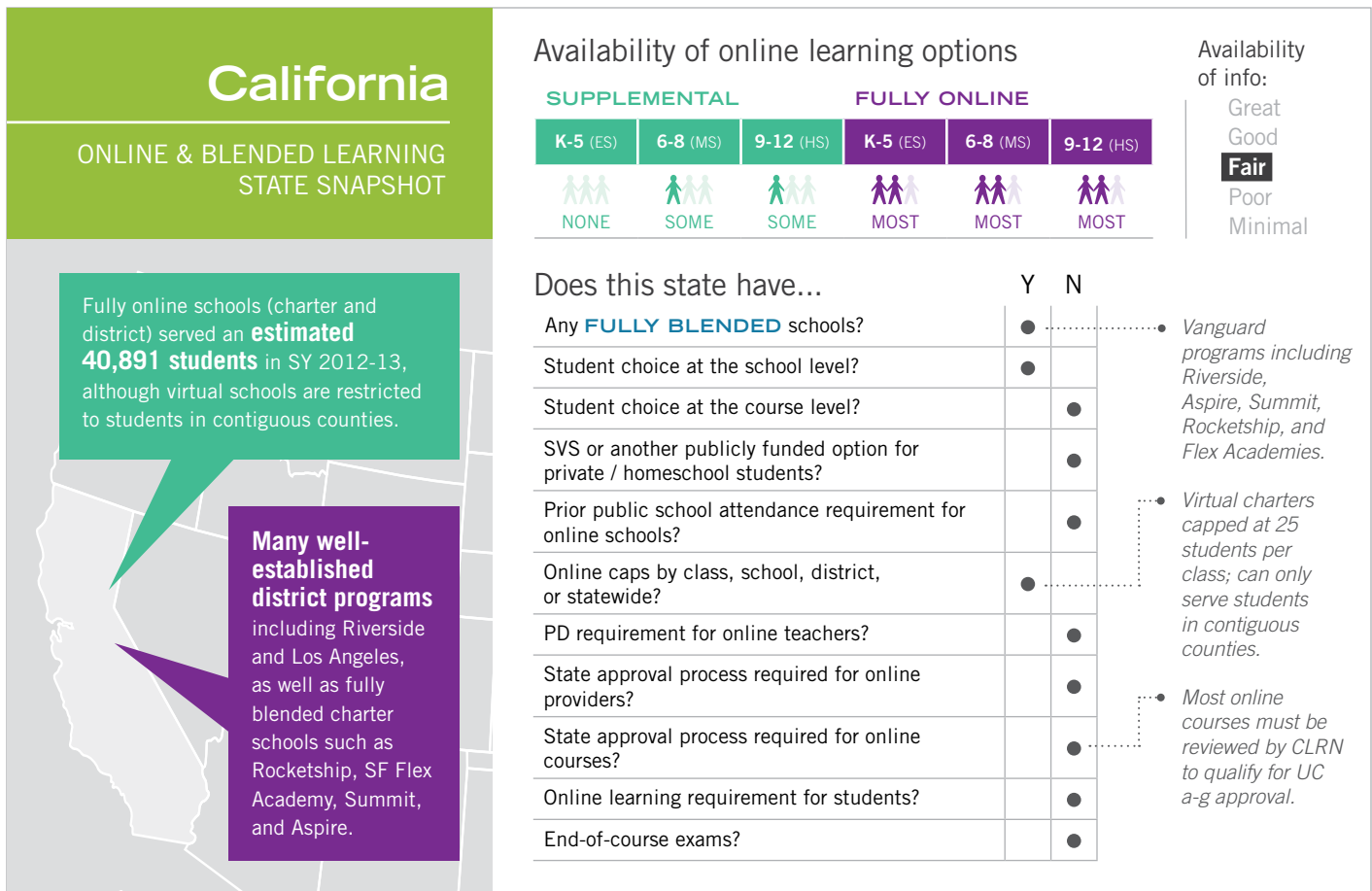
<sup>62</sup> Personal communications with Scott Sides, Director, ARVA, August 13, 2013

<sup>63</sup> Act 1280 (2013); retrieved August 8, 2013, [http://www.arkansased.org/public/userfiles/Legislative\\_Services/Quality%20Digital%20Learning%20Study/Facts/Act%201280%20Digital%20Learning%20Opportunities.pdf](http://www.arkansased.org/public/userfiles/Legislative_Services/Quality%20Digital%20Learning%20Study/Facts/Act%201280%20Digital%20Learning%20Opportunities.pdf)

<sup>64</sup> Quality Digital Learning Study; retrieved August 8, 2013, <http://www.arkansased.org/divisions/policy/quality-digital-learning-study>

<sup>65</sup> Act 1309 (2013); retrieved August 8, 2013, <http://www.arkleg.state.ar.us/assembly/2013/2013R/Acts/Act1309.pdf>

<sup>66</sup> Arkansas Department of Education Rules Governing Distance Learning, retrieved August 8, 2013, <http://170.94.37.152/REGS/005.15.12-001F-12833.pdf>



**California has more districts and charter schools recognized for incorporating online or blended learning than any other state.** Examples include the Riverside, Oakland, and Los Angeles districts, charter schools including Aspire, Summit, Flex Academies, and Rocketship, and at least 42 fully virtual schools that collectively provide all students in the state access to a fully online school. These latter schools are restricted by a requirement that they serve students in contiguous counties only, so the number of schools is higher than it is in states that allow for statewide online enrollment.<sup>67</sup> California does not have a state virtual school, and students have access to supplemental online courses only if those courses are offered by their district or a district partner.

Recent data collection efforts by the California Department of Education (CDE) and the California eLearning Census have begun to shed light on the extent of online and blended learning activity in the state.<sup>68</sup> In SY 2012-13, schools and districts reported to CDE 66,375 students taking one or more online classes (a 71% annual increase), and 20,022 students taking 50% or more of their classes online (a 40% increase).<sup>69</sup> These increases are likely a combination of better reporting and actual enrollment increases, although in comparing its census data (detailed below) to the CDE data,<sup>70</sup> the California Learning Resource Network (CLRN) noted

<sup>67</sup> The reason for this is that education management organizations (EMOs) often operate only one fully online school in other states, drawing students from across the state. In California many EMOs operate multiple schools because of the contiguous counties requirement.

<sup>68</sup> CDE is working to identify all schools and programs in the state that deliver at least 30% of their instruction online. A searchable map that tags synchronous, asynchronous, and blended learning programs, as well as public, private, and charter programs, is available at <http://www2.cde.ca.gov/coep/imagemap.aspx>

<sup>69</sup> California Basic Education Data System, online enrollment data; retrieved August 2, 2013, <http://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/DQ/EducOpt.aspx?TheYear=2012-13&TheRpt=StAltEd&cLevel=State&cTopic=Enrollment&rCode=2&CDSCode=00000000000000>

<sup>70</sup> California eLearning Census Addendum blog post; retrieved August 2, 2013, <http://bbridges51.edublogs.org/2013/07/31/california-elearning-census-addendum/>

that some virtual schools are missing from the report, so it is likely that these numbers are low. In its census, CLRN reported 24,383 students are enrolled in fully online programs, a 23% increase from what it reported in SY 2011-12. A tally of the number of students in fully online programs as reported in the census, students from schools that did not report in the census, and students taking more than 50% of their courses online according to CBEDS leads to a total of at least 40,891 students learning fully online in SY 2012-13.

The California eLearning Census was deployed for a second year by CLRN<sup>71</sup> in spring 2013 to 1,014 California public school districts and 763 direct-funded charters; it received 516 responses and reported<sup>72</sup> the following:

- Statewide, 46% of responding districts and direct-funded charters reported having students participate in eLearning, although online and blended learning implementation is much higher in unified and high school districts and charters (73%) than in elementary districts (19%).
- Of districts and direct-funded charters whose students were not participating in online learning, 26% report they are planning to pilot or implement online learning, a decrease from 33% that is perhaps reflective of the increase in the number of districts and charters that are participating in eLearning.
- The number of students participating in blended learning grew to 100,882, a 17% increase.

A growing number of districts and charter schools offer blended, supplemental, and/or full-time options to students.

- Riverside Virtual School (RVS) offers comprehensive online and blended learning programs to Riverside Unified School District (RUSD) students as well as out-of-district students. It served 1,803 course enrollments for full-time students, a 4% annual increase, and 3,396 supplemental course enrollments, a 15% annual increase, for a total of 5,199 course enrollments during SY 2012-13. RUSD is one of the few districts in the country that tracks blended learning enrollments, serving 22,700 students in SY 2012-13, an increase of 27%. Districts and schools across California partner with Riverside through the California Open Campus initiative (CAOC) to access a variety of services including professional development, a learning management system, courses, and sometimes teachers. CAOC has 36 district partners in California as of September 2013, and served 500 students in SY 2012-13.
- Innovative blended learning charter schools are taking root in California, including Rocketship Education, which enrolled 3,146 students in seven elementary schools in the San Jose area in SY 2012-13. In addition, San Francisco and Silicon Valley Flex Academies are serving about 350 students, Aspire Public Schools has 35 schools in California, KIPP Empower Academy served 330 students in grades K-2 in SY 2012-13, and Summit Preparatory Charter Academy serves about 400 high school students.
- Joseph Weller Elementary School in Santa Clara County reported early successes in student achievement, engagement, and discipline after its first year of a fully blended model.<sup>73</sup>

In 2011, the California County Superintendents Educational Services Organization (CCSESA) released the California eLearning Framework, a guide for school districts and schools implementing online and blended learning opportunities for students. The framework examines the national landscape of eLearning and presents four key components of quality online and blended learning opportunities within a California context.<sup>74</sup>

<sup>71</sup> The California Learning Resource Network (CLRN) is a statewide education technology service of the CDE that is administered by the Stanislaus County Office of Education.

<sup>72</sup> California eLearning Census 2013; retrieved August 2, 2013, [http://clrn.org/census/eLearning\\_Census\\_Report\\_2013.pdf](http://clrn.org/census/eLearning_Census_Report_2013.pdf)

<sup>73</sup> Milipitas' Weller Elementary Touts New Program's Academic Feats, San Jose Mercury News, published July 3, 2013; retrieved July 29, 2013, [http://www.mercurynews.com/milipitas/ci\\_23593196/milipitas-weller-elementary-touts-new-programs-academic-feats](http://www.mercurynews.com/milipitas/ci_23593196/milipitas-weller-elementary-touts-new-programs-academic-feats)

<sup>74</sup> California eLearning Framework; retrieved August 13, 2013, [http://estaffroom.scooe.org/file.php/1/Digital\\_Literacy/eLearning\\_Framework/CA\\_eLearning\\_Framework.pdf](http://estaffroom.scooe.org/file.php/1/Digital_Literacy/eLearning_Framework/CA_eLearning_Framework.pdf)

Management of the University of California Online Academy (UCOA), which built on over a decade of course and content development from UC College Prep, has shifted to Scout from UC as of January 2013. Scout is a state program that received \$2.4 million in SY 2012-13 under the Student Academic Preparation and Educational Partnerships program to offer Advanced Placement, honors, and “a-g” college preparation courses online. California public school teachers or students may choose to use Scout’s courses to supplement existing curriculum, or as stand-alone courses (although it does not grant credit). Scout offers three options: a free version available to students and teachers, a version with more tools and support for a small fee, or a teacher-led version for a larger fee. Scout served 971 course enrollments in spring and summer 2013.

### **State policies**

Legislation guiding online and blended learning has not been updated in recent years. However, online programs in California are governed by a series of laws detailed at [www.kpk12.com/states/](http://www.kpk12.com/states/). Funding for online courses is tied to one of two methods: those requiring the use of independent study provisions, and those requiring that students are in a classroom, under direct control of a teacher.

- Independent study regulations for all non-classroom based instruction, including student-teacher ratios.<sup>75</sup> Independent study regulations are very specific, and require samples of students’ work be kept. Online charter schools are also governed by independent study provisions. Alternative education programs operate under these guidelines as a path toward offering online and blended programs in credit recovery, credit accrual, and credit advancement.
- Alternatively, schools may choose to offer online courses in school, with a teacher, where students attend and generate funds via ADA calculations.

AB644 (2012)<sup>76</sup> allows for synchronous, online instruction when computing ADA for students in grades 9-12 beginning in SY 2014-15.

CLRN is a state-funded project that reviews online courses, supplemental electronic learning resources, and open educational resources (OER) for their alignment to California’s original content standards, the Common Core State Standards, and California’s Social Content Criteria. CLRN reviews grades 6-12 online courses in English-language arts, history-social science, mathematics, science, world languages, and visual and performing arts, and has certified 139 courses (or 48% of all courses) as of September 2013.

The University of California (UC) and California State University (CSU) designed “a-g” policy standards<sup>77</sup> that all courses must meet to satisfy the UC and CSU entrance requirements. In May 2012, the UC Board of Admissions and Relations with Schools (BOARS) released updated requirements for approval of K-12 online courses and programs. Based on those requirements, a specific policy for a-g review of online courses was released in August 2012.<sup>78</sup> Courses first must be assessed against the iNACOL Standards for Quality Online Courses (either by CLRN, or in some instances via self-assessment), and then courses may be submitted to UC for the a-g review.

A consortium of public and private agencies came together to fund the Leading Edge Certification in an effort to address a perceived statewide need for professional development related to online learning. The project offers 21<sup>st</sup> century training programs for online teachers, classroom (blended learning) teachers, administrators, teacher librarians, and lead learners (course developers) seeking certification in digital skills.<sup>79</sup>

<sup>75</sup> Independent study requirements; retrieved June 12, 2012, <http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/eo/is/>

<sup>76</sup> AB644 (2012); retrieved August 1, 2013, [http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill\\_id=201120120AB644](http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=201120120AB644)

<sup>77</sup> a-g policy website; retrieved August 2, 2013, <http://www.ucop.edu/agguide/>

<sup>78</sup> A-G Guide – Online courses; retrieved August 2, 2013, <http://www.ucop.edu/agguide/online-learning/online-courses/index.html>

<sup>79</sup> Leading Edge Certification; retrieved August 2, 2013, <http://www.cue.org/leadingedge>

# Colorado

## ONLINE & BLENDED LEARNING STATE SNAPSHOT

**Supplemental** courses are available through the state virtual school, Colorado Online Learning (COL), which served **1,007 course enrollments** in SY 2012-13, as well as some district programs.

Colorado reported **17,289 unique students** taking online courses in SY 2012-13, the majority of which were in fully online programs. There are **58 online schools** and programs recognized by the state.

### Availability of online learning options

SUPPLEMENTAL			FULLY ONLINE		
K-5 (ES)	6-8 (MS)	9-12 (HS)	K-5 (ES)	6-8 (MS)	9-12 (HS)
NONE	NONE	SOME	ALL	ALL	ALL

Availability of info:

- Great
- Good**
- Fair
- Poor
- Minimal

### Does this state have...

	Y	N	
Any <b>FULLY BLENDED</b> schools?	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	At least 3 fully blended schools.
Student choice at the school level?	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Student choice at the course level?	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	26 multi-district schools and single-district programs and schools available.
SVS or another publicly funded option for private / homeschool students?	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	
Prior public school attendance requirement for online schools?	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	
Online caps by class, school, district, or statewide?	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	
PD requirement for online teachers?	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	
State approval process required for online providers?	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	For multi-district programs only.
State approval process required for online courses?	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	
Online learning requirement for students?	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	
End-of-course exams?	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	In 5 subjects.

### Colorado has numerous fully online programs operating across multiple districts, district-level programs that are fully online and/or supplemental, and a small state virtual school.

The Colorado Department of Education (CDE) reported 17,289 unique students enrolled in full- and part-time programs in SY 2012-13, an increase of 7% from 2011-12.<sup>80</sup> CDE believes the significant majority of these enrollments are full time. There are 58 online schools and programs recognized by the Office of Online and Blended Learning as of September 2013: five multi-district charter schools, 21 multi-district schools, 11 single-district schools, and 17 single-district programs are authorized to serve fully online students. In addition, three single-district supplemental programs serve students within their districts,<sup>81</sup> and Colorado Online Learning (COL) is the state virtual school. COL reported 1,007 course enrollments in SY 2012-13, a 36% decrease from the previous year.<sup>82</sup>

### State policies

HB11-1277 (2011)<sup>83</sup> significantly reduced previous reporting requirements; the next report will be released in 2014, and then every five years. Annual online student enrollment data are derived from the October and end-of-year per-pupil revenue counts, as well as other collections throughout the year. Online enrollments

<sup>80</sup> Online student enrollment data school year 2012-13; <http://www.cde.state.co.us/onlinelearning/download/rptEnrollmentAll1213.pdf>; retrieved June 7, 2013

<sup>81</sup> Online programs; retrieved June 7, 2013, <http://www.cde.state.co.us/onlinelearning/schools.htm>

<sup>82</sup> Enrollment numbers obtained through personal communication with Colorado Online Learning, July 16, 2013

<sup>83</sup> HB11-1277 (2011), sections 23-28 address online learning; retrieved June 6, 2013, [http://www.leg.state.co.us/clics/clics2011a/csl.nsf/fsbillcont3/A58089DC75F0EAB18725780800FD9?open&file=1277\\_enr.pdf](http://www.leg.state.co.us/clics/clics2011a/csl.nsf/fsbillcont3/A58089DC75F0EAB18725780800FD9?open&file=1277_enr.pdf)

are designated by full- and part-time students, so data are not available at a course level. The law also removed the time period for which certification of online schools is granted; they remain certified indefinitely until CDE has reason to believe the program is not in substantial compliance with one or more of the statutory or regulatory requirements.

Much of Colorado's legislation related to online learning can be traced to an audit of fully online programs<sup>84</sup> released in December 2006 and the ensuing work of the Trujillo Commission.<sup>85</sup> The result of those efforts was SB215 (2007), which created what is now known as the Office of Online and Blended Learning.

A second online education law, HB1037 (2007),<sup>86</sup> provides \$480,000 annually to fund a BOCES to contract with a provider to offer online courses to school districts across the state for no more than \$200 per student per semester. This is a primary source of funding for Colorado Online Learning. SB13-139 (April 2013) seeks to expand access to supplemental online courses statewide by changing the RFP process previously outlined in HB1037. The contract that previously was awarded to the Mountain BOCES through HB1037 will now be awarded to a "designated BOCES" in consultation with the statewide association of BOCES. That BOCES will create a proposal process by February 2015 to select one or more providers to deliver online courses and professional development, and to share best practices in online and blended learning.

SB13-139 also requires authorized supplemental providers to submit an annual summary report beginning June 1, 2015 that includes student completion data.

HB12-1124 (2012) directed "the department of education to commission a study of the issues surrounding integration of digital learning into the statewide system of public education in Colorado."<sup>87</sup> The study was released in January 2013.<sup>88</sup>

Details about other laws affecting online programs and students are available on the *Keeping Pace* website at [www.kpk12.com/states/](http://www.kpk12.com/states/).

CDE released two reports in October 2012 commissioned to improve the state's understanding of online learners.

- *A Study of Online Learning: Perspectives of Online Learners and Educators* surveyed online students, parents, and staff of online schools for a better understanding of the motivations of online learners and their previous experiences in brick-and-mortar classrooms.<sup>89</sup>
- *Characteristics of Colorado's Online Students* utilized data from the Colorado Basic Literacy Act, the Colorado Student Assessment Program, and the October and end-of-year student counts to look at students in three groups: grades K-3, grades 3-9, and secondary success / graduates / postsecondary readiness. It analyzed demographics, trends, and performance in online schools using data collected from 2003 through 2011.<sup>90</sup>

<sup>84</sup> Report of the State Auditor; retrieved June 6, 2013, [http://www.leg.state.co.us/OSA/coauditor1.nsf/All/6D2762978BB1D6DF8725723E005ED7D4/\\$FILE/1768%20Online%20Ed%20Perf%20rel%20Dec%202006.pdf](http://www.leg.state.co.us/OSA/coauditor1.nsf/All/6D2762978BB1D6DF8725723E005ED7D4/$FILE/1768%20Online%20Ed%20Perf%20rel%20Dec%202006.pdf)

<sup>85</sup> The Trujillo Commission's report; retrieved June 6, 2013, <http://www.dkfoundation.org/trujillo-commission-online-education-final-report-2007>

<sup>86</sup> HB1037 (2007); retrieved June 6, 2013, [http://www.leg.state.co.us/CLICS/CLICS2010A/csl.nsf/fsbillcont3/584ABEF08DBB8FB4872576A80026B247?Open&file=1037\\_enr.pdf](http://www.leg.state.co.us/CLICS/CLICS2010A/csl.nsf/fsbillcont3/584ABEF08DBB8FB4872576A80026B247?Open&file=1037_enr.pdf)

<sup>87</sup> HB12-1124 (2012); retrieved June 6, 2013, <http://www.cde.state.co.us/onlinelearning/download/HB12-1124.pdf>

<sup>88</sup> *Digital Learning in Colorado: Opportunities and Recommendations*; retrieved June 7, 2013, <http://www.coloradokids.org/issues/k12education/digitallearning.html>

<sup>89</sup> Colorado Department of Education, *A Study of Online Learning: Perspectives of Online Learners and Educators*, [http://www.cde.state.co.us/onlinelearning/download/Study%20of%20Online%20Learning\\_Perspectives%20of%20Online%20Learners%20and%20Educators\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.cde.state.co.us/onlinelearning/download/Study%20of%20Online%20Learning_Perspectives%20of%20Online%20Learners%20and%20Educators_FINAL.pdf); retrieved June 7, 2013

<sup>90</sup> Colorado Department of Education, *Characteristics of Colorado's Online Students*; retrieved June 7, 2013, [http://www.cde.state.co.us/onlinelearning/download/OL\\_Research\\_Final.pdf](http://www.cde.state.co.us/onlinelearning/download/OL_Research_Final.pdf)



# Connecticut

## ONLINE & BLENDED LEARNING STATE SNAPSHOT

Students have **some supplemental and credit recovery options** through CT Adult Virtual High School, The VHS Collaborative, and CT Virtual Learning (which closed at the end of SY 2012-13).

There are no fully online schools in Connecticut, and there is little online or blended activity at the district level.

### Availability of online learning options

SUPPLEMENTAL			FULLY ONLINE		
K-5 (ES)	6-8 (MS)	9-12 (HS)	K-5 (ES)	6-8 (MS)	9-12 (HS)
NONE	NONE	SOME	NONE	NONE	NONE

Availability of info:

- Great
- Good
- Fair
- Poor**
- Minimal

### Does this state have...

	Y	N
Any <b>FULLY BLENDED</b> schools?	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Student choice at the school level?	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Student choice at the course level?	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
SVS or another publicly funded option for private / homeschool students?	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Prior public school attendance requirement for online schools?	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Online caps by class, school, district, or statewide?	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
PD requirement for online teachers?	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
State approval process required for online providers?	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
State approval process required for online courses?	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Online learning requirement for students?	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
End-of-course exams?	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

• CT Adult Virtual High School courses have a seat limit of 24.

• PA 10-111 (2010) requires training for teachers in online credit recovery.

• Beginning with graduating class of 2018 in 5 subjects.

### Connecticut has an Adult Virtual High School (CT AVHS) and had a second small state virtual school, CT Virtual Learning, which closed at the end of SY 2012-13.

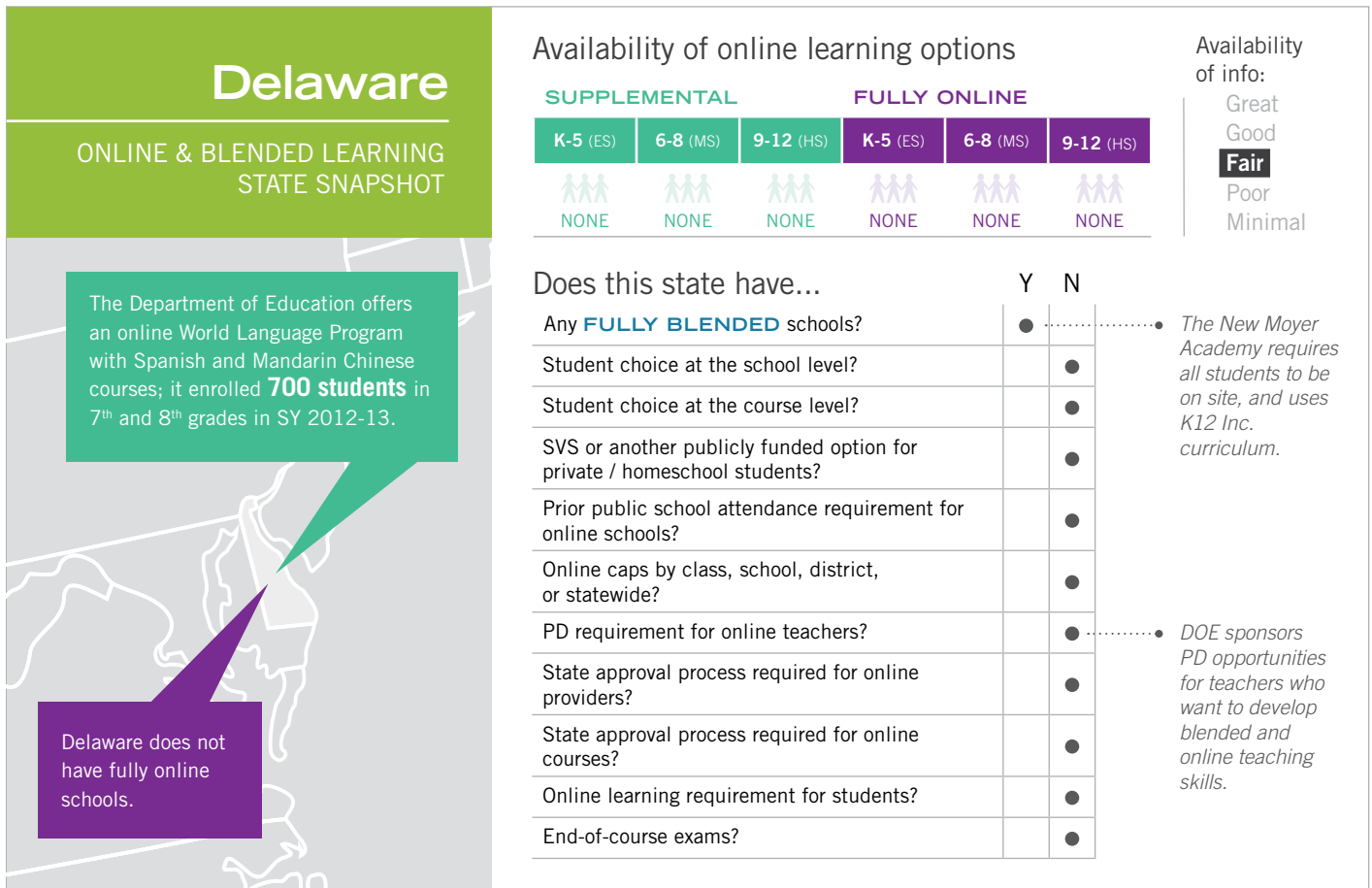
Seventy-four schools, 31% of the high schools in the state, are members of The VHS Collaborative, which served 1,645 course enrollments in the state in SY 2013-14. There is some district activity, primarily in credit recovery.

Connecticut PA No. 10-111 (2010)<sup>91</sup> allowed middle and high school students to earn high school credit via online learning, and required districts to adopt policies for granting credit; detailed requirements can be found at [www.kpk12.com/states](http://www.kpk12.com/states). PA No. 10-111 also required districts with dropout rates of 8% or higher to establish online credit recovery programs. From 2013, districts must provide student support and remedial services, including online learning options, for students beginning in 7<sup>th</sup> grade. There is no formal monitoring process by or funding from the Department of Education.

The Connecticut Distance Learning Consortium operates two statewide online programs. The first, CT AVHS, serves students enrolled in participating adult education programs. It served 2,442 course enrollments in SY 2012-13, an increase of 24%. The second, CT Virtual Learning, served 135 course enrollments SY 2012-13 (an annual decrease of 29%) before ceasing operations at the end of the school year.<sup>92</sup>

<sup>91</sup> Public Act No. 10-111; retrieved July 23, 2013, <http://www.cga.ct.gov/2010/ACT/Pa/pdf/2010PA-00111-R00SB-00438-PA.pdf>

<sup>92</sup> Personal communication with CTDLC; September 17, 2013



**Delaware has very little online and blended learning activity. Some districts use vendor-provided courses on a limited basis, and some high schools participate in the University of Delaware's Online High School, which provides dual enrollment courses for high school students across the state at a cost of \$620 per course.** The Department of Education offers an online World Language Program that offered Spanish and Mandarin Chinese courses for 700 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students in SY 2012-13.<sup>93</sup> One school, The New Moyer Academy, uses online curriculum from K12 Inc. in a blended environment, requiring students be at the school site every school day; it enrolled 182 students in SY 2012-13.<sup>94</sup>

In January 2008, Delaware launched the Delaware Virtual School as a pilot program offering six online courses through 27 high schools and serving nearly 300 students, but the Virtual School's budget was subsequently cut. A limited version of the pilot program continued through the 2008-09 school year, but the program did not receive funding for 2009-10 and has not received funding since then.

<sup>93</sup> Online World Language Program; retrieved July 10, 2013, [http://www.doe.k12.de.us/infosuites/staff/ci/content\\_areas/wl\\_immersion.shtml](http://www.doe.k12.de.us/infosuites/staff/ci/content_areas/wl_immersion.shtml)

<sup>94</sup> The New Moyer Academy; retrieved July 10, 2013, [http://www.thenewmoyeracademy.com/Moyer\\_Academy/Home.html](http://www.thenewmoyeracademy.com/Moyer_Academy/Home.html)







# Florida

## ONLINE & BLENDED LEARNING STATE SNAPSHOT

Florida is a true course choice state, with an estimated **240,000 K-12 students choosing funded online courses** from many fully online and supplemental providers in SY 2012-13.

Florida Virtual School, the largest state virtual school in the country, served **410,962 supplemental course enrollments and 5,366 fully online students** in grades K-12 in SY 2012-13.

### Availability of online learning options

K-5 (ES)	6-8 (MS)	9-12 (HS)	K-5 (ES)	6-8 (MS)	9-12 (HS)
					
ALL	ALL	ALL	ALL	ALL	ALL

### Availability of info:

- Great
- Good**
- Fair
- Poor
- Minimal

### Does this state have...

	Y	N	
Any <b>FULLY BLENDED</b> schools?	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	At least 1, <i>iPrep Academy (Miami)</i> .
Student choice at the school level?	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Student choice at the course level?	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Yes, eligible for some PT programs in K-1 and 6-12, and some FT options in K-12.
SVS or another publicly funded option for private / homeschool students?	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Prior public school attendance requirement for online schools?	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Some students must have been enrolled the prior year in a FL public school.
Online caps by class, school, district, or statewide?	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	
PD requirement for online teachers?	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	
State approval process required for online providers?	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	For VIP for PT and FT providers and virtual charters; includes all courses.
State approval process required for online courses?	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Online learning requirement for students?	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	For standard diploma.
End-of-course exams?	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	

**Florida is the first state in the country to legislate that all K-12 students have full- and part-time virtual options and that funding follows each student down to the course level.** Florida has a long history of supporting online learning. In addition to district programs and fully online schools, Florida Virtual School (FLVS) is the largest state virtual school in the country, and served 410,962 course enrollments in SY 2012-13, a 35% increase. More students take online courses in Florida than in any other state, with more than 240,000 students taking online courses through part- or full-time programs in SY 2012-13.

SB1514 (2013)<sup>95</sup> changes the funding structure for all schools, traditional and virtual, including FLVS. Previously, districts received full funding for up to six courses for each student, and FLVS received funding for all courses completed by students, whether that was a student's sixth course or courses beyond one FTE. With the passage of SB1514, students can no longer generate more than one FTE; instead, a student's FTE will be distributed proportionally by the department of education (DOE) to each district (FLVS is considered a district) for as many courses as a student takes.<sup>96</sup> This creates an incentive for districts to encourage students to take in-district traditional or virtual courses as they can potentially lose money if students take any out-of-district courses, or if a student takes a virtual course and does not complete it, thereby not generating funding.

The funding changes have resulted in significantly reduced pre-enrollments in FLVS for SY 2013-14. Although the chancellor of public schools released a memo in June 2013 reminding districts that they may

<sup>95</sup> SB1514 (2013); retrieved August 5, 2013, <http://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2013/1514/BillText/er/PDF>

<sup>96</sup> Florida Public Virtual Schools Questions and Answers: Funding and Reporting; retrieved August 26, 2013, <http://www.fldoe.org/Schools/virtual-schools/pdf/DistrictVIP-FAQ.pdf>

not restrict students from taking FLVS courses,<sup>97</sup> FLVS eliminated 177 full-time positions and 625 part-time instructors in August 2013 due to lower pre-enrollments.<sup>98</sup> As of September 2013, enrollments in all types of district programs have increased for SY 2013-14.

### Online options

Florida has a variety of online options for students<sup>99</sup> in grades K-12 that are summarized in Table 5.<sup>100</sup>

Virtual program / school	Program type	Grade levels served	Student eligibility	Enrollments SY 2012-13	% change
<b>State Level</b>					
Florida Virtual School (FLVS)	Part-time	K-1 and 6-12 Grades 2-5	All students Per s. 1002.455	410,962 course completions	+35%
Florida Virtual School Full Time (FLVS FT)	Full-time	K-12	All students	5,366 students	+39%
<b>District Level</b>					
District Franchise of FLVS	Part-time	Same as FLVS	Same as FLVS	12,300 unique students	+53%
	Full-time			3,000 students 42,614 total course enrollments	+8% +29%
District Virtual Instruction Program (VIP); Provider or District Operated	Full-time	K-5 Grades 6-12	All students Per s. 1002.455	4,800 students (*not including the 3,000 from the district franchises)	+60%
	Part-time	K-1 Grades 2-12	All students Per s. 1002.455	553 unique students	+177%
District Virtual Course Offerings	Part-time	K-1 Grades 2-12	All students Per s. 1002.455	4,500 unique students	406%
	Full-time	K-5	All students Per s. 1002.455		
Virtual Charter School	Full-time	K-5 6-12	All students per s. 1002.455	104 unique students	n/a

**Table 5: Florida's public virtual education options 2013-14**

All students = Public, private, and home education students<sup>101</sup>

Eligibility per s. 1002.455 = Students must meet one of the following criteria: Prior-year in Florida public school, siblings of virtual students enrolled in current and end of previous year, military dependents who recently moved to Florida, students in grades K-1, students in grades K-5 enrolling in full-time virtual program.

**Florida Virtual School (FLVS)** is the main supplemental provider. FLVS served 410,962 successful supplemental course enrollments in 2012-13, a 35% annual increase. In 2000, legislation established FLVS as an independent education entity. Legislation enacted in 2002 and 2003 granted parental rights for public school choice,<sup>102</sup> listed FLVS as an option, and defined full-time equivalent (FTE) students for FLVS based on "course completion and performance" rather than on seat time. The program has 1,140 full-time teachers (down from 1,412) and 45 part-time teachers (down from 684) as of August 2013, down significantly from the end of SY 2012-13. FLVS is governed by Florida Statute 1002.37;<sup>103</sup> students retain the right to choose FLVS courses to satisfy their educational goals.

<sup>97</sup> FL DOE Memo; retrieved August 13, 2013, <http://www.fldoe.org/schools/virtual-schools/pdf/schoolchoiceaflvsc.pdf>

<sup>98</sup> Personal communication with FLVS, August 29, 2013

<sup>99</sup> Virtual education website; retrieved July 2, 2013, <http://www.fldoe.org/Schools/virtual-schools/>

<sup>100</sup> Table based on Florida's Public Virtual Education Options 2013-14; retrieved July 2, 2013, <http://www.fldoe.org/schools/virtual-schools/pdf/veof.pdf>

<sup>101</sup> Supplemental courses are reported as number of course enrollments, and fully online students are reported as the number of students.

<sup>102</sup> Florida Statutes 1002.20 and 1001.42 regarding school choice; retrieved July 2, 2013, [http://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/index.cfm?mode=View%20Statutes&SubMenu=1&App\\_mode=Display\\_Statute&Search\\_String=1002.20&URL=1000-1099/1002/Sections/1002.20.html](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/index.cfm?mode=View%20Statutes&SubMenu=1&App_mode=Display_Statute&Search_String=1002.20&URL=1000-1099/1002/Sections/1002.20.html) and [http://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/index.cfm?mode=View%20Statutes&SubMenu=1&App\\_mode=Display\\_Statute&Search\\_String=1001.42&URL=1000-1099/1001/Sections/1001.42.html](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/index.cfm?mode=View%20Statutes&SubMenu=1&App_mode=Display_Statute&Search_String=1001.42&URL=1000-1099/1001/Sections/1001.42.html)

<sup>103</sup> Florida Statute 1002.37; retrieved July 2, 2013, [http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index.cfm?App\\_mode=Display\\_Statute&Search\\_String=&URL=1000-1099/1002/Sections/1002.37.html](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&Search_String=&URL=1000-1099/1002/Sections/1002.37.html)

FLVS runs a full-time online option, **FLVS FT**, operated in partnership with Connections Academy for grades K-12. The full-time online school served a total of 5,366 students in grades K-8 in SY 2012-13, a 39% increase.

The first two **virtual charter schools** opened in SY 2012-13 in Osceola School District. iVirtual League Academy is serving students in grades K-12 and is operated by Charter Schools USA. Florida Virtual Academy at Osceola is serving students in grades K-9 and is operated by K12 Inc. An additional five virtual charters are open in SY 2013-14, and K12 Inc. operates a small statewide online school that served 11 students in SY 2012-13.

Through the **Virtual Instruction Program**, all Florida school districts offer full-time and part-time virtual instruction programs for students in grades K-12. For some districts, franchises of FLVS are used to meet this requirement. There were 7,800 fully online students enrolled in all district virtual programs in SY 2012-13, an annual increase of 56%. Most districts operate more than one virtual program under the VIP umbrella, and the number of options continues to increase due to a requirement for many districts to offer at least three options at all grade levels. Many districts are sharing resources and entering into agreements with regional education consortia to provide their required virtual options.

**District Franchises of FLVS** allow districts to use FLVS courses with their own teachers. Two regional consortia (the Panhandle Regional Consortium and the North East Florida Regional Consortium) representing 27 districts, and an additional 29 districts independently, representing 56 out of 67 districts statewide, operate franchises of FLVS. This represents a dramatic increase from eight franchises in 2008-09. The franchises reported over 42,614 half-credit completions in SY 2012-13, a 29% increase over the previous year. These enrollments include about 3,000 fully online students, while about 12,000 were supplemental course enrollments. These are in addition to the FLVS enrollments reported above. Although districts may use their franchises to meet VIP requirements, the franchises also serve home education, private school, and other public school students.

**District Virtual Course Offerings:** Districts also may offer online courses for grades K-12 outside of their VIP and district franchises. Beginning in SY 2013-14, students can cross district lines to take online courses from other districts regardless of whether it is offered in their district.

### ***State policies***

Florida has a long history of legislation affecting online learning; the details of that history can be found on the *Keeping Pace* website at [www.kpk12.com/states](http://www.kpk12.com/states). All of Florida's virtual schools and programs are designated by law as school choice options<sup>104</sup> for Florida families. Teachers in these programs must hold Florida teaching certificates, and the curriculum must meet state standards. In addition, virtual programs and courses must meet standards set by iNACOL and the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB). Online students participate in state assessments, and full-time schools and programs receive school grades through Florida's accountability system.

In 2013, the DOE<sup>105</sup> added a data element to the statewide student information system so that every student who enrolls for at least 14 days will be counted as enrolled, even if they disenroll, so as to calculate comprehensive completion rates for all online programs.

Legislation passed in 2013 creates a statewide online course catalog and lifts previous restrictions on students taking courses across district lines. HB7029 (2013)<sup>106</sup> also:

- Requires the DOE to develop the Florida Approved Courses and Tests (FACT) initiative in 2015-16, an online catalog of digital learning courses that:
  - Will include a course description, completion and passage rates, and a method for students and teachers to provide evaluative feedback.

<sup>104</sup> School choice options; retrieved September 17, 2013, <http://info.fldoe.org/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-5250/dps-2009-007.pdf>

<sup>105</sup> Florida Department of Education, Database Manual, retrieved September 9, 2013, <http://www.fldoe.org/eias/dataweb/default.asp>

<sup>106</sup> HB7029 (2013); retrieved August 5, 2013, <http://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2013/7029/BillText/er/PDF>

- May include massively open online courses (MOOCs) in algebra I, biology, geometry, and civics; fully online courses; and blended courses.
  - Will include approved providers who agree to participate in the statewide assessment program and the education performance accountability system.
  - Allows providers that cannot yet demonstrate “prior successful experience offering online courses to elementary, middle, or high school students as demonstrated by quantified student learning gains or student growth in each subject area and grade level provided for consideration as an instructional program option” to receive conditional approval for one year if they meet all other provider requirements.
- Details reporting requirements for FLVS Global, which provides courses and content to teachers and students around the world.
  - Requires the auditor general to conduct an operational audit of FLVS and submit a report to the legislature by January 31, 2014.
  - Removes blended courses provided by a traditional public school, a charter school, or a district innovation school from the definition of the term “core-curricula courses” for purposes of class-size requirements (previously only applied to fully online classes).
  - Requires the DOE to provide identifiers for blended learning courses, which combine “traditional and online instructional techniques,” and ensure that “Students in a blended learning course must be full-time students of the school and receive the online instruction in a classroom setting at the school.”
  - Prohibits a district from requiring a public school student to take an online course at a certain time or place.
  - Requires the DOE to identify measures of quality based upon student outcomes.

CS/CS/HB7063 (2012)<sup>107</sup> authorized part-time courses for elementary students through FLVS, clarified the online learning requirement passed in 2011, linked funding for both online and brick-and-mortar students to end-of-course exams beginning in SY 2016-17, and allowed elementary students to earn part-time, or supplemental course, funding, among other provisions. It also required full-time virtual programs and schools to be responsible for their enrolled ESE students and expanded funding to include ESE and ESOL funding for them.

## **Funding**

The District Virtual Instruction Program (VIP) and virtual charter schools are funded through the Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP) based on successful completions. Districts receive FEFP funding for each student and may operate their own programs, or they may negotiate with their virtual instruction providers for rates below the per-pupil funding. Completions are defined by 1011.61<sup>108</sup> as earning passing grades or credits for online courses or the prescribed level of content that counts toward promotion to the next grade.

Per-student funding for FLVS for SY 2013-14 will remain at \$5,200 per full-time virtual education student completion; this equates to less than \$5,200 per student when taking into account students who do not complete. If a student takes six courses, then the per-course completion funding will remain at \$433, the same as SY 2012-13. However, with SB1514, a student’s FTE is prorated based on the total number of courses, which can be more than six, and therefore less than \$433 per course completion. FLVS will receive an estimated \$175 million in funding in SY 2013-14. FLVS FT is eligible for more than basic education funding (including ESE and ESOL).

<sup>107</sup> CS/CS/HB7063 (2012); retrieved July 2, 2013, <http://www.myfloridahouse.gov/Sections/Bills/billsdetail.aspx?BillId=48958>

<sup>108</sup> Florida Statute 1011.61; retrieved July 2, 2013, [http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index.cfm?App\\_mode=Display\\_Statute&Search\\_String=&URL=1000-1099/1011/Sections/1011.61.html](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&Search_String=&URL=1000-1099/1011/Sections/1011.61.html)

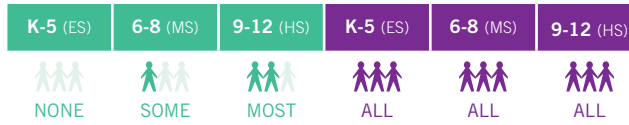
# Georgia

## ONLINE & BLENDED LEARNING STATE SNAPSHOT

Georgia Virtual School is one of the larger state virtual schools, with **25,877 course enrollments** in SY 2012-13.

Georgia voters passed a constitutional amendment enabling legislation (HB797; 2012) to create a new State Charter Schools Commission and funding formula for virtual charter schools. **Three fully online schools** served **13,412 students** in SY 2012-13.

### Availability of online learning options



Availability of info:

Great  
**Good**  
 Fair  
 Poor  
 Minimal

### Does this state have...

	Y	N	
Any <b>FULLY BLENDED</b> schools?		●	
Student choice at the school level?	●		
Student choice at the course level?	●		● Students in grades 9-12 do not need district approval to enroll in GAVS.
SVS or another publicly funded option for private / homeschool students?	●		● Limited number funded by the state.
Prior public school attendance requirement for online schools?		●	
Online caps by class, school, district, or statewide?		●	● Unfunded approval process limited to regionally accredited programs.
PD requirement for online teachers?		●	
State approval process required for online providers?	●		
State approval process required for online courses?		●	
Online learning requirement for students?		●	● In 14 subjects. GAVS administers EOC exams for its students.
End-of-course exams?	●		

### Georgia has online learning activity through the state virtual school, Georgia Virtual School (GAVS), as well as several significant district programs and three fully online schools.

In 2012, the Georgia legislature passed three bills that significantly impacted online learning policy. SB289<sup>109</sup> affected all school districts in Georgia and included the following provisions:

- All students in grades 9-12 may enroll in online courses in GAVS without approval of the student's home district, "regardless of whether the school in which the student is enrolled offers the same course." A limit of one GAVS course per semester per student was eliminated.
- All districts must provide written information on both part- and full-time online learning options to parents of all students in grades 3-12.
- All providers must be approved by the State Department of Education (SDE), which publishes a list of approved clearinghouse providers each year.

SB289 also prohibited local school boards from enacting policies to keep students from online classes during the school day, and required that publishers of textbooks recommended by the State Board of Education (SBE) provide electronic versions of such textbooks.

Virtual charters have a tumultuous history in Georgia, particularly regarding authorization and funding; details of that history can be found at [www.kpk12.com/states/](http://www.kpk12.com/states/). The challenges were resolved with the passage of a 2012 ballot referendum that amended the state constitution and created an independent state-level charter

<sup>109</sup> SB289 (2012); retrieved June 17, 2013, <http://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/en-US/display/20112012/SB/289>

school authorizer. The enabling legislation, HB797<sup>110</sup> (2012), established a new State Charter Schools Commission operating under the SBE and defined its duties and powers in regard to charter schools, which include developing and disseminating best practices and accountability standards, presenting an annual report to the SBE on academic and financial performance, and making public information available to parents. HB797 also established a new funding formula, allowing virtual charters to receive the same per-pupil funding as brick-and-mortar schools per the Quality Basic Education (QBE) funding formula, plus supplemental funding for all charter schools that was established by HB797. Virtual charter funding for 2012-13 was \$4,460 per student and is projected to be about \$4,334 for SY 2013-14.<sup>111</sup>

HB175 (2012)<sup>112</sup> created Georgia's Online Clearinghouse, directed by the SDE, through which local school systems and charter schools may offer online courses to students in other schools and districts. The SDE launched the clearinghouse<sup>113</sup> in 2013 despite having no funding for reviews or approvals. Currently, it only lists online courses from GAVS and public school districts that have received regional accreditation, but it does not include outside providers. Criteria for approval had not been established as of September 2013.

### **Online programs**

Online programs include the GAVS, several significant district programs, and three fully online schools. In SY 2012-13 the Georgia Cyber Academy served 10,453 enrollments in grades K-12; Georgia Connections Academy served 1,861 students in grades K-12; and Provost Academy Georgia served 1,098 students in grades 9-12.<sup>114</sup> Twiggs County public school opened a nine-district fully online school in SY 2013-14. Forsyth County Schools' iAchieve Virtual Academy also offers a fully online program for county residents; it accepts out-of-district students for tuition.

Gwinnett County Online Campus (GOC) was granted charter authorization in 2011, allowing it to offer fully online options in addition to supplemental courses for Gwinnett County students. In SY 2012-13, GOC served 107 fully online enrollments and about 5,000 supplemental enrollments, nearly half of which were in summer school. Cobb Virtual Academy served 1,903 course enrollments and 1,023 unique students. Fulton, DeKalb, and Henry Counties also have online programs with courses listed in Georgia's Online Clearinghouse.

GAVS was created by legislation in 2005, and in 2006 the SBE created the rule that governs the school.<sup>115</sup> GAVS had 25,877 course enrollments in SY 2012-13, a 24% annual increase. GAVS expanded to serve grades 6-12 beginning with SY 2012-13 and plans to serve grades 3-12 in 2014-15. GAVS is unusual for a state virtual school in that its supplemental students take state end-of-course (EOC) exams administered by GAVS,<sup>116</sup> allowing for a comparison of test scores between students in online courses and state averages. In SY 2012-13, students taking EOCs through GAVS scored higher than or equal to the state average on 10 of the 11 EOCs administered.<sup>117</sup> Although this is a measure of proficiency that does not take student growth into account, it is a better measure than most states have for outcomes of supplemental online courses. GAVS also provides more than 50 online courses<sup>118</sup> as open educational resources at no cost to Georgia districts.

GAVS funding changed with SB289 (2012). GAVS invoices districts monthly, and districts pay GAVS \$250 per student per online course. GAVS also receives annual line-item funding for operations (\$1.5 million for SY 2013-14) for total funding of about \$7.5 million. Line-item funding will become a smaller percentage of total funding as per-course, per-student funding from districts increases. A limited number of state funded seats are offered to homeschooled and private students as part of annual line item funding.

<sup>110</sup> HB797 (2012); retrieved June 17, 2013, <http://www.legis.ga.gov/Legislation/20112012/127650.pdf>

<sup>111</sup> State charter school funding; retrieved July 30, 2013, <http://scsc.georgia.gov/funding>

<sup>112</sup> HB175 (2012); retrieved July 8, 2013, <http://www.legis.ga.gov/Legislation/20112012/127714.pdf>

<sup>113</sup> Georgia's Online Clearinghouse; retrieved July 8, 2013, [http://www.doe.k12.ga.us/\\_layouts/GADOEPublic.SPApp/ClearingHouse.aspx](http://www.doe.k12.ga.us/_layouts/GADOEPublic.SPApp/ClearingHouse.aspx)

<sup>114</sup> GA DOE, Enrollment; retrieved July 9, 2013, [http://app3.doe.k12.ga.us/ows-bin/owa/fte\\_pack\\_ethnicsex.entry\\_form](http://app3.doe.k12.ga.us/ows-bin/owa/fte_pack_ethnicsex.entry_form)

<sup>115</sup> 160-8-1-01; retrieved July 18, 2013, <http://www.doe.k12.ga.us/External-Affairs-and-Policy/State-Board-of-Education/SBOE%20Rules/160-8-1-01.pdf>

<sup>116</sup> Georgia Virtual School, end-of-course exams, retrieved July 17, 2013, <http://www.gavirtualschool.org/CourseInfo/EndofCourseTestInformation.aspx>

<sup>117</sup> Unpublished data provided by Georgia Virtual School

<sup>118</sup> Georgia Virtual Learning Shared Resources; retrieved July 9, 2013, <http://www.gavirtuallearning.org/Resources/SharedLandingPage.aspx>



# Hawaii

## ONLINE & BLENDED LEARNING STATE SNAPSHOT

Hawaii Virtual Learning Network includes the state virtual school; it reported **1,534 course enrollments** in SY 2012-13.

There are **two blended schools**, Hawaii Technology Academy and Myron B. Thompson Academy (MBTA).

### Availability of online learning options

SUPPLEMENTAL			FULLY ONLINE		
K-5 (ES)	6-8 (MS)	9-12 (HS)	K-5 (ES)	6-8 (MS)	9-12 (HS)
NONE	SOME	MOST	NONE	NONE	NONE

### Availability of info:

Great  
Good  
**Fair**  
Poor  
Minimal

### Does this state have...

	Y	N
Any <b>FULLY BLENDED</b> schools?	●	
Student choice at the school level?		n/a
Student choice at the course level?		●
SVS or another publicly funded option for private / homeschool students?		●
Prior public school attendance requirement for online schools?		●
Online caps by class, school, district, or statewide?		●
PD requirement for online teachers?		●
State approval process required for online providers?		●
State approval process required for online courses?		●
Online learning requirement for students?		●
End-of-course exams?		●

● Myron B. Thompson and Hawaii Technology Academy.  
● Hawaii is one district.  
● eSchool has class caps.  
● eSchool has a PD requirement.

**Hawaii has several statewide online programs, including the Hawaii Virtual Learning Network’s (HVLN) partners, the E-School and Myron B. Thompson Academy; the private Kamehameha Schools; the University of Hawaii Online Learning Academy (a tutoring program); and the Hawaii Technology Academy charter school.** As the state of Hawaii is one school district, these few blended and supplemental programs give all high school students in the state access to some online and/or blended learning options. In 2013, the legislature funded \$8 million toward a one-to-one initiative for eight pilot schools to receive a digital tablet and laptop for every student and teacher.

HB2971 SD2<sup>119</sup> created HVLN to expand and systematize supplemental online course offerings. To accomplish this, HVLN:

- established criteria to evaluate and approve online courses, and offers training to teachers in online instruction.
- provides centralized support services to online students.
- established partnerships with institutes of higher education, private schools, charter schools, state virtual schools, and commercial vendors.<sup>120</sup>

<sup>119</sup> HB 2971, retrieved July 3, 2013, [http://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/session2008/bills/HB2971\\_sd2\\_.htm](http://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/session2008/bills/HB2971_sd2_.htm)

<sup>120</sup> Hawaii Virtual Learning Network; retrieved May 30, 2013, <http://hawaiiivln.k12.hi.us/>

HVLN reported 1,534 enrollments in grades 7-12 in SY 2012-13, a decrease of 17% from the previous year. Public school secondary students statewide can take an online course from the E-School program during the school year on a first-come, first-served basis at no charge. Private school students are allowed to take courses during the summer sessions; all students pay for courses offered during the summer session. Member schools pay a membership fee and receive benefits such as online professional development and access to online course content.

Myron B. Thompson Academy is a blended charter school that serves about 500 full-time students statewide. Students take some courses face-to-face at the onsite location and other courses mostly online with some face-to-face requirements. The face-to-face requirements are unique to each island. The Thompson Academy created the Thompson Extension Academy (TEA) program to offer supplemental online courses as an HVLN partner. TEA reported 300 course enrollments in SY 2012-13, a decrease of 63%<sup>121</sup> from the previous year.

Hawaii Technology Academy (HTA) is a blended learning charter school for students in grades K-12. HTA is entering its sixth year and reported 1,300 students in SY 2012-13, a 4% increase from the previous year. HTA offers its program to students on Oahu, Kauai, Maui, and the Big Island. Kamehameha Schools Distance Learning is a private K-12 school that partners with HVLN and offers nationwide distance learning courses for high school students. In SY 2012-13, it enrolled 235 students in fully online courses with a focus on Hawaiian culture through its 'Ike Hawaii Distance Learning Program.<sup>122</sup>

State policies did not change significantly from 2011 through 2013 and are available at [www.kpk12.com/states/](http://www.kpk12.com/states/).

<sup>121</sup> Thompson Extension Academy deliberately kept its numbers low this year due to a school redesign.

<sup>122</sup> Kamehameha Schools Distance Learning; retrieved May 30, 2013, <http://ksdl.ksbe.edu/ikehawaii>

# Idaho

## ONLINE & BLENDED LEARNING STATE SNAPSHOT

Idaho Digital Learning Academy is one of the larger state virtual schools with **19,036 course enrollments** in SY 2012-13.

In 2012, voters overturned SB1184 (2011), a technology-driven education law that included a course choice provision and a one-to-one laptop initiative. The SBE also repealed an online learning requirement.

### Availability of online learning options

SUPPLEMENTAL			FULLY ONLINE		
K-5 (ES)	6-8 (MS)	9-12 (HS)	K-5 (ES)	6-8 (MS)	9-12 (HS)
NONE	SOME	MOST	ALL	ALL	ALL

Availability of info:

- Great**
- Good
- Fair
- Poor
- Minimal

### Does this state have...

	Y	N
Any <b>FULLY BLENDED</b> schools?		●
Student choice at the school level?	●	
Student choice at the course level?		●
SVS or another publicly funded option for private / homeschool students?		●
Prior public school attendance requirement for online schools?		●
Online caps by class, school, district, or statewide?		●
PD requirement for online teachers?		●
State approval process required for online providers?	●	
State approval process required for online courses?		●
Online learning requirement for students?		●
End-of-course exams?		●

7 fully online schools with 5,213 students in SY 2012-13.

State approval is part of the vendor and course evaluation process for the online clearinghouse portal.

Removed per the revocation of SB1184.

**Idaho has one of the largest state virtual schools (the Idaho Digital Learning Academy), seven virtual charters, district programs, and a state distance education academy.**<sup>123</sup> The Idaho Digital Learning Academy (IDLA) had 19,036 course enrollments in SY 2012-13, an 8% increase. The virtual charters<sup>124</sup> enrolled 5,213 students in SY 2012-13,<sup>125</sup> about the same as the previous year. There are a few district online programs, including the Bonneville, Vallivue, Emmett, Meridian, and Coeur d’Alene school districts.

### State policies

Idaho Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Luna introduced an aggressive education policy in 2011, embodied in SB1184 (2011) and several other laws, emphasizing a technology-driven education agenda. The laws included a one-to-one laptop initiative for all students and teachers, a review and approval process for online courses, greater student choice to enroll in online courses without district approval, and other initiatives. After the laws passed, opponents gathered enough signatures to place a referendum on the November 2012 state ballot to repeal SB1184. Emergency clauses in subsequent 2011 legislation allowed SB1184 to take effect, but with the knowledge that voters would have the final say. Proposition 3, which

<sup>123</sup> Idaho Public Charter Schools, see “Other” tab; retrieved July 3, 2013, [http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/charter\\_schools/regions.htm](http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/charter_schools/regions.htm). Idaho Distance Education Academy is similar to a virtual charter but is classified as a distance education academy.

<sup>124</sup> Details about the seven virtual charter schools can be found at <http://kpk12.com/states/>.

<sup>125</sup> Idaho SDE enrollment statistics by district and charter school, revised March 2013; retrieved July 3, 2013, [http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/statistics/fall\\_enrollment.htm](http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/statistics/fall_enrollment.htm).

included most of the online learning policies in what was referred to as the “Students Come First” legislation, was soundly defeated with a 66% “no” vote.

Two controversial aspects of SB1184 had been made into Idaho State Board of Education (SBE) rule before the November referendum: a requirement that all students take at least two online courses to graduate from high school, and a fractional ADA funding formula that would have helped fund online courses, in part, from school district funding. In November 2012 the SBE voted to repeal both measures.

IDLA suffered significant funding decreases and the elimination of its state appropriation based on SB1184. With the repeal of the law, IDLA’s funding reverted to a state appropriation. SB1091<sup>126</sup> (2013) re-established IDLA’s state appropriation, albeit with a simplified version of IDLA’s original funding formula. IDLA now receives a “Base Amount” of \$1.35 million, plus a “variable amount” based on fixed funding per online course (\$221 per course) multiplied by an enrollment projection (23,000 course enrollments for SY 2013-14). IDLA’s total budget for 2013-14 is \$6.4 million. For more details about the IDLA funding formula, please see [www.kpk12.com/states](http://www.kpk12.com/states).

SB1091 also appropriated funds for the development and maintenance of an online course portal, begun by the State Department of Education (SDE) before the repeal of SB1184, to include online courses from IDLA, school districts, charter schools, and post-secondary institutions. The portal must incorporate customer ratings, and notification and communications capabilities. The legislature budgeted \$150,000 for portal development in FY 2014 with the clearinghouse of online courses to launch in spring 2014. Funding is to be deducted from total state education funds before district funding is appropriated.

SB1028 (2013) revises Idaho SDE rule<sup>127</sup> to remove “pilot” status around a mastery-based learning initiative that allows all students to earn credit by demonstrating mastery of a subject instead of only being allowed to earn credit through seat time, and to “successfully proceed through school curriculum at their own pace.”<sup>128</sup> Standards are to be defined and approved by the local school district or local education agency by submitting an application to participate in the mastery advancement program to the SBE.<sup>129</sup>

HB221(2013)<sup>130</sup> revises new virtual charter school petitions and prohibits a local school district board of trustees from authorizing a new public virtual school charter. The law defines a virtual school as one “that delivers a full-time, sequential program of synchronous and/or asynchronous instruction primarily through the use of technology via the Internet in a distributed environment ... and must have an online component to their school with online lessons and tools for student and data management.”

IDLA is working with districts in Idaho to implement local blended learning programs. All Twin Falls School District middle school students are participating in online or blended learning classes in SY 2012-13, and about 40 districts out of 114 are either using IDLA online courses, the learning management system, professional development courses, or some combination of these services to implement blended learning.

Additional details on funding, governance, tracking, and accountability can be found at [www.kpk12.com/states/](http://www.kpk12.com/states/).

<sup>126</sup> SB1091 (2013); retrieved June 11, 2013, <http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/legislation/2013/S1091Bookmark.htm>

<sup>127</sup> Idaho statutes; retrieved July 3, 2013, <http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/idstat/Title33/T33CH16SECT33-1620.htm>

<sup>128</sup> IDAPA 08.02.03.105 Rules Governing Thoroughness; retrieved June 12, 2012, [http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/publications/weekly\\_newsletter\\_docs/2010/January%2020%20newsletter.pdf](http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/publications/weekly_newsletter_docs/2010/January%2020%20newsletter.pdf)

<sup>129</sup> Ibid

<sup>130</sup> HB221 (2013); retrieved July 3, 2013, <http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/legislation/2013/H0221.pdf>

# Illinois

## ONLINE & BLENDED LEARNING STATE SNAPSHOT

Illinois Virtual School is the state virtual school; it served **2,994 course enrollments** in SY 2012-13, a **7% annual increase**.

HB494 (2013) placed a moratorium on new virtual charter schools, but does not impact existing virtual programs, none of which are statewide.

### Availability of online learning options

SUPPLEMENTAL			FULLY ONLINE		
K-5 (ES)	6-8 (MS)	9-12 (HS)	K-5 (ES)	6-8 (MS)	9-12 (HS)
NONE	SOME	SOME	NONE	NONE	NONE

Availability of info:

- Great
- Good
- Fair**
- Poor
- Minimal

### Does this state have...

	Y	N	
Any <b>FULLY BLENDED</b> schools?	●		At least 3 blended schools, including VOISE Academy in Chicago.
Student choice at the school level?		●	
Student choice at the course level?		●	
SVS or another publicly funded option for private / homeschool students?		●	Private / homeschool students must pay a course fee.
Prior public school attendance requirement for online schools?		●	
Online caps by class, school, district, or statewide?		●	
PD requirement for online teachers?		●	IVS provided teacher professional development online to 679 Illinois teachers in SY 2012-13.
State approval process required for online providers?		●	
State approval process required for online courses?		●	
Online learning requirement for students?		●	
End-of-course exams?		●	

**Illinois has a state virtual school, Illinois Virtual School (IVS), and several district-level online and blended schools, although no statewide fully online schools.** HB494 (2013)<sup>131</sup> amends the Charter Schools Law of the School Code to establish a one-year moratorium on charter schools with “virtual-schooling components” through April 1, 2014. The moratorium does not apply to a “charter school with virtual-schooling components existing or approved prior to April 1, 2013.” HB494 requires the State Charter School Commission to submit a report on the effect of virtual schooling to the General Assembly including its effect on student performance, the costs associated with virtual schooling, and oversight issues, on or before March 1, 2014.

In early 2013 the proposed Illinois Virtual Charter School @ Fox River Valley (IVRC @ FRV) approached 18 school districts in the Fox Valley region to approve and participate in a new virtual charter school that would serve students in the 18 districts. The school would have been governed by a nonprofit group, Virtual Learning Solutions, and managed by K12 Inc. All 18 school districts rejected the IVRC @ FRV proposal. Virtual Learning Solutions then filed 18 separate appeals (one for each district) to the State Charter School Commission. While those appeals were pending, HB494 was signed into law, and the appeals were withdrawn.

<sup>131</sup> HB494; retrieved June 3, 2013, <http://www.ilga.gov/legislation/publicacts/98/PDF/098-0016.pdf>

## ***Online programs***

IVS had 2,994 course enrollments in SY 2012-13, a 7% increase over the previous year. It is funded via state appropriation (\$1.45 million in 2013-14), and course enrollment fees of \$250 per student per semester. IVS is the online provider for original credit online courses for the Chicago Public Schools.<sup>132</sup> IVS expanded middle school courses in 2013 to include grades 6-8 in most core subject areas, and launched a blended learning pilot program that provides courses and a learning management system for districts that want to use local teachers at \$65 per student per course. IVS provided teacher professional development online to 679 Illinois teachers in SY 2012-13 through both self-paced asynchronous and instructor-led courses, a 51% increase over SY 2011-12.

Virtual Opportunities Inside a School Environment (VOISE) Academy is a blended learning school in Chicago; it is a Chicago Public Schools (CPS) performance school created under the CPS Renaissance 2010 initiative. Indian Prairie School District offers online courses to in-district students and reported 333 course enrollments in SY 2012-13.

K12 Inc. provides curriculum and services for three charter schools with significant virtual components. The schools must get written approval from each district they serve and none operate statewide. The Chicago Virtual Charter School (CVCS) requires students to meet at a physical location once a week; this addresses a legal provision that charter schools not be home-based.<sup>133</sup> CVCS enrolled 594 students in SY 2012-13. Youth Connection Charter School Virtual High School is a Chicago public school serving students ages 18-21 (grades 9–12) who have dropped out of high school; it enrolled 93 students in SY 2012-13. It offers a blended learning format with students spending some time at learning centers around Chicago. Cambridge Academy at Cambridge Lakes Charter School is a fully online school that received approval from the state in June 2011 to serve K-12 students statewide. However, to serve students from outside the Cambridge Lakes district, it must have written agreements in place with each student's district of residence.

Additional state policy history can be found at [www.kpk12.com/states/](http://www.kpk12.com/states/).

<sup>132</sup> Chicago Public School course enrollments through IVS are included in the IVS total enrollment of 2,994.

<sup>133</sup> See [www.kpk12.com/states/](http://www.kpk12.com/states/) for a history of the lawsuit by the Chicago Teachers Union claiming that CVCS was not a legal charter school because Illinois law indicates that charter schools may not be home-based.

# Indiana

## ONLINE & BLENDED LEARNING STATE SNAPSHOT

There were an estimated **6,733 students** enrolled in at least four fully online schools in SY 2012-13.

Indiana has embraced blended learning with **at least seven fully blended schools** open in SY 2013-14 and statewide support from the IDOE in the form of content, professional development, and other resources.

### Availability of online learning options

SUPPLEMENTAL			FULLY ONLINE		
K-5 (ES)	6-8 (MS)	9-12 (HS)	K-5 (ES)	6-8 (MS)	9-12 (HS)
NONE	NONE	SOME	ALL	ALL	ALL

Availability of info:

- Great
- Good
- Fair**
- Poor
- Minimal

### Does this state have...

	Y	N	
Any <b>FULLY BLENDED</b> schools?	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	At least 7.
Student choice at the school level?	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Student choice at the course level?	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	60% of virtual charter students statewide must have been enrolled in public schools during prior year.
SVS or another publicly funded option for private / homeschool students?	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	
Prior public school attendance requirement for online schools?	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Online caps by class, school, district, or statewide?	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	
PD requirement for online teachers?	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Optional state-funded Intro to Blended and Online Teaching course available statewide.
State approval process required for online providers?	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	
State approval process required for online courses?	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	
Online learning requirement for students?	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	
End-of-course exams?	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	In 3 subjects.

### Indiana has expanded online and blended options for its students significantly in recent years, with new online schools (charter and non-charter), blended schools, and supplemental programs.

In SY 2012-13 there were an estimated 6,733 students enrolled in at least four fully online schools,<sup>134</sup> and at least 6, 210 supplemental course enrollments.<sup>135</sup> This is the result of sweeping education reform laws passed in 2011, including HB1002, which ended the virtual school pilot program, set virtual charter funding at 87.5% of base ADM plus special education grants, and established that at least 60% of virtual charter students must have been included in the state ADM count the previous year.

The Department of Education (IDOE) Office of eLearning offers resources to educators, including digital resources, professional development, and interactive online tools to promote district collaboration (with a focus on blended learning).<sup>136</sup> A directory of classroom innovation highlights the work of 23 school districts awarded Classroom Innovation Grants (2012) for supporting student learning through the use of technology.<sup>137</sup> In 2012 IDOE formed the Indiana eLearning Leadership Cadre, a 12-member panel whose role is to support schools and educators to increase outreach and capacity to innovate at the school and classroom level through educational technology.

<sup>134</sup> Personal communication with Michelle Green, eLearning Development Specialist, IDOE, August 6, 2013. This is an estimated figure assumed to be low; however, it may also include some blended learning enrollments from the Hoosier Academies.

<sup>135</sup> This number is likely to be low, as the state is not aware of all programs providing supplemental courses.

<sup>136</sup> Indiana Department of Education Office of eLearning; retrieved July 30, 2013, <http://www.doe.in.gov/achievement/technologies>

<sup>137</sup> Directory of Classroom Innovation; retrieved July 30, 2013, <http://www.indianaelearning.us/directory/>

## Online and blended programs

Enrollment in fully online and blended schools—most of which are charter schools—has increased consistently in the wake of HB1002 (see Table 6). The largest of these is Hoosier Academies, with 3,831 students in SY 2012-13. An outgrowth of the original pilot program, it is now two K12 Inc. academies, one online and one fully blended; a third blended school closed in SY 2012-13. Three new fully blended schools opened in SY 2013-14: Nexus Academy of Indianapolis (grades 9-12), Enlace Academy (grades K-3), and George and Veronica Phalen Leadership Academy #1 (grades K-8).

	Grades	SY 2012-13 enrollment	Growth	Mode
<b>Hoosier Academies</b>	K-12	3,831	+77%	One fully online; two fully blended
<b>Achieve Virtual Education Academy</b>	9-12	117	-46%	Fully online (also served 390 supplemental enrollments)
<b>Indiana Virtual School</b>	6-12	36	+80%	Fully online
<b>Indiana Connections Academy</b>	K-12	2,749	+52%	Fully online
<b>Carpe Diem Collegiate High School-Meridian</b>	6-12	80	n/a	Fully blended

**Table 6: Fully online and blended schools in Indiana in SY 2012-13**

In addition, a diverse range of largely fee-based programs offer supplemental core, credit recovery, and Advanced Placement® supplemental courses to students statewide. Many of these programs are consortia-led, with prices on a sliding scale depending on where the student lives. Providers include:

- Achieve Virtual Education Academy, which served 390 supplemental course enrollments in SY 2012-13, an increase of 290%.<sup>138</sup>
- The Indiana Virtual Academy, which reported 3,870 course enrollments, a 33% increase from SY 2011-12.<sup>139</sup> Courses cost \$295 per semester to most; \$190 to residents of Ripley County; and nothing to some from select partner schools.<sup>140</sup>
- The Indiana Online Academy, a program of the Central Indiana Educational Service Center whose members total 23 school districts in and around Marion County.
- Indiana University High School, a diploma-granting distance program providing tuition-based supplemental courses and a fully online program to students worldwide (and often deployed overseas). Administered by the Indiana University, about 31% of 1,950 enrollments in SY 2012-13 were Indiana residents.

Districts are increasingly developing their own online and blended programs as well. For example, Crown Point Community School Corporation is phasing in blended courses across its high school and plans to expand into its middle school. Center Grove Community School Corporation offers a “Global Campus,” with course prices set at \$295 per semester.

## State policies

State policies have not changed significantly since 2011; further details about previous legislation, along with two 2009 reports on the state of virtual learning in Indiana, are available in *Keeping Pace 2012* and at [www.kpk12.com/states](http://www.kpk12.com/states).

<sup>138</sup> Personal communication with Achieve Virtual Education Academy, August 5, 2013

<sup>139</sup> Personal communication with INDVA, August 5, 2013

<sup>140</sup> Course info; retrieved July 2, 2013, <http://www.indva.com/course-info/#cost>



# Iowa

## ONLINE & BLENDED LEARNING STATE SNAPSHOT

Iowa Learning Online and Iowa Online AP Academy are the state virtual schools. They served **1,240 course enrollments** in SY 2012-13. IOL received a \$1.5 million appropriation with House File 215 (2013).

Iowa's first **two fully online schools**, Iowa Connections Academy and Iowa Virtual Academy, opened in SY 2012-13, **servicing 302 students**.

### Availability of online learning options

SUPPLEMENTAL			FULLY ONLINE		
K-5 (ES)	6-8 (MS)	9-12 (HS)	K-5 (ES)	6-8 (MS)	9-12 (HS)
NONE	NONE	SOME	SOME	SOME	SOME

Availability of info:  
**Great**  
 Good  
 Fair  
 Poor  
 Minimal

Does this state have...	Y	N
Any <b>FULLY BLENDED</b> schools?		●
Student choice at the school level?	●	
Student choice at the course level?		●
SVS or another publicly funded option for private / homeschool students?	●	
Prior public school attendance requirement for online schools?		●
Online caps by class, school, district, or statewide?	●	
PD requirement for online teachers?		●
State approval process required for online providers?		●
State approval process required for online courses?		●
Online learning requirement for students?		●
End-of-course exams?		●

● Accredited non-public school students and dually enrolled homeschooled students may enroll in Iowa Learning Online courses.

● .018% (approximately 900) student cap statewide for full-time schools; no more than 1% from any one district.

**Iowa has two partnering supplemental statewide online programs, increasing district-level online learning activity, one community college offering high school credit recovery, and its first two fully online schools, Iowa Connections Academy and Iowa Virtual Academy, which opened for SY 2012-13.** The Iowa Connections Academy served 235 students in grades K-12, and Iowa Virtual Academy served 67 students in grades K-6 in SY 2012-13.

### State policies

House File 215<sup>141</sup> (2013) provides funding and additional details for legislation passed in 2011 and 2012. It accomplishes the following:

- Appropriates \$1.5 million annually for two years for the administration and expansion of the Iowa Online Learning (IOL) initiative. The funding also will provide professional development for IOL teachers.
- Establishes a competency-based learning task force and awards an annual grant to no more than 10 districts to pilot a competency-based learning program.
- States that beginning with SY 2016-17, all students in grades 3-11 will take annual assessments that measure student achievement and growth. A task force has been created that will make recommendations on statewide student assessments that are aligned with the Iowa Common Core, and

<sup>141</sup> House File 215 (2013), retrieved June 26, 2013, [http://coolice.legis.iowa.gov/linc/85/external/CCH215\\_Introduced.pdf](http://coolice.legis.iowa.gov/linc/85/external/CCH215_Introduced.pdf)

that are valid, reliable, and piloted in Iowa. It also will review the costs the assessments will impose on districts and states, including the technical support needed, and report its findings by January 1, 2015.

House File 645 (2011)<sup>142</sup> and Senate File 2284 (2012):<sup>143</sup>

- Codified Iowa Learning Online (ILO), the Department of Education’s virtual school initiative. It is the only online program allowed to help districts fulfill the Iowa Code Chapter 272 “offer and teach” requirements. Districts are prevented from contracting with private providers for “offer and teach” courses.
- Established ILO as the Online Learning Program Model. This is repealed as of July 1, 2015, making it equivalent to a three-year pilot.
- Defined online learning and online coursework.
- Stated that the Department of Education would visit the two district virtual academies, conduct surveys, and provide the legislature with data and a report determining if instruction is delivered primarily by an appropriately Iowa-licensed teacher or by a parent or guardian. The report will “include but is not limited to student achievement and demographic characteristics, retention rates, and the percentage of enrolled students’ active participation in extracurricular activities.”
- Limited the statewide enrollment of pupils in educational instruction to not more than .018% of the statewide K-12 enrollments (about 900 students) and limited the number of students participating in instruction and course content delivered over the Internet to no more than 1% of a sending district’s enrollment.
- Mandated that ILO teachers must have completed “an online learning for Iowa educators professional development project offered by area education agencies, a teacher preservice program, or comparable coursework.”

### **Online programs**

ILO, run by the Iowa Department of Education (IDOE), offers a variety of synchronous and asynchronous Internet, video-based, and blended courses. ILO started in summer 2004 and offers courses in grades 9-12 (students in grades 8-12) with set start/end dates and accommodations for students needing slower or faster pacing. ILO had 627 course enrollments in SY 2012-13, a 27% decrease from the previous year. Some of the program’s courses in science and math are offered via the statewide video-based Iowa Communication Network. Additional courses are offered by participating Iowa school districts, with ILO providing support for promotion, registration, and any associated Iowa Communications Network fees.

The Iowa Online AP Academy (IOAPA) reported 603 course enrollments in SY 2012-13, a 7% increase. The program received an appropriation of \$481,849 for SY 2012-13. A weighted funding provision was passed in SY 2008-09 that provided additional funding for schools offering distance courses to other Iowa schools through the use of the Iowa Communication Network.<sup>144</sup>

Kirkwood High School Distance Learning is a program of Kirkwood Community College that works with school districts across Iowa to offer online transfer credit courses to students looking for credit recovery opportunities; it charges \$150 per Iowa student per course. Kirkwood served 848 course enrollments in SY 2012-13, a 38% increase from 2011-12.

<sup>142</sup> House File 645 (2011), Section 18; retrieved June 26, 2013, <http://coolice.legis.iowa.gov/Cool-ICE/default.asp?Category=BillInfo&Service=Billbook&menu=text&ga=84&hbill=HF645>

<sup>143</sup> Senate File 2284 Division IV (2012); retrieved June 26, 2013, <http://coolice.legis.iowa.gov/Cool-ICE/default.asp?Category=BillInfo&Service=Billbook&menu=text&ga=84&hbill=SF2284>

<sup>144</sup> I.C.A. 257.11; retrieved June 26, 2013, <http://coolice.legis.state.ia.us/Cool-ICE/default.asp?Category=billinfo&Service=iowaCode&input=257.11>

# Kansas

## ONLINE & BLENDED LEARNING STATE SNAPSHOT

There are **13 fully online schools**, 67 district/building programs, and 8 service center programs recognized by the state.

In SY 2012-13 the state counted **4,689 fully online K-12 students**, and an additional 1,220 taking supplemental and/or blended options.

### Availability of online learning options

SUPPLEMENTAL			FULLY ONLINE		
K-5 (ES)	6-8 (MS)	9-12 (HS)	K-5 (ES)	6-8 (MS)	9-12 (HS)
SOME	MOST	MOST	MOST	MOST	MOST

Availability of info:

**Great**

- Good
- Fair
- Poor
- Minimal

### Does this state have...

	Y	N
Any <b>FULLY BLENDED</b> schools?		●
Student choice at the school level?	●	
Student choice at the course level?		●
SVS or another publicly funded option for private / homeschool students?		●
Prior public school attendance requirement for online schools?		●
Online caps by class, school, district, or statewide?		●
PD requirement for online teachers?	●	
State approval process required for online providers?	●	
State approval process required for online courses?		●
Online learning requirement for students?		●
End-of-course exams?		●

● Students may enroll in 1 of 44 programs that accept out-of-district students.

● Multiple providers, but funding not guaranteed.

● Districts must provide adequate training to teachers who teach in virtual schools, and confirm via annual report to state board.

● KSDE approves virtual schools/ programs.

**Kansas has 88 full-time virtual schools and programs approved by the Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE): 13 full-time virtual schools, 67 district/building programs, and eight service center programs that collectively cover all elementary through high school grade levels.**<sup>145</sup> All schools and programs are approved for full-time enrollment.

In SY 2012-13 the state counted 4,689 fully online K-12 students and an additional 1,220 taking supplemental and/or blended options.<sup>146</sup> Online elementary and middle schools in small, rural communities often serve fewer than 100 students, with some exceptions, e.g.—the Lawrence Virtual School, the largest virtual school in the state.

Any school or district may choose to provide a supplemental online course or contract with an existing virtual school or program for an online course, but they are not required to do so. During SY 2012-13, 44 of the 88 approved schools and programs accepted out-of-district students.

The state reported 4,689 full-time students and 1,220 part-time students in SY 2012-13, and a total of 5,497 FTEs. Part-time students were enrolled in either blended learning programs, advanced or credit recovery

<sup>145</sup> Virtual School/Program List 2012-2013; retrieved June 12, 2013, [http://www.ksde.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=0noLU\\_jupMk%3d&tabid=455&mid=6785](http://www.ksde.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=0noLU_jupMk%3d&tabid=455&mid=6785)

<sup>146</sup> Personal communication with Jessica Noble, education program consultant, KSDE; 2 July 2013. Figures for SY 2011-12 have been updated to reflect unpublished, audited data released subsequent to publication of *Keeping Pace 2012*. There are also 1,239 “ungraded” students enrolled in SY 2013-14 (a 6% increase over SY 2012-13), i.e., adult learners pursuing high school education under some of the same KSDE-authorized programs.

courses, or supplemental courses for homeschooled students. About 30% of virtual education students study at the elementary school level, with 25% at the middle school level and 45% at the high school level. The number of full-time students increased by 699 (15%) since SY 2011-12, while the number of part-time students decreased by 400 (25%); many shifted from part- to full-time status.

### ***State policies***

The KSDE has had a comprehensive set of policies for online schools and programs, including extensive reporting, since enacting its Virtual School Act, KSA 2009 Supp. 72-3711 through 72-3716 (2008).<sup>147</sup> The act increased supervision and regulation of all virtual schools by KSDE. All virtual schools/programs are audited annually. Extensive documentation is available on the KSDE website, including an explanation of Virtual Education Requirements.<sup>148</sup>

State law permits districts to make agreements for inter-district attendance for supplemental online courses.

### ***Funding***

The Virtual School Act altered the funding of online students such that all full-time virtual students are funded at 1.05 (105%) of base FTE. The base state aid per pupil in SY 2012-13 was \$3,838; full-time virtual students received \$4,030. A number of other factors may impact funding:

- Virtual students are eligible for two additional weightings: non-proficient at-risk and Advanced Placement, which can increase the amount funded by up to 25%. Schools with a higher proportion of at-risk-weighted students receive a larger amount per pupil.
- As students may attend both a traditional school and a virtual school, funding levels may be affected by whether these schools are in the same or different districts.
- Students who attend a district's virtual school as well as a local traditional school will be counted by the school at which they undertake the most coursework. If countable time is more than 50% virtual, the student will be counted as virtual for funding purposes.

State policies did not change significantly from 2009-12; see [www.kpk12.com/states](http://www.kpk12.com/states).

<sup>147</sup> Virtual School Act; retrieved June 12, 2013, [http://kansasstatutes.lesterama.org/Chapter\\_72/Article\\_37/](http://kansasstatutes.lesterama.org/Chapter_72/Article_37/)

<sup>148</sup> Kansas State Department of Education Virtual School and Program information; retrieved June 12, 2013, <http://www.ksde.org/Default.aspx?tabid=455>

# Kentucky

## ONLINE & BLENDED LEARNING STATE SNAPSHOT

The state closed its state virtual school, Kentucky Virtual Schools, in 2012, redirecting enrollments to district supplemental programs. JCPSeSchool is one of the larger district programs in the country, with **17,700 enrollments** in SY 2012-13.

Kentucky does not have fully online or fully blended schools.

### Availability of online learning options

SUPPLEMENTAL			FULLY ONLINE		
K-5 (ES)	6-8 (MS)	9-12 (HS)	K-5 (ES)	6-8 (MS)	9-12 (HS)
NONE	NONE	SOME	NONE	NONE	NONE

Availability of info:

- Great
- Good
- Fair**
- Poor
- Minimal

### Does this state have...

	Y	N
Any <b>FULLY BLENDED</b> schools?		●
Student choice at the school level?		●
Student choice at the course level?		●
SVS or another publicly funded option for private / homeschool students?		●
Prior public school attendance requirement for online schools?		●
Online caps by class, school, district, or statewide?		●
PD requirement for online teachers?		●
State approval process required for online providers?		●
State approval process required for online courses?		●
Online learning requirement for students?		●
End-of-course exams?	●	.....● <i>In 4 subjects.</i>

**Kentucky closed its state virtual school, Kentucky Virtual School (founded in 2000) in 2012; it last served 1,700 students in SY 2011-12.** Students are now directed to the Kentucky Virtual Campus for K-12, which guides students to three providers that offer supplemental and fully online options. The largest provider (and one of the largest in the country) is Jefferson County's JCPSeSchool; it served 17,700 course enrollments in grades 6-12 in a competency-based curriculum. It offers end-of-course exams five times a year. Barren Academy of Virtual and Expanded Learning (BAVEL) served 310 students and 862 total course enrollments in SY 2012-13; students must reside in a district that has a non-resident agreement with Barren County. Kentucky Educational Television had 532 supplemental course enrollments in SY 2012-13.

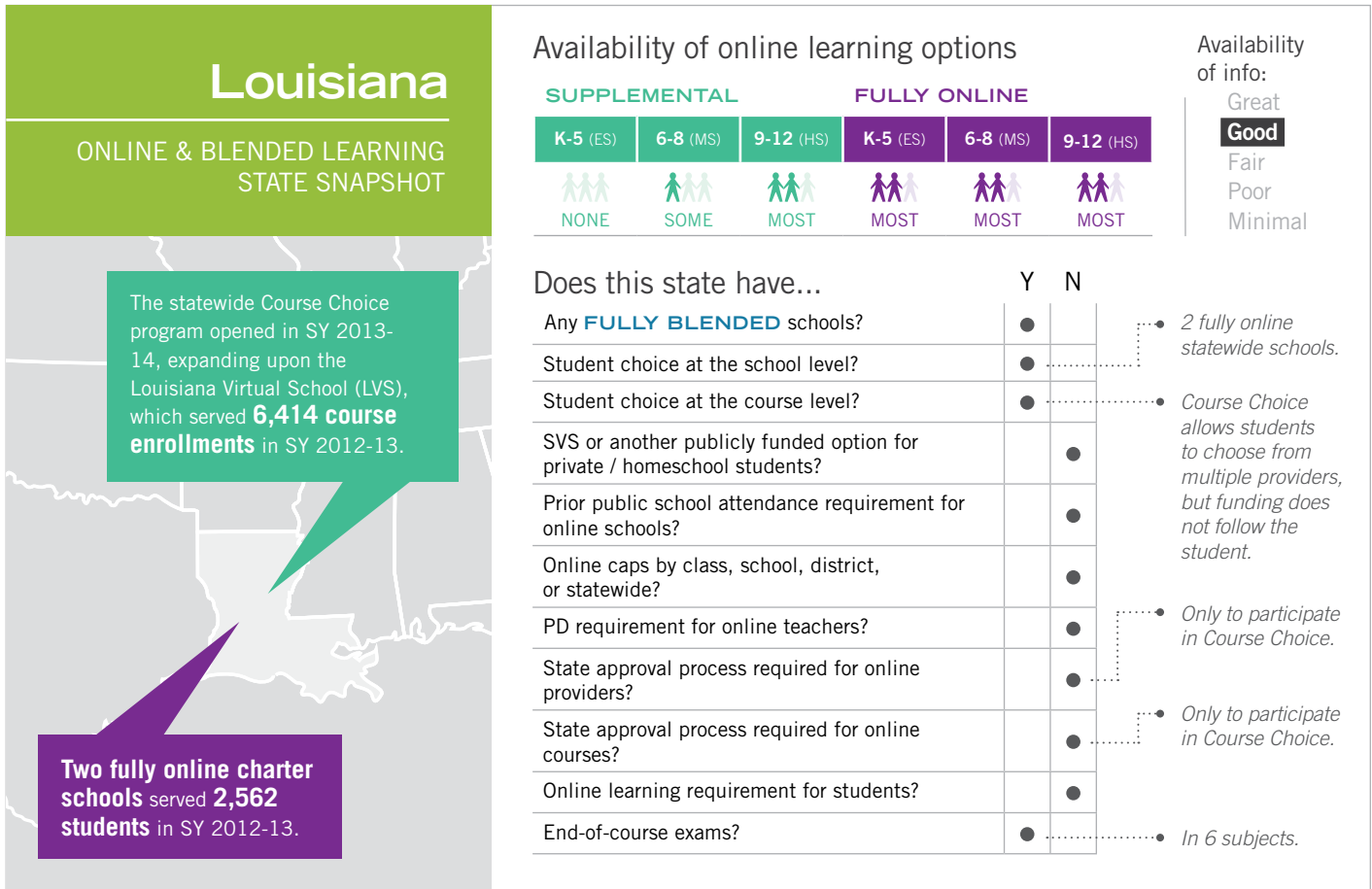
In 2012 the KDE began implementing blended learning pilot programs in volunteer schools and districts as a result of recommendations in Digital Learning 2020: A Policy Report for Kentucky's Digital Future.<sup>149</sup>

Kentucky does not have inter-district choice, charter schools, or charter school legislation. However, HB37 (2012)<sup>150</sup> allowed districts of innovation to include virtual education hours in overall instructional time and to establish a virtual school within the district for delivering alternative classes to meet high school graduation requirements. Four of 17 applicants were approved.<sup>151</sup>

<sup>149</sup> Digital Learning 2020: A Policy Report for Kentucky's Digital Future; retrieved August 13, 2013, <http://education.ky.gov/school/innov/Documents/KY%20Digital%20Learning%20FINAL.pdf>

<sup>150</sup> HB37 (2012); retrieved August 13, 2013, <http://www.lrc.ky.gov/record/12rs/HB37.htm>

<sup>151</sup> Districts of Innovation; retrieved August 15, 2013, <http://education.ky.gov/school/innov/Documents/DOI%20Final%20Recommendations%20and%20Summary.docx>



## Louisiana has two fully online charter schools, an increasing number of district programs, and a state-led Course Choice program.

Through SY 2012-13, Louisiana had a state virtual school, Louisiana Virtual School (LVS). In 2012 Act 2 (HB976) introduced the Course Choice program,<sup>152</sup> enacting sweeping reforms to public K-12 education. Under Course Choice, all students are permitted to select their own online and hybrid courses from 45 authorized private and out-of-district providers, including vendors such as Apex, Edgenuity, K12 Inc., and Princeton Review, and also Louisiana universities, community colleges, and school districts.<sup>153</sup> Early challenges to the program's legality, and particularly of its funding model, were raised, and following a Louisiana Supreme Court ruling mid-2013 that per-pupil allocation funds could not be diverted outside of public schools, funding shifted and is based on a state appropriation and grant funding (instead of tapping into the public education funding formula). As of September 2013, funding has been secured for at least 3,500 course enrollments for SY 2013-14, but future funding is uncertain.<sup>154</sup>

LVS opened in fall 2000 and ran through SY 2012-13 as a supplemental program for grades 6-12. As of September 2013 it no longer is offering courses, and students are guided to choose from authorized providers in the Course Choice catalog.<sup>155</sup> In SY 2012-13, students from 224 schools in 109 of 132 total districts, diocesan systems, and independent charter and nonpublic schools participated in LVS; there were 3,447 students in 3,937 seats (a mix of block, one-semester, and full-year course enrollments), equivalent to 6,414 one-semester enrollments. Enrollment decreased by 28% from SY 2011-12 due to reduced state funding.

<sup>152</sup> HB976 (Act 2); retrieved June 29, 2013, <http://www.legis.la.gov/Legis/BillInfo.aspx?i=220608>

<sup>153</sup> Louisiana Course Choice; retrieved June 28, 2013, <http://www.louisianacoursechoice.net/>

<sup>154</sup> Personal communication with Assistant Superintendent of Content, Louisiana Department of Education, August 7, 2013

<sup>155</sup> 2013-2014 Course Provider Catalog; retrieved August 7, 2013, [http://www.louisianabelieves.com/docs/course-choice/course-choice-catalog--k12-\(8-6-13\).pdf?sfvrsn=12](http://www.louisianabelieves.com/docs/course-choice/course-choice-catalog--k12-(8-6-13).pdf?sfvrsn=12)

Louisiana has two fully online charter schools, authorized by the Louisiana State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE): the Louisiana Connections Academy (LACA) and Louisiana Virtual Charter Academy (LAVCA). LACA enrollment is capped at 1,200 students. For SY 2013-14, LACA enrolled 350 students in grades K-5, 385 students in grades 6-8, and 465 students in grades 9-12, the same distribution as in SY 2012-13.<sup>156</sup> LAVCA, a K12 Inc. school, is available to Louisiana students in grades K-12; in SY 2012-13 there were 1,362 enrolled students, reflecting an annual increase of 9%.

District programs opened in Vermilion, St. Mary, St. Martin, Lafourche, and Rapides parishes in 2012, and in St. Tammany in 2013, providing both fully online and supplemental options to students. Typically, in-district students attend such schools for little or no tuition, and out-of-district students can enroll for tuition if there is space. Bossier, Caddo, and St. James parishes participate in Course Choice as providers.

### **State policies**

Act 2 (HB976, 2012) expanded options for students through three separate components:

- Course Choice provides Louisiana students with access to nearly 1,000 supplemental courses. Approved course providers offer core academic, Advanced Placement®, and career and technical education (CTE) courses, as well as test preparation courses and college credit opportunities.
- Charter school expansion: Act 2 amended the application process for charter schools and provided for a new type of BESE-certified chartering authority, “local charter authorizers,” which may be a state agency, a nonprofit corporation, a Louisiana public postsecondary education institution, or a nonprofit corporation established by the governing authority of a parish or municipality.<sup>157</sup>
- Recovery School District (RSD): The law allowed parents of students attending chronically failing schools to vote to have schools placed in the state-run RSD.

### **Quality assurance, teaching, and curriculum**

In 2013 the Department of Education published updated state standards for distance education in Bulletin 741 (Louisiana Handbook for School Administrators),<sup>158</sup> some sections are specific to Course Choice. Per Bulletin 132 (Louisiana Course Choice Program),<sup>159</sup> BESE authorizes the operation and eligibility of providers to participate in Course Choice for three years, and will monitor and evaluate each by student achievement metrics, e.g. success on exams, logical course pathways, and proven assessment methods for all courses. Providers must follow the International Association for K-12 Online Learning (iNACOL) *National Standards for Quality Online Courses*, *National Standards for Quality Online Teaching*, and *National Standards for Quality Online Programs*.<sup>160</sup>

### **Funding**

District and charter programs are funded under the Minimum Foundation Program, a formula adopted annually by BESE. Under the Course Choice program, students from public schools rated “C,” “D,” or “F” under the Louisiana School and District Accountability System are fully funded through a state grant; students from public schools rated “A” or “B” whose schools do not offer the desired course are also funded. Fifty percent of course costs are paid to the provider upon student enrollment and 50% paid upon timely completion (though providers may still receive 40% if a student eventually completes and receives credit for the course).

The state grant also funds a Counselor Assistance Center to support parents, students, school counselors, and course providers implementing the Course Choice program.

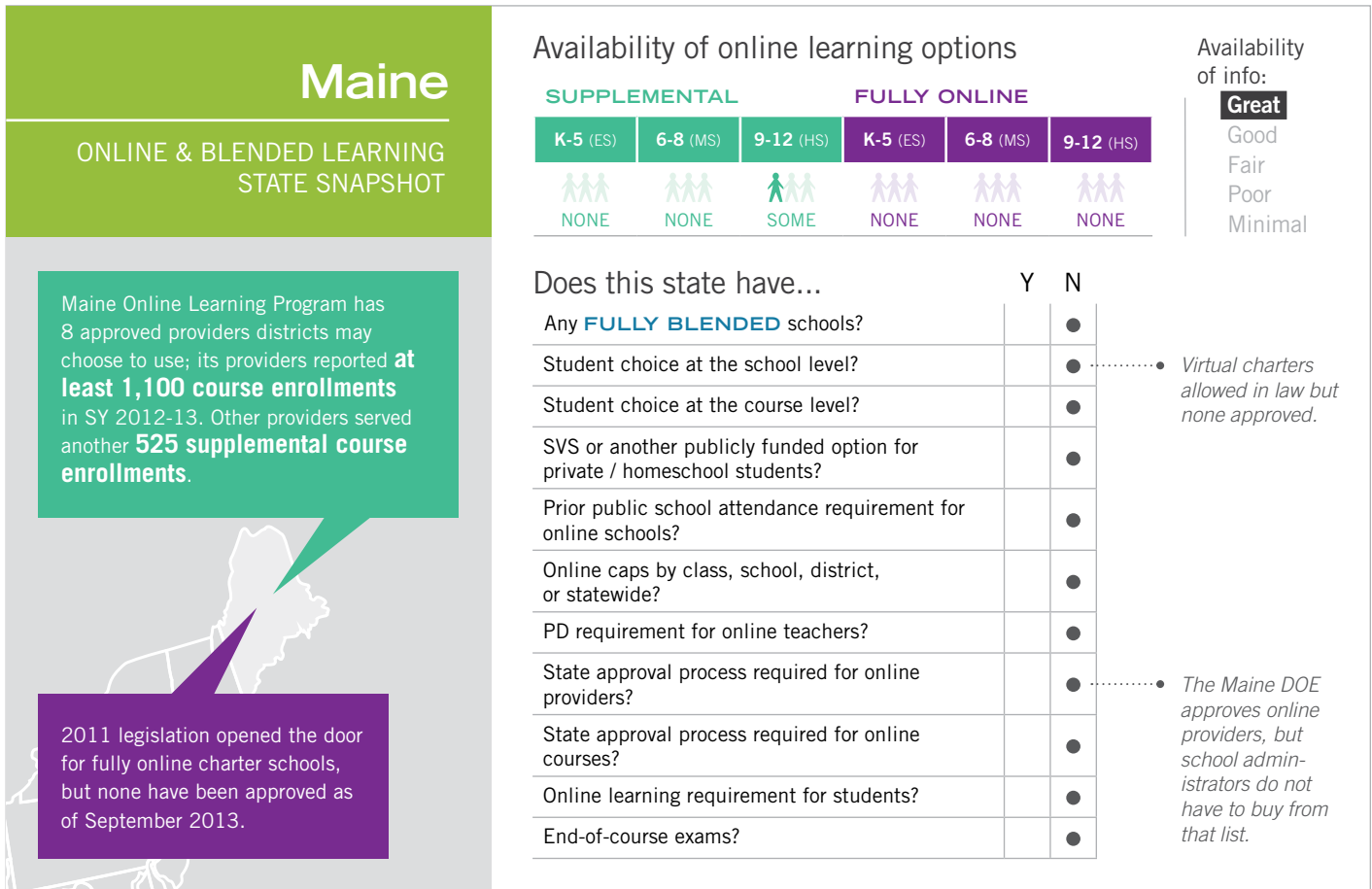
<sup>156</sup> Personal communication with Glenda Jones, Assistant Principal, LACA, June 28, 2013

<sup>157</sup> Bulletin 126 (Charter Schools); retrieved June 29, 2013, <http://www.doa.louisiana.gov/osr/lac/28v139/28v139.doc>

<sup>158</sup> Bulletin 741 (Louisiana Handbook For School Administrators); retrieved August 7, 2013, <http://www.doa.louisiana.gov/osr/lac/28v115/28v115.doc>

<sup>159</sup> Bulletin 132 (Louisiana Course Choice Program); retrieved June 28, 2013, <http://www.doa.louisiana.gov/osr/lac/28v151/28v151.doc>

<sup>160</sup> iNACOL National Quality Standards; retrieved August 8, 2013, <http://www.inacol.org/resources/publications/national-quality-standards/>



There are no statewide online programs in Maine, although some local options exist. **LD1553 (2011)**<sup>161</sup> allowed charter schools in Maine for the first time (limited to 10 charter schools over 10 years, five of which have already been approved, though none of which are virtual), and created a **State Charter School Commission as the only entity that can authorize virtual charter schools**. (Other types of authorizing entities are allowed in the law, and they can authorize charter schools that have an online component.) The commission rejected virtual charter proposals from Connections Academy (Maine Connections Academy) and K12 Inc. (Maine Virtual Academy) in January 2013,<sup>162</sup> and none has since been approved for SY 2013-14. In August 2013, the commission issued a request for proposals for charter school applications, including full-time virtual charter schools, due by December 2, 2013. Letters of intent that were due by September 2013 have been submitted by Maine Connections Academy and Maine Virtual Academy. New policies outlined in the application process include different requirements for virtual charter schools, including synchronous requirements for students and teachers.<sup>163</sup> Also, LD1553 had several quality assurance measures; details can be found at [www.kpk12.com/states/](http://www.kpk12.com/states/).

<sup>161</sup> LD1553; retrieved July 26, 2013, [http://www.mainelegislature.org/legis/bills/bills\\_125th/billtexts/SP049601.asp](http://www.mainelegislature.org/legis/bills/bills_125th/billtexts/SP049601.asp)

<sup>162</sup> Maine Charter School Commission January 8, 2013 meeting notes; retrieved August 6, 2013, <http://www.maine.gov/csc/meetings/01082013minutes.html>

<sup>163</sup> Maine Charter School Commission; retrieved August 6, 2013, <http://www.maine.gov/csc/index.html>



Existing online learning options in Maine include the following:<sup>164</sup>

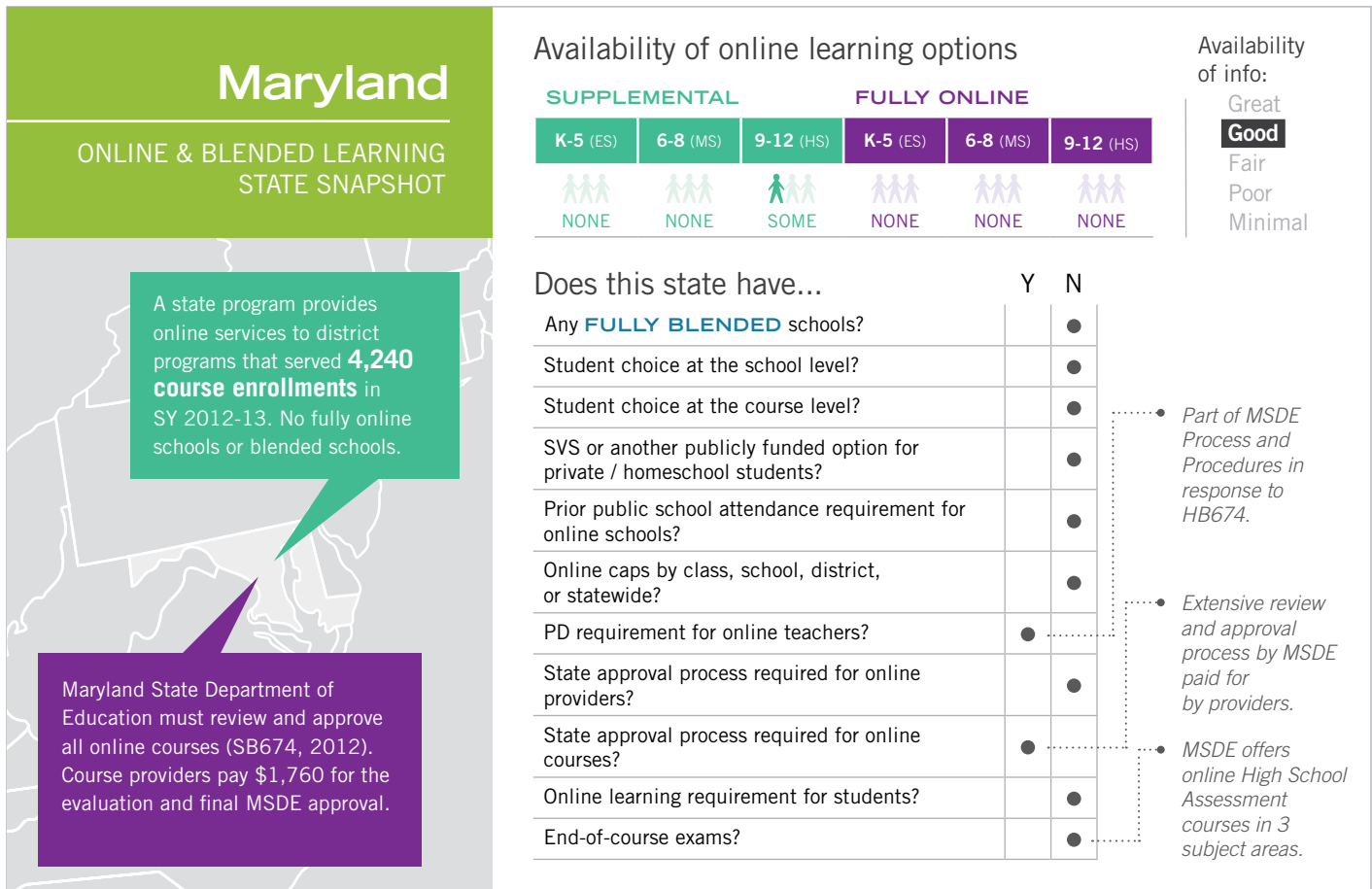
- The Maine Online Learning Program (MOLP) was created by SP0531 (2009)<sup>165</sup> to promote online learning programs and courses for K-12 students. MOLP is meeting its goals primarily by establishing an approved list of providers for districts. As of September 2013, the Maine Department of Education (MDE) has approved eight providers, who served at least 1,100 course enrollments in SY 2012-13.<sup>166</sup> According to the legislation, the MDE is required to report online data annually to the legislature, including a list of programs and courses offered, the number of participating students, student performance, expenditures, and the number of students unable to enroll because of space limitations. In SY 2012-13 three online providers were approved and submitted reports: K12 Inc., Apex Learning, and Connections Academy. Apex Learning reported 426 enrollments, K12 Inc. reported 52 students, and Connections reported no students participating in the online courses provided. No students were turned away by any provider due to space limitations.
- The VHS Collaborative (a MOLP-approved provider) has 45 member schools (17% of all middle and high schools) in Maine. It reported 681 course enrollments (96% of which are high school students) in SY 2012-13.
- AP4ALL provides access to Advanced Placement® courses for all students statewide; it is managed by the MDE. It reports 300 course enrollments in 21 courses for SY 2012-13.
- The University of Maine's Academ-e program offers 19 courses and has about 225 juniors and seniors from Maine high schools participating in university courses each semester in SY 2012-13. The program is funded through two sources: the University of Maine, which discounts tuition by 50%, and the legislature's Aspirations Program which covers the remaining 50%.
- The Maine Learning Technology Initiative has equipped all of the state's 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students and teachers with one-to-one access to wireless notebook computers and the Internet for the past 10 years. Currently, the program provides equipment and support to 54% of Maine's high schools. All middle and high schools are provided wireless notebook computers for faculty and administrators through the program, and all middle and high schools are provided a state-of-the-art wireless network infrastructure. The new computers include software that links parents to state Department of Labor services, including career centers.<sup>167</sup>
- School systems use IP-based video conferencing equipment that leverages the state's education broadband network, the Maine School and Library Network (MSLN). MSLN is managed by NetworkMaine, a joint venture by the MDE, Maine State Library, University of Maine, and Maine Office of Information Technology. MSLN provides broadband services to schools and public libraries at no cost.

<sup>164</sup> The descriptions of online programs in Maine are from "A Review of Online Learning Initiatives," Spring 2010; unpublished report provided by Maine Department of Education.

<sup>165</sup> Maine public law, Chapter 330; retrieved July 26, 2013, [http://www.mainelegislature.org/legis/bills/bills\\_124th/chappdfs/PUBLIC330.pdf](http://www.mainelegislature.org/legis/bills/bills_124th/chappdfs/PUBLIC330.pdf); further quotes are from this source

<sup>166</sup> Approved providers list; retrieved July 26, 2013, <http://www.maine.gov/education/technology/molp/approved.html>

<sup>167</sup> Maine Learning Technology Initiative; retrieved August 7, 2013, <http://www.maine.gov/mlte/>



**The state program, Maryland Virtual Learning Opportunities (MVLO), offers locally developed and licensed online courses approved by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) to all 24 local school systems.** Districts reported 4,240 course enrollments in these courses to the MSDE in SY 2012-13. Maryland does not have statewide fully online schools.

Maryland law<sup>168</sup> requires the MSDE to develop standards for teachers and other school employees for offering of online courses or services, to review courses and courseware to assure quality and alignment with content standards, and to purchase and develop Internet-based learning resources and courses for students and staff.

In response to SB674, in 2012 the MSDE released Process and Procedures for Offering Student Online Courses in Maryland Public Schools.<sup>169</sup> The document outlines school district responsibilities, minimum training requirements for teachers, an online course review process, the process for converting face-to-face courses to online courses, and MSDE responsibilities in the course approval process. Additional notable items from within the document include:

- Course facilitators must complete an online course as a student, participated in a three-hour professional development course covering how to teach online, and shadowed an experienced online teacher.
- An extensive set of additional guidance and checklists, some of which are required while others are recommended.

<sup>168</sup> Maryland SB674 (2012); retrieved June 12, 2013, <http://mgaleg.maryland.gov/webmgafirmMain.aspx?tab=subject3&ys=2012rs/billfile/sb0674.htm>

<sup>169</sup> MSDE Process and Procedures for Offering Student Online Courses in Maryland Public Schools; retrieved June 12, 2013, [http://mdk12online.org/docs/Process\\_and\\_Procedures.pdf](http://mdk12online.org/docs/Process_and_Procedures.pdf)

The Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR)<sup>170</sup> defines credit-bearing online courses as courses in which “80% or more of instruction is conducted online.” Courses that provide up to 80% of the instruction online do not have any requirements other than those that apply to all courses in Maryland. COMAR<sup>171</sup> also requires the MSDE to create online course approval processes as outlined in the Process and Procedures document; it allows the MSDE to charge a vendor fee of \$1,400 per course evaluation. If an approved contractor reviews a course, MSDE may charge the vendor a \$360 course fee for the final approval process. Additional online course evaluation and approval responsibilities are defined in SB461 (2013),<sup>172</sup> which requires the MSDE course evaluation process meet the accessibility needs of students with disabilities.

HB745<sup>173</sup> (2012) created the Maryland Advisory Council for Virtual Learning, which reports annual recommendations to the state superintendent regarding digital learning issues. HB532 (2013)<sup>174</sup> outlines specific areas on which the council must report and make recommendations by December 2013, including:

- “the human, technological, financial, and regulatory resources needed to support a requirement that a student complete a virtual course or a course that blends digital content with traditional classroom instruction to graduate from high school;
- the feasibility of establishing virtual schools in the State;
- the experiences of other states in establishing virtual and blended schools; and
- any issues relating to virtual learning quality standards and accessibility.”

HB1362 (2010) authorized school districts to establish a virtual public school subject to the approval of MSDE.<sup>175</sup> The legislation did not state whether a public school student has the choice of enrolling in online courses outside the resident school district. No funding was appropriated to support the activities of HB1362, and no new district programs had been initiated under this law as of September 2013. The law also did not change an existing provision of a charter school law that requires that students be “physically present on school premises.”<sup>176</sup> Without funding support, and with the cost associated with the online course review and approval process, establishment of virtual charter schools by local school districts is not likely for SY 2013-14.

### **Online programs**

MVLO was established by HB1197 (2002).<sup>177</sup> Maryland Virtual School (MVS) is one of two components of MVLO directed by the MSDE. MVS maintains a database for approved online student courses (locally developed or offered by vendors), courses currently under review by vendors, and courses denied. With approval from local school systems, students may enroll in online courses. Course fees are paid either by the school district or the student’s family. Fees range from \$25 per student per course for districts that want to use a course the MSDE owns or leases, to \$800 for a course provided by a vendor with an online instructor. MVLO also offers tuition-free High School Assessment online courses to students in three subject areas.

MVS provides many services associated with state virtual schools. It reviews and approves the online courses local school systems can offer; publishes a catalog and technical requirements for courses; and provides approved vendor contact information. Due to MSDE budget and staff constraints, the online course enrollment process was delegated to districts in 2009. Some of the districts enrolling students and using MVS online services include Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Frederick, Howard, Montgomery, Prince George’s, and Washington County Public Schools. Districts reported 4,240 course enrollments in SY 2012-13.

<sup>170</sup> Code of Maryland Regulations 13A.04.15.02; retrieved July 18, 2013, <http://www.dsd.state.md.us/comar/getfile.aspx?file=13a.04.15.02.htm>

<sup>171</sup> Code of Maryland Regulations 13A.04.15.04; retrieved July 18, 2013, <http://www.dsd.state.md.us/comar/getfile.aspx?file=13a.04.15.04.htm>

<sup>172</sup> SB461 (2013); retrieved June 12, 2013, <http://mgaleg.maryland.gov/2013RS/bills/sb/sb0461T.pdf>

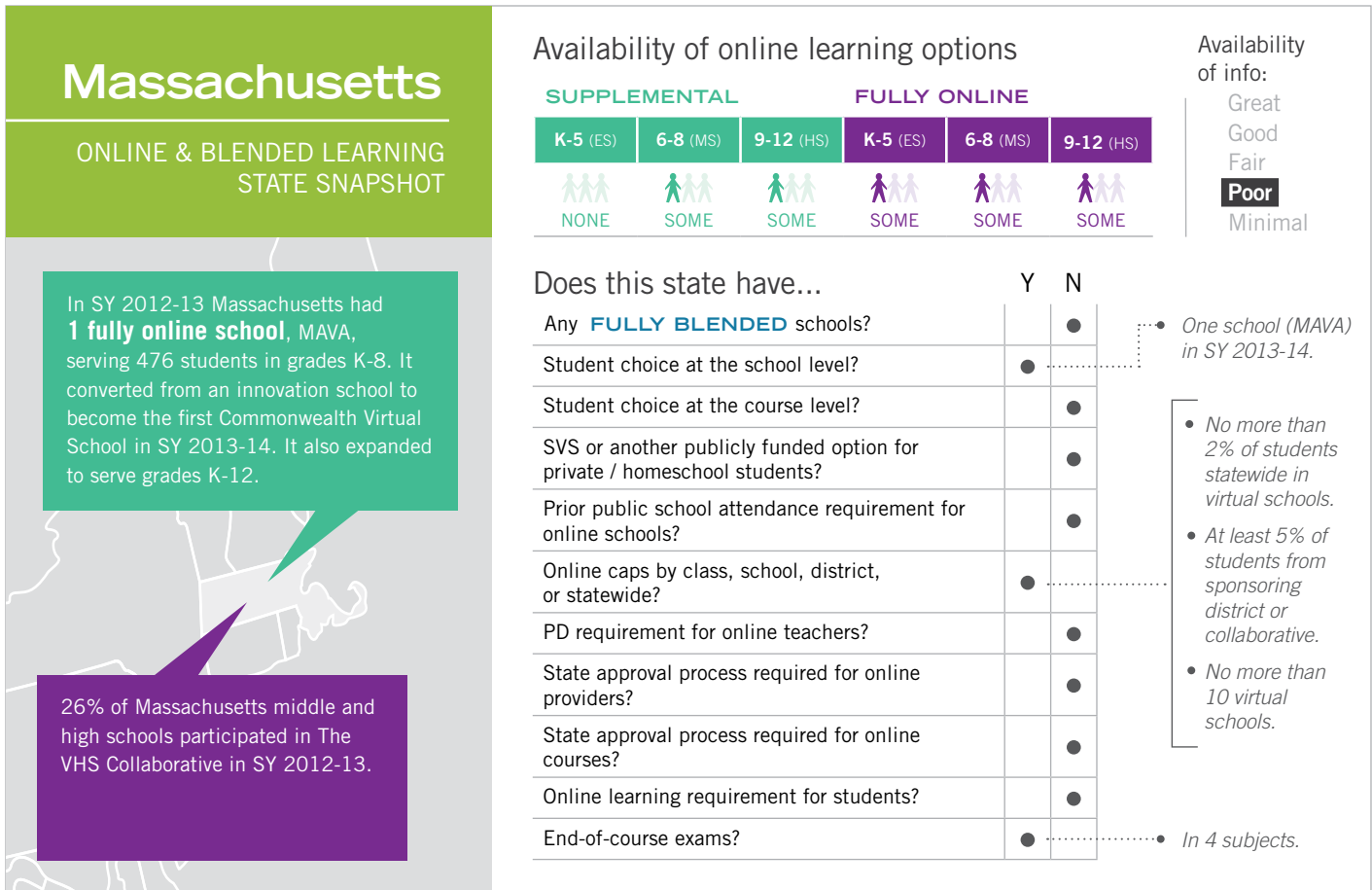
<sup>173</sup> HB745 (2012); retrieved July 28, 2012, <http://mgaleg.maryland.gov/webmga/frmMain.aspx?tab=subject3&ys=2012rs/billfile/hb0745.htm>

<sup>174</sup> Department of Legislative Services, Fiscal & Policy Note; retrieved June 11, 2013, [http://mgaleg.maryland.gov/2013RS/fnotes/bil\\_0002/hb0532.pdf](http://mgaleg.maryland.gov/2013RS/fnotes/bil_0002/hb0532.pdf)

<sup>175</sup> HB1362 (2010); retrieved June 12, 2013, <http://mgaleg.maryland.gov/webmga/frmMain.aspx?tab=subject3&ys=2010rs/billfile/hb1362.htm> and enacted in state statute § 7-1002, retrieved July 22, 2013, <http://mgaleg.maryland.gov/webmga/frmStatutesText.aspx?pid=subject5&ys=2013RS&article=ged&section=7-1002&ext=html&session=2013RS>

<sup>176</sup> Section § 9-102; retrieved June 22, 2013, [http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/programs/charter\\_schools/docs/md\\_charter\\_school\\_laws](http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/programs/charter_schools/docs/md_charter_school_laws)

<sup>177</sup> HB1197 (2002); retrieved June 12, 2013, <http://mgaleg.maryland.gov/webmga/frmMain.aspx?ys=2002rs%2fbillfile%2fhb1197.htm>



**Massachusetts has one fully online school and a few supplemental options for students.** Massachusetts Virtual Academy at Greenfield (MAVA) served 476 students in grades K-8 in SY 2012-13, and it is expanding to serve students in grades 9-12 in SY 2013-14. No other virtual schools are approved for SY 2013-14. In SY 2013-14, 26% of Massachusetts schools participated in The VHS Collaborative (VHS), serving 5,650 course enrollments. Although this is a 9% decrease from SY 2011-12, it is the highest number of VHS enrollments for any state (VHS is located in Massachusetts). In July 2013 the state closed MassONE, a state program to provide tools and resources to educators. In 2012 “An Act Establishing Commonwealth Virtual Schools” (H4274, 2012) was approved by the legislature, providing a new framework for online and supplemental K-12 educational opportunities for students as of January 2013.

### State policies

“An Act Establishing Commonwealth Virtual Schools” (Chapter 379) was signed into law in 2013;<sup>178</sup> it defines “Commonwealth virtual school” as a public school, operated by a board of trustees whose teachers primarily teach from a remote location using the Internet or other computer-based methods and whose students are not required to be located at the physical premises of the school. Chapter 379 states that:<sup>179</sup>

- Applicants approved by the board are awarded a certificate to operate a Commonwealth of Massachusetts Virtual School (CMVS or Commonwealth virtual school) for three to five years.

<sup>178</sup> Chapter 379 (2013); retrieved August 1, 2013, <https://malegislature.gov/Laws/SessionLaws/Acts/2012/Chapter379>

<sup>179</sup> Virtual Schools: Report on New Legislation and Proposed Delegation of Authority to Commissioner; retrieved August 8, 2013, <http://www.doe.mass.edu/boe/docs/2013-01/item4.html>

- The board was required to create a request for proposals (RFP) process by October 1, 2013, to establish new CMVS.<sup>180</sup>
- A single school district, two or more school districts, an education collaborative, an institution of higher education, a non-profit entity, two or more certified teachers, or parents are eligible to submit proposals for a CMVS. Private and parochial schools and for-profit entities are not eligible.
- The board may authorize no more than three CMVS for the 2013-16 school years.
- No more than 2% (roughly 19,000) of students enrolled in public schools statewide may be enrolled full time in virtual schools, and no more than 10 CMVS may operate at one time.
- A CMVS established by one or more districts or a collaborative must enroll at least 5% of its students from the sponsoring district(s) or collaborative.
- A school committee may vote to restrict enrollment of its students in CMVS if its total virtual school enrollment exceeds 1% of the district's student population.
- MAVAs would automatically be awarded a certificate to operate a CMVS upon submission of a timely application (process was completed in June 2013 and a certificate awarded).
- The cost for students attending a CMVS is set at the "school choice tuition amount" (up to \$5,000), though the board may approve alternate amounts within limits.
- Each CMVS shall submit an annual report and obtain an annual independent financial audit; the department shall publish periodic reports on CMVS covering academic performance and demographic data, and shall report to the legislature on implementation and impact of the new law.
- The department shall develop and publish a list of online courses aligned with current state academic standards that school districts may use.

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE) Office of Digital Learning provides an annual "Digital Learning in Massachusetts" report, which focuses primarily on the use of classroom-based tools for blended learning.<sup>181</sup>

### ***Online programs***

MAVA was originally established in 2010 as a Virtual Innovation School (603 CMR 48.05),<sup>182</sup> a non-charter district school with more autonomy than a traditional public school and the state's first fully online school. It served 476 K-8 students in SY 2012-13 and was capped at 500 students. With Chapter 39, MAVAs were required to apply to become a CMVS, and its application as the Greenfield Virtual School was approved in July 2013. The school now serves grades K-12 and can accommodate 750 students in SY 2013-14, 250 of whom may be high school students. Enrollment may increase to 1,000 students in SY 2014-15, and to 1,250 for SY 2015-16.<sup>183</sup> While future CMVS will require that 5% of students be local, MAVAs have been grandfathered in at 2%. MAVAs terms stipulate a per-pupil tuition rate of \$6,700. A CMVS approval process for new schools was not created prior to SY 2013-14, so no other schools have yet been approved.

<sup>180</sup> Office of Digital Learning Provider Approval Process; retrieved August 16, 2013 <http://www.doe.mass.edu/odl/cmvs/app-process.html>

<sup>181</sup> Annual Reports—Digital Learning in Massachusetts; retrieved August 1, 2013, <http://www.doe.mass.edu/odl/etreport/2012.pdf>

<sup>182</sup> Innovation Schools Statute: Mass. General Laws Chapter 71, Section 92 (as added by Section 8 of Chapter 12 of the Acts of 2010); retrieved August 8, 2013, [http://www.doe.mass.edu/boe/docs/0710/item2\\_statute.pdf](http://www.doe.mass.edu/boe/docs/0710/item2_statute.pdf)

<sup>183</sup> The Massachusetts Virtual Academy at Greenfield / Greenfield Virtual School; retrieved August 8, 2013, <http://gcvs.org/>

## Michigan

ONLINE & BLENDED LEARNING  
STATE SNAPSHOT

### Availability of online learning options

SUPPLEMENTAL			FULLY ONLINE		
K-5 (ES)	6-8 (MS)	9-12 (HS)	K-5 (ES)	6-8 (MS)	9-12 (HS)
NONE	SOME	MOST	SOME	SOME	MOST

Availability of info:  
Great  
 Good  
 Fair  
 Poor  
 Minimal

Michigan Virtual School, the state virtual school, served **20,812 course enrollments** in SY 2012-13.

Public Act 60 (2013) allows students in grades 5-12 to take up to 2 online courses without district approval.

The first **2 fully online statewide schools** opened in SY 2012-13. 7 are operating in SY 2013-14.

### Does this state have...

	Y	N	
Any <b>FULLY BLENDED</b> schools?	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	At least 6.
Student choice at the school level?	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Student choice at the course level?	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Students in grades 5-12 may take up to 2 online courses without district approval.
SVS or another publicly funded option for private / homeschool students?	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	
Prior public school attendance requirement for online schools?	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	SB619 (2012) limited the number of cyber charters and their enrollments.
Online caps by class, school, district, or statewide?	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
PD requirement for online teachers?	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	
State approval process required for online providers?	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	
State approval process required for online courses?	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Online course or learning experience to graduate high school.
Online learning requirement for students?	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
End-of-course exams?	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	

### Michigan has extensive online and blended learning activity, including:

- Seven online charter schools, two of which operated in SY 2012-13, and five of which are newly opened in SY 2013-14.
- At least seven blended schools including three Nexus Academy schools, MySchool@Kent operated by Kent Intermediate School District, and two FlexTech blended high schools.
- Michigan Virtual School (MVS) is one of the larger state virtual schools, with 20,812 course enrollments in SY 2012-13, a 5% increase over SY 2011-12.
- A large consortium program, GenNET, operated by the Genesee ISD with over 400 districts participating and processing more than 22,749 course enrollments supplied by multiple providers in SY 2012-13.
- An unknown number of single-district programs.

### State policies

SB619 (2012)<sup>184</sup> raised the cap on the number of fully online schools, referred to as cyber charter schools. The Michigan Department of Education identified 7,850 fully online students in SY 2012-13.

<sup>184</sup> SB619 (2012); retrieved July 18, 2013, <http://www.legislature.mi.gov/documents/2011-2012/publicact/pdf/2012-PA-0129.pdf>

Public Act 60 (2013) expands student choice by giving students the opportunity to take two funded online courses without resident district approval, and increases funding for Michigan Virtual University (MVU) to support a variety of digital learning initiatives. MVU is a private nonprofit entity funded by annual legislative appropriations, course tuition, and private grants, and operates MVS and the Michigan Virtual Learning Research Institute.

Public Act 60 does the following:

- Allows students in grades 5-12, with parental consent, to take up to two online courses per academic term, semester, or trimester without district approval beginning in SY 2013-14.
- Allows a student to choose online courses from a statewide catalog or those offered by the student's resident district. The statewide catalog will be developed and maintained by MVU for SY 2013-14; it will include online courses from any district that elects to accept applications for enrollment from nonresident students, as well as course titles from MVS.
- Requires a district to pay for the online course(s) chosen from the state catalog from its foundation allowance, and "pay 80% of the cost of the online course upon enrollment and 20% upon completion as determined by the district." Based on the state's minimum foundation allowance<sup>185</sup> of \$7,076 for SY 2013-14, districts cannot pay more than \$589 (one-twelfth of the foundation amount) for a semester length course, and \$393 (one-eighteenth of the foundation amount) for a trimester course; however, students may have to pay some of the tuition if a course exceeds that amount.
- Requires districts accepting nonresident enrollments for online courses to provide MVU with the syllabus for the statewide catalog, list the courses offered by the district on a publicly accessible website, and to offer the course(s) on an open entry and exit method, or aligned to a semester, trimester, or accelerated academic term format.
- Allows a district to deny a student enrollment in an online course if the pupil has previously gained the credits for the course, the online course is non-credit, the online course is inconsistent with the remaining graduation requirements of the student, the student does not possess the prerequisite knowledge and skills to be successful in the online course or has failed in previous online coursework in the same subject, or the online course is of insufficient quality or rigor. A student denied enrollment in an online course may appeal to the superintendent of the student's resident intermediate district.

The first two fully online schools opened in SY 2012-13: Michigan Connections Academy served 809 enrollments, and Michigan Virtual Charter Academy served 932 students. SB619 (2012)<sup>186</sup> went into effect in March 2013 and did the following:

- Increased the number of cyber charter schools that can be authorized. Statewide authorizing bodies<sup>187</sup> are limited to authorizing a total of five cyber charters in 2013, 10 in 2014, and 15 after 2014.
- Allowed cyber schools to enroll students from anywhere in the state, to enroll students in any grade level (K-12), and to act as a course provider to any school or district.
- Increased the cap on each cyber school's enrollments to 2,500 students during the first year of operation, 5,000 the second year, and 10,000 students in the third and subsequent years. The law limited total statewide cyber school enrollment to 2% of Michigan's SY 2011-12 public school enrollment (about 30,000 students).
- Removed the requirement that students previously be enrolled in public school and dropped the requirement that cyber schools enroll a matching percentage of dropouts to new students.

<sup>185</sup> Based on the state's minimum district foundation allowance of \$7,076 for SY 2013-14.

<sup>186</sup> Public Act 60 (2013); retrieved July 9, 2013, <http://legislature.mi.gov/documents/2013-2014/publicact/pdf/2013-PA-0060.pdf>

<sup>187</sup> In Michigan the state public universities, Bay Mills Community College (a tribal college), and the Education Achievement System (EAS) may authorize charter schools statewide.

- Allowed traditional school districts, intermediate school districts, and community colleges (within the college's regional boundaries) to each authorize one "school of excellence that is a cyber school" to operate statewide.

### ***Online programs***

Five new cyber charter schools are operating in SY 2013-14: Great Lakes Cyber School serves grades 9-12 with Connections Education curriculum, and it is chartered by Central Michigan University; LifeTech Academy serves grades 9-12 and is chartered by Eaton Rapids Public Schools; Michigan Great Lakes Virtual Academy serves grades K-12 with curriculum and educational services provided by K-12 Inc., it is chartered by Manistee Area Public Schools; iCademy serves grades K-12 and is chartered by Lake Superior State University; and Mosaica Online Academy of Michigan serves grades K-12 and is chartered by the Baldwin School District.

Michigan has several blended learning programs, including three Nexus Academy schools in Lansing, Grand Rapids, and Royal Oak. Kent ISD opened MySchool@Kent in 2012, a blended learning program that accepts homeschooled and private school students in addition to those enrolled in Kent ISD public schools. MySchool@Kent served over 300 students in SY 2012-13. Livingston County has two FlexTech blended high schools.

MVU received a \$5 million increase in its state appropriation to expand its leadership role in four key areas: 1) provide an extensive professional development program to at least 500 educational personnel on the effective integration of digital learning into curricula and instruction; 2) research and establish an Internet-based platform and facilitate a user network that assists educators in using the platform; 3) create and maintain an statewide online course catalog; and 4) support research and quality-related functions as part of its Michigan Virtual Learning Research Institute.

In 2013, the Michigan Virtual Learning Research Institute and iNACOL launched the Research Clearinghouse for K-12 Blended and Online Learning (<http://k12onlineresearch.org>), to house the latest research examining breakthrough models and trends in blended and online learning.

In 2008, Michigan's superintendent of public instruction implemented a process that allowed school districts to seek a waiver of the state's pupil accounting rules to allow eligible full-time students to take all of their coursework online. The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) reported that 196 local school districts, ISDs, or public school academies were approved to operate a seat-time waiver for SY 2012-13, and that 7,850 students were taking 100% of their classes online, a 197% increase from the previous year.<sup>188</sup> This does not include enrollments in the online charter schools noted above.

In 2006, the state legislature was the first in the nation to pass a requirement that Michigan students have an "online learning experience" before graduating.<sup>189</sup> Details on the requirement are available at [www.kpk12.com/states/](http://www.kpk12.com/states/).

MVU is working with Kent State University to pilot a MOOC for K-12 students during SY 2013-14.

<sup>188</sup> MDE 2012-13 Seat Time Waiver Legislative Report; retrieved July 30, 2013, [http://www.techplan.org/downloads/all\\_user\\_files/2012-2013\\_seat\\_time\\_waiver\\_report\\_20130403\\_115350\\_1.pdf](http://www.techplan.org/downloads/all_user_files/2012-2013_seat_time_waiver_report_20130403_115350_1.pdf). The report was required by Public Act 63, 2011, Sec. 903; retrieved July 16, 2013, <http://www.legislature.mi.gov/documents/2011-2012/publicact/pdf/2011-PA-0063.pdf>

<sup>189</sup> Public Act 123; retrieved July 17, 2013, [http://www.michigan.gov/documents/PA\\_123\\_and\\_124\\_159920\\_7.pdf](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/PA_123_and_124_159920_7.pdf)



# Minnesota

## ONLINE & BLENDED LEARNING STATE SNAPSHOT

Minnesota has online charter schools, multi-district programs, single-district programs, and intermediate districts and consortia of schools that **served 14,703 students** in SY 2012-13.

Minnesota was among the first states to allow students to choose a single online course from among multiple providers and allow the funding to follow the student. It remains one of the few states to do so.

### Availability of online learning options

SUPPLEMENTAL			FULLY ONLINE		
K-5 (ES)	6-8 (MS)	9-12 (HS)	K-5 (ES)	6-8 (MS)	9-12 (HS)
SOME	ALL	ALL	ALL	ALL	ALL

Availability of info:

- Great**
- Good
- Fair
- Poor
- Minimal

### Does this state have...

	Y	N	
Any <b>FULLY BLENDED</b> schools?	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	At least 2.
Student choice at the school level?	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Student choice at the course level?	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
SVS or another publicly funded option for private / homeschool students?	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	40 students per course / program.
Prior public school attendance requirement for online schools?	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	
Online caps by class, school, district, or statewide?	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Starting in 2014, all MN teacher prep and PD programs must address digital skills.
PD requirement for online teachers?	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	
State approval process required for online providers?	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Multi-district programs, or where >50% of instruction is online.
State approval process required for online courses?	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	
Online learning requirement for students?	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	
End-of-course exams?	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	

### Minnesota has online charter schools, multi-district programs, single-district programs, and intermediate districts and consortia of schools.

There were 83,608 course enrollments in full- and part-time programs reporting to the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) in SY 2012-13, an annual increase of 9%.<sup>190</sup> Minnesota was among the first states to allow students to choose a single online course from among multiple providers and remains one of the few states to do so; these students are counted among the part-time course enrollments above.

The Omnibus K-12 Education Act of 2003 (amended in 2010) set forth a number of policies affecting online education. The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) was subsequently required by SF1528 (2012) to review, approve, and publish a list of all fully online schools, as well as those schools who enrolled online students on a part-time basis from a nonresident district. A full course listing must be published as well. Any school that delivered 50% or more of a student's instruction online was required to become an approved MDE provider. Only approved online learning (OLL) providers generate funding.<sup>191</sup>

The state-level approval process now covers most online learning programs; district-level programs providing only supplemental courses are encouraged to apply for state approval. The MDE online learning provider application was updated in 2013. Providers now submit a letter of intent, apply to the MDE, host a site visit, and follow up with any concerns or outstanding questions. The application includes assurances that all

<sup>190</sup> Personal communication with Deborah Proctor, Minnesota Department of Education, August, 2013. All data are self-reported and unaudited by the state.

<sup>191</sup> MDE Online Learning Providers; retrieved July 31, 2103, <http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/StuSuc/EnrollChoice/Online/index.html>

courses meet state standards and are taught by Minnesota-licensed teachers. The department reserves the right to investigate complaints of all its approved providers at any time.

In August 2012, all approved providers were made aware of their required participation in a three-year quality-review process that includes a reflective self-study report for renewal of department approval.<sup>192</sup> MDE began its review of 12 (44%) of its most senior approved-provider programs in August 2013, and will post outcomes on its website in fall 2013.

Students may choose to enroll in online learning programs in one of the following ways:<sup>193</sup>

- Participate in any approved OLL program. No school district or charter school may prohibit a student from participating in online learning.
- Enroll full time in a comprehensive OLL program through open enrollment, charter school enrollment, or through an agreement between boards.
- Enroll in supplemental OLL courses during a single school year to a maximum of 50% of the student's full schedule of courses per term at the enrolling district.
- Enroll in supplemental courses above 50% of the student's course schedule if the enrolling district grants permission or if an agreement is made between schools for instructional services.
- Students may enroll in more than their 1.0 average daily membership for a fee.

### **Online and blended programs**

As of August 2013, there were 27 department-approved online learning public school providers (as opposed to 30 in 2013), a mix of consortia, intermediate districts, charter school programs, and multidistrict programs serving students statewide (see Table 7).<sup>194</sup>

	Supplemental (part-time)	Fully online	Total
<b>Unique students 2012-13</b>	5,507	9,196	14,703
% Change	-3%	+13%	+6%
Course enrollments 2012-13	9,933	73,675	83,608
% Change	+6%	+9%	+9%
<b>Course completions 2012-13</b>	7,955	47,836	55,791
% Change	+1%	0%	0%
Completion percentage 2011-12	84%	71%	73%
Completion percentage 2012-13	80%	65%	67%

**Table 7: Minnesota course enrollment data provided by Minnesota Department of Education**

Two new blended charter schools, West Side Summit for grades K-4 and Venture Academy for grades K-6, opened in fall 2013.<sup>195</sup>

A searchable database of courses and programs offered by MDE-approved providers is available via the Minnesota Learning Commons (MnLC), a joint project of the University of Minnesota, Minnesota State Colleges and Universities, and the MDE. This state program provides an educational portal for consumer access to credit- and non-credit courses available through K-20 public institutions, highlighting online programs, courses, tools, and resources.<sup>196</sup> MnLC funding is provided through grants and the budgets of member institutions.

<sup>192</sup> Personal communication with Deborah Proctor, Minnesota Department of Education, July 31, 2013

<sup>193</sup> Minnesota Learning Commons Fast Facts; retrieved July 1, 2013, <http://www.iseek.org/education/onlineenroll.html>

<sup>194</sup> Minnesota Approved Online Learning (OLL) Providers; retrieved July 1, 2013, [http://education.state.mn.us/mdeprod/idcplg?IdcService=GET\\_FILE&dDocName=047044&RevisionSelectionMethod=latestReleased&Rendition=primary](http://education.state.mn.us/mdeprod/idcplg?IdcService=GET_FILE&dDocName=047044&RevisionSelectionMethod=latestReleased&Rendition=primary)

<sup>195</sup> As of August 2013, MDE was unaware of applications from these schools to operate.

<sup>196</sup> Minnesota Learning Commons; retrieved July 1, 2013, <http://mnlearningcommons.org>

### ***State policies***

SF1528 (2012) added significant detail to previous online learning legislation.<sup>197</sup> Revised language updated MS124D.095 (2010), MS122A.18 (2010), and 122A.60 (2010) and included the following provisions:

- All college and university teacher-preparation programs were required to include the “knowledge and skills teacher candidates need to deliver digital and blended learning and curriculum and engage students with technology,” effective for candidates entering a teacher-preparation program after June 30, 2014.
- Staff development activities were required to include the ability to “accommodate the delivery of digital and blended learning and curriculum and engage students with technology.”
- When serving only their own enrolled students, districts or other public entities would be automatically authorized to offer supplemental “digital learning;” they would only need to seek MDE approval if offering full-time online learning, or supplemental online courses to students outside of their district, school, or charter.
- A procedure for handling complaints against online learning providers was detailed.
- The Online Learning Advisory Council (OLAC)—expiring June 30, 2013—was charged with overseeing the development of a catalog of digital learning content aligned to Minnesota academic standards before its term ended. It was also charged with providing an accompanying report on standards, feedback, maintenance, and incorporating student performance data; this is now available on the department web site.<sup>198</sup>
- An initial appropriation of \$104,000 was provided to “the Department of Education for additional support and staffing related to digital learning and online learning.” The amount will be increased in 2014 and later by \$26,000 each year.

OLAC was charged with making biannual recommendations to the education commissioner; its 2010-2013 annual reports and background reports for the new Online and Digital Learning Council are available on the council web site.<sup>199</sup> The newly appointed council will serve through June 2016.

Further details about funding, accountability, and quality assurance can be found at [www.kpk12.com/states/](http://www.kpk12.com/states/).

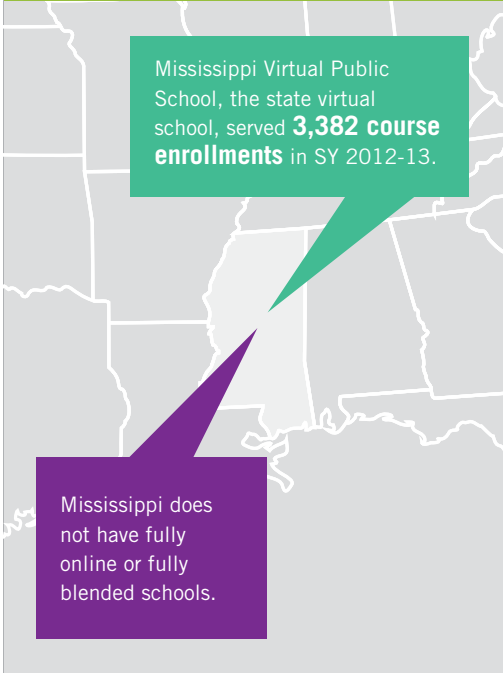
<sup>197</sup> SF1528 (2012); retrieved July 1, 2013, <https://www.revisor.mn.gov/bin/bldbill.php?bill=S1528.3.html&session=Is87>

<sup>198</sup> Minnesota Digital Curriculum Referral Catalog: Fiscal Year 2013 Report To the Legislature; retrieved August 8, 2013, <http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/mdeprod/groups/educ/documents/basic/051317.pdf>

<sup>199</sup> MN Online Learning Advisory Council; retrieved August 8, 2013, <https://sites.google.com/site/mnolac/documents>

## Mississippi

ONLINE & BLENDED LEARNING  
STATE SNAPSHOT



### Availability of online learning options

SUPPLEMENTAL			FULLY ONLINE		
K-5 (ES)	6-8 (MS)	9-12 (HS)	K-5 (ES)	6-8 (MS)	9-12 (HS)
NONE	NONE	SOME	NONE	NONE	NONE

Availability of info: Good  
Fair  
Poor  
Minimal

Does this state have...	Y	N
Any <b>FULLY BLENDED</b> schools?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Student choice at the school level?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Student choice at the course level?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
SVS or another publicly funded option for private / homeschool students?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Prior public school attendance requirement for online schools?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Online caps by class, school, district, or statewide?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
PD requirement for online teachers?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
State approval process required for online providers?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
State approval process required for online courses?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Online learning requirement for students?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
End-of-course exams?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

.....● In 4 subjects.

**The Mississippi Virtual Public School (MVPS), established by legislation in 2006,<sup>200</sup> is the only major online program in the state.** MVPS began with \$1.8 million in funding in 2009-10, but that has dropped to \$500,000 per year in the previous two years. MVPS reported 3,121 course enrollments in SY 2012-13, an 8% decrease from SY 2011-12. MVPS serves students in grades 9-12, giving preference to juniors and seniors. All students are required to gain approval from their local school district; and homeschooled students must pay for their courses. HB1056 (2010) authorized the “State Board of Education [SBE] to select private providers ... to administer, manage, or operate virtual school programs, including operation of the Mississippi Virtual Public School Program.” The Department of Education (MDE) selected Connections Education to run MVPS. The SBE established policy for virtual schools in 2006 and retains approval authority for all MVPS coursework and policy, as well as any other programs in the state. It also established a set of guiding principles for virtual schools administered by the MDE.<sup>201</sup>

The current charter school law, the New Start School Program and Conversion Charter School Act,<sup>202</sup> allows parents of students of a school that has been failing for three consecutive years to request that the state board turn it into a charter. The Center for Education Reform calls Mississippi’s charter law the weakest in the country.<sup>203</sup> As of July 2013, there are no charter schools—virtual or brick-and-mortar—in Mississippi.

<sup>200</sup> Mississippi Code 37-161-3 / HB1056 (2010); retrieved July 17, 2013, <http://billstatus.ls.state.ms.us/2010/pdf/history/HB/HB1056.xml>  
<sup>201</sup> State Board Policy 5400; retrieved July 17, 2013, <http://www.mde.k12.ms.us/docs/policy-manual/5400.htm?sfvrsn=2>  
<sup>202</sup> SB2293 (2010); retrieved July 17, 2013, <http://billstatus.ls.state.ms.us/2010/pdf/history/SB/SB2293.xml>  
<sup>203</sup> The Center for Education Reform; retrieved July 17, 2013, <http://www.edreform.com/in-the-states/parent-power-index/states/ms/>

# Missouri

## ONLINE & BLENDED LEARNING STATE SNAPSHOT

Missouri Virtual Instruction Program (MoVIP) served **1,623 course enrollments** in SY 2012-13, about the same number as in SY 2011-12. MoVIP also allows districts to purchase content and courses.

Some districts and postsecondary institutions offer online courses, but there are no fully online statewide programs.

### Availability of online learning options

SUPPLEMENTAL			FULLY ONLINE		
K-5 (ES)	6-8 (MS)	9-12 (HS)	K-5 (ES)	6-8 (MS)	9-12 (HS)
NONE	NONE	SOME	NONE	NONE	NONE

Availability of info:

- Great
- Good
- Fair
- Poor**
- Minimal

### Does this state have...

	Y	N
Any <b>FULLY BLENDED</b> schools?		●
Student choice at the school level?		●
Student choice at the course level?		●
SVS or another publicly funded option for private / homeschool students?		●
Prior public school attendance requirement for online schools?		●
Online caps by class, school, district, or statewide?		●
PD requirement for online teachers?		●
State approval process required for online providers?		●
State approval process required for online courses?		●
Online learning requirement for students?		●
End-of-course exams?		●

Although districts cannot limit access to MoVIP courses, funding is very limited.

In 8 subjects.

### Missouri has a small state virtual school with the Missouri Virtual Instruction Program (MoVIP), no statewide online charter schools, and a few district programs.

There has been an overall decline in online learning options and enrollment in existing options due to significant statewide budget cuts dating to SY 2009-10. MoVIP and the University of Missouri Columbia High School (MU High School) continue to operate, although in the case of MoVIP, with reduced enrollments. New programs at the district and postsecondary level are opening.

#### Online programs

MoVIP is the state virtual school created by SB912<sup>204</sup> and HB1275<sup>205</sup> in 2006. Overseen by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), it serves part- and full-time students in grades K-12, although the majority of its enrollments are in high school. It does not offer courses directly; rather it contracts with external vendors. MoVIP began SY 2009-10 with a \$4.8 million appropriation; however, funding was severely cut midyear, resulting in an immediate drop in enrollments. MoVIP served 1,623 course enrollments in SY 2012-13, a figure similar to that of the previous year but a 90% decrease from SY 2008-09. Funding for SY 2012-13 was \$390,000. Many counties in Missouri have students participating in MoVIP, which offers about 150 core, elective, and AP<sup>®</sup> courses. Most students pay tuition, although some rely on one of four funding options for attending MoVIP that are detailed at [www.kpk12.com/states/](http://www.kpk12.com/states/).

<sup>204</sup> SB912 (2006); retrieved August 13, 2013, <http://www.senate.mo.gov/06info/pdf-bill/tat/SB912.pdf>

<sup>205</sup> HB1275 (2006); retrieved August 13, 2013, <http://www.house.mo.gov/content.aspx?info=/bills061/bilsum/perf/sHB1275P.htm>

MoVIP also allows districts to offer MoVIP courses using their own teachers in a blended mode. The district has full access to the learning management system and course content; it simply pays the vendor for the course.

Other supplemental options that offer courses for a fee include the MU High School, which is part of the University of Missouri's College of Education, and some district programs. MU High School provides access to 180 self-paced asynchronous courses for a fee, typically paid for by students and their families. It is in the process of merging with a similar program, Mizzou K-12 Online. The combined programs reported roughly 7,300 course enrollments in SY 2012-13, of which roughly 300 were middle and grade school level. The Cooperating School Districts of Greater St. Louis offers supplemental courses to member and non-member districts through its District's Choice Online Learning Program (DCOL). The North Kansas City School District offers supplemental online courses to its students.

Hope Academy in Kansas City, which served 365 students at the high school level in SY 2012-13, opened in SY 2009-10. It is among few charters in the state to provide dedicated online instruction. Hope Academy serves high school dropouts or those at risk of dropping out.

### ***State policies***

Missouri passed legislation in 2012 that expanded charter schools while requiring more oversight, but the legislation did not address virtual charters. The state legislature considered legislation in 2011 and 2012 that specifically would have allowed students to enroll in virtual courses or programs outside of their district, but it did not pass.<sup>206</sup> (Students who experience "transportation hardship" due to travel time or distance may in some cases be assigned to other school districts, but the only explicit virtual enrollment option is through a limited number of seats with MoVIP.<sup>207</sup>)

SB291 (2009) eliminated seat-time requirements for virtual education classes offered by Missouri school districts and allowed districts to collect state funds. It stated "for purposes of calculation and distribution of funding, attendance of a student enrolled in a district virtual class will equal, upon course completion, ninety-four percent of the hours of attendance for such class delivered in the non-virtual program."<sup>208</sup> Charter schools receive state funding when providing virtual courses to students. School districts and charter schools must ensure that courses from outside vendors are aligned with state curriculum standards and comply with state requirements for teacher certification.

<sup>206</sup> SB329 (2011); [http://www.senate.mo.gov/11info/bts\\_web/Bill.aspx?SessionType=r&BillID=4177409](http://www.senate.mo.gov/11info/bts_web/Bill.aspx?SessionType=r&BillID=4177409); HB 463 (2011); <http://house.mo.gov/bills/summary.aspx?bill=HB463&year=2011>; SB735 (2012), [http://www.senate.mo.gov/12info/BTS\\_Web/Bill.aspx?SessionType=R&BillID=984768](http://www.senate.mo.gov/12info/BTS_Web/Bill.aspx?SessionType=R&BillID=984768); and HB1629 (2012); <http://www.house.mo.gov/BillSummaryPrn.aspx?bill=HB1629&year=2012&code=R&style=new>, all retrieved August 13, 2013

<sup>207</sup> Missouri Revised Statutes 167.121; retrieved August 13, 2013, <http://www.moga.mo.gov/statutes/c100-199/1670000121.htm>

<sup>208</sup> SB291 (2009), Missouri Revised Statutes 162.1250; retrieved August 15, 2013, [http://www.senate.mo.gov/09info/BTS\\_Web/Bill.aspx?SessionType=R&BillID=683252](http://www.senate.mo.gov/09info/BTS_Web/Bill.aspx?SessionType=R&BillID=683252)

# Montana

## ONLINE & BLENDED LEARNING STATE SNAPSHOT

MTDA, the state virtual school, opened in 2010 and served **7,993 course enrollments** in SY 2012-13. Classes are taught by Montana teachers employed by local districts and trained in online instruction by MTDA.

Montana does not have fully online or fully blended schools.

### Availability of online learning options

SUPPLEMENTAL			FULLY ONLINE		
K-5 (ES)	6-8 (MS)	9-12 (HS)	K-5 (ES)	6-8 (MS)	9-12 (HS)
NONE	SOME	MOST	NONE	NONE	NONE

Availability of info:

- Great
- Good**
- Fair
- Poor
- Minimal

### Does this state have...

	Y	N
Any <b>FULLY BLENDED</b> schools?		●
Student choice at the school level?		●
Student choice at the course level?		●
SVS or another publicly funded option for private / homeschool students?		●
Prior public school attendance requirement for online schools?		●
Online caps by class, school, district, or statewide?		●
PD requirement for online teachers?		●
State approval process required for online providers?		●
State approval process required for online courses?		●
Online learning requirement for students?		●
End-of-course exams?		●

• A student could partially enroll in a district and take an MTDA online course.

• DOE sponsors PD opportunities for teachers who want to develop online & blended teaching skills.

### The only statewide online program in Montana is the Montana Digital Academy (MTDA), the state virtual school.

Montana does not have any statewide fully online schools. There are some small single-district online programs that are limited to serving students in their own districts.

MTDA is hosted by the University of Montana’s College of Education and Human Sciences. Course enrollments for SY 2012-13 reached 7,993, an 18% increase over the previous year. MTDA has experienced significant growth since it opened in fall 2010, although it faced a budget shortfall during SY 2012-13 because of continued increases in enrollments (4,551 course enrollments in its first year, and then a 49% increase between SY 2011-12 and SY 2012-13). HB210 (2013)<sup>209</sup> provided a supplemental appropriation of \$300,000 to cover the shortfall in 2013, ensuring all requested enrollments were served in spring 2013.

HB2 (2013)<sup>210</sup> provides a \$3.79 million appropriation for MTDA, split equally between SY 2013-14 and SY 2014-15. The budget appropriation was based on the percentage increase in MTDA course enrollments during SY 2012-13: a 10% annual increase in original credit course enrollments and a 25% increase in credit recovery course enrollments. This funding allows MTDA to continue to provide online courses at no cost to public school districts and students. However, despite the budget increase, MTDA will continue to monitor enrollments and will cap them if the program begins to exceed budget projections.

<sup>209</sup> HB210 (2013); retrieved June 6, 2013, <http://legiscan.com/MT/text/HB210>

<sup>210</sup> HB2 (2013); retrieved June 6, 2013, <http://legiscan.com/MT/text/HB2>

MTDA classes are taught exclusively by Montana teachers, employed by their local districts and trained in online instructional techniques by MTDA. MTDA, through an interlocal agreement with the local school district, provides compensation for the local district teacher and reimburses each district for associated employment costs. MTDA teachers are generally assigned only one course section per semester to avoid conflict with teaching loads in their local districts. MTDA offers both original credit and credit recovery courses; small districts tend to enroll students in original credit classes, while larger districts tend to enroll a higher percentage of students in credit recovery courses. Credit recovery courses account for about 50% of MTDA course enrollments. MTDA offers a middle school world language survey course, which is capped at 500 course enrollments each year.

### ***State policies***

There is no law in Montana that authorizes charter schools. Although there is an administrative rule that provides for something called “charter schools,” Montana has never had any charter schools. Great Falls Public Schools operates the largest online district program in Montana using originally developed courses supplemented by MTDA courses. The Kalispell Schools Bridge Academy, an alternative program, uses MTDA content in a blended learning environment with district teachers and academic support.

Providers of individual online courses delivered through single-district programs must register annually with the state.<sup>211</sup> Providers must identify all Montana school districts to which they are delivering distance learning; verify the professional qualifications of course teachers; provide course descriptions, including content and delivery model, for each program and/or course; and demonstrate that students have ongoing contact with distance learning teachers. Despite these reporting requirements, there are no available documents that report online course enrollments at the district level. The Office of Public Instruction also publishes a set of online course guidelines, although there is no formal process for evaluating online course quality.<sup>212</sup>

School districts can only serve students who are residents of the district, preventing districts from offering statewide programs.<sup>213</sup>

State policies did not change from 2011-2013. Additional information on state policies and the history of distance and online learning activity in Montana is available at [www.kpk12.com/states/](http://www.kpk12.com/states/).

<sup>211</sup> Montana OPI registered distance learning providers; retrieved June 3, 2013, <http://opi.mt.gov/pdf/Accred/09DLPProviders.pdf>

<sup>212</sup> Montana OPI Checklist for Evaluating Online Courses; retrieved June 3, 2013, [http://opi.mt.gov/pdf/advplacement/OLC\\_Checklist.pdf](http://opi.mt.gov/pdf/advplacement/OLC_Checklist.pdf)

<sup>213</sup> Montana Code 20-7-118; retrieved June 10, 2013, <http://leg.mt.gov/bills/mca/20/7/20-7-118.htm>



# Nebraska

## ONLINE & BLENDED LEARNING STATE SNAPSHOT

The Nebraska BlendED Initiative offers courses to grades 3-12; it served **7,578 course enrollments** in SY 2012-13.

There are no fully online or fully blended public school options in Nebraska.

### Availability of online learning options

SUPPLEMENTAL			FULLY ONLINE		
K-5 (ES)	6-8 (MS)	9-12 (HS)	K-5 (ES)	6-8 (MS)	9-12 (HS)
NONE	SOME	SOME	NONE	NONE	NONE

Availability of info:

- Great
- Good
- Fair**
- Poor
- Minimal

### Does this state have...

	Y	N
Any <b>FULLY BLENDED</b> schools?		●
Student choice at the school level?		●
Student choice at the course level?		●
SVS or another publicly funded option for private / homeschool students?		●
Prior public school attendance requirement for online schools?		●
Online caps by class, school, district, or statewide?		●
PD requirement for online teachers?		●
State approval process required for online providers?		●
State approval process required for online courses?		●
Online learning requirement for students?		●
End-of-course exams?		●

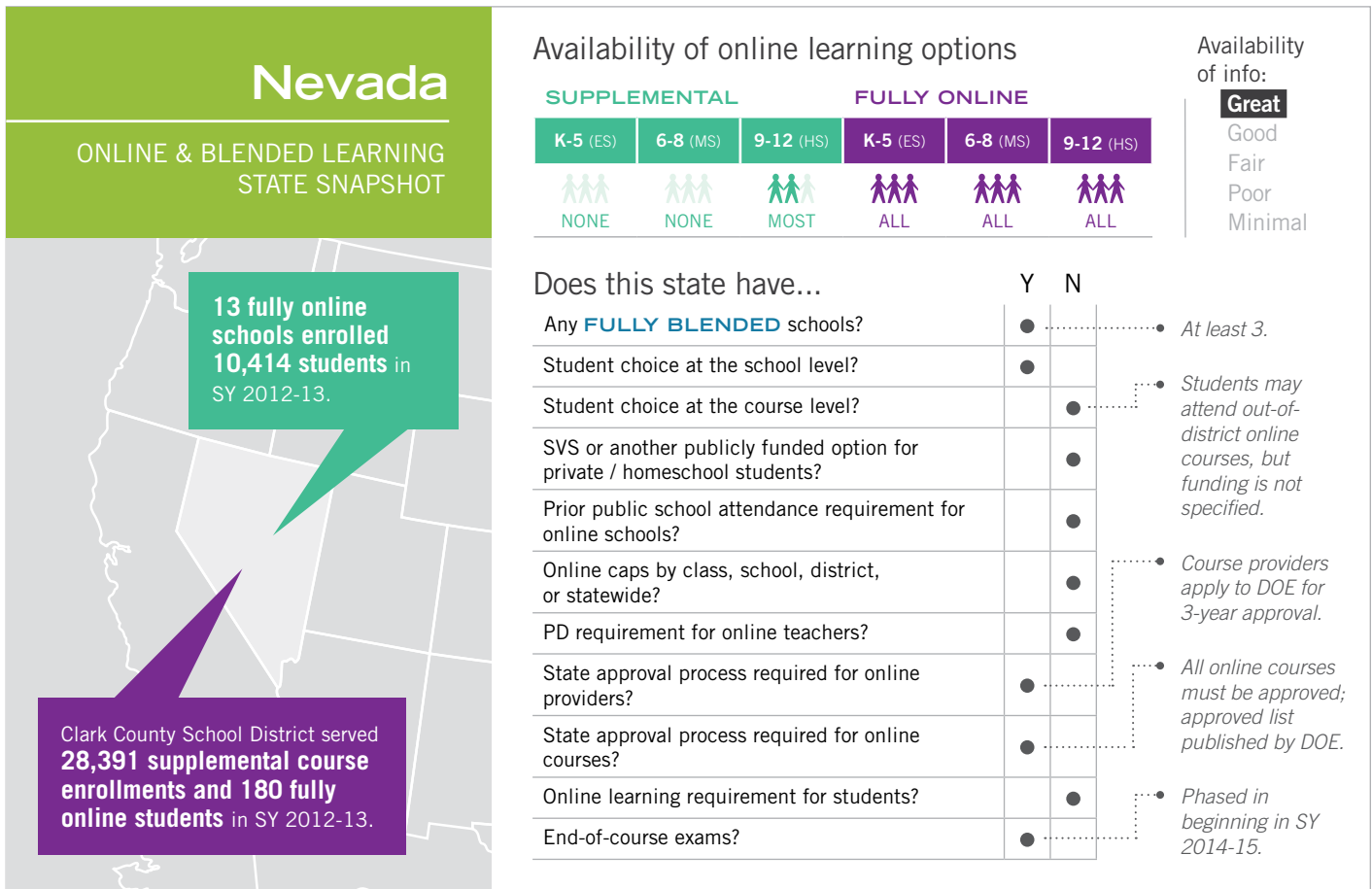
### Nebraska offers a combination of blended learning, videoconferencing, and supplemental online courses to its students; it does not have a fully online public school option.

Nebraska Virtual Instruction Source (NVIS) offers over 550 courses in the various delivery modes listed above to 219 of the 256 districts; it reported 7,578 enrollments in its BlendED initiative in SY 2012-13. The Nebraska Virtual Partnership, along with the K-12 and higher education systems, the Education Service Unit Coordinating Council (ESUCC), the Department of Education, and Nebraska Educational Television, created NVIS.<sup>214</sup> Courses are offered via Network Nebraska and include online classes mostly offered by the University of Nebraska High School, which enrolls an average of 2,600 students (most of whom are private pay, with some paid by the district) in an open enrollment system. Schools are paid up to \$1,000 per course, per semester, for courses exchanged via Network Nebraska, and must complete an annual report to NVIS to claim incentive dollars, which come from state lottery funds.

The Nebraska Virtual Academy (NEVA)<sup>215</sup> is a consortium of schools offering blended courses through Moodle and videoconferencing; it reported 50 students from 10 different districts taking courses in SY 2012-13. Omaha Public Schools (OPS) eLearning, which initially was designed to meet the needs of credit recovery students in grades 9-12, has evolved into a blended learning program for all students. State policies created between 2006 and 2009 influenced distance learning across the state and are detailed at [www.kpk12.com/states/](http://www.kpk12.com/states/).

<sup>214</sup> *Keeping Pace 2011* reported this as a state virtual school pilot, but we no longer believe that this program meets our definition of a state virtual school (which does not imply a judgment as to the value of the program to students).

<sup>215</sup> Nebraska Virtual Academy; retrieved July 7, 2013, [http://neva-k.www.esu13.org/modules/groups/integrated\\_home.phtml?&gid=1835416&sessionid=2a582ec9e01597b2639fa3c9354d431d&t=9d1ddd3a11718412a598e5251bd81e3c](http://neva-k.www.esu13.org/modules/groups/integrated_home.phtml?&gid=1835416&sessionid=2a582ec9e01597b2639fa3c9354d431d&t=9d1ddd3a11718412a598e5251bd81e3c)



**Nevada has 11 online and blended charter schools and 15 district online programs that are approved by the Nevada Department of Education (NDE) to offer online courses as of September 2013.** The fully online programs served a combined 10,414 fully online students in SY 2012-13, a 19% annual increase.<sup>216</sup> The state is unique in that 78% of its students are in one district, the Clark County School District, which offers one of the largest single-district programs in the country.<sup>217</sup> SB58 (2013)<sup>218</sup> gives students the ability to enroll either full- or part-time in out-of-district programs, although funding is not specified.

### Online programs

The eight fully online virtual charter schools, four virtual district programs, and one “reengagement center” served a combined 10,414 fully online students in SY 2012-13, a 19% annual increase (see detailed school enrollment information at [www.kpk12.com/states](http://www.kpk12.com/states)). Clark County School District Virtual High School (a district program) launched in fall 2004, and serves students statewide. It served 28,391 supplemental course enrollments in SY 2012-13, an annual increase of 184%, as well as about 180 fully online students, an increase of 21%.<sup>219</sup> This included 6,349 course enrollments in summer 2013, an increase of 32%. Although Clark County serves some out-of-district enrollments for a \$50 per-course fee, the majority of its enrollments are in-district. WOLF program in Washoe County served 250 fully online students in SY 2012-13.<sup>220</sup> Washoe

<sup>216</sup> Personal communication with the NDE and State Public Charter School Authority, August 16, 2013

<sup>217</sup> National Center for Education Statistics; retrieved August 22, 2013, <http://nces.ed.gov/ccd/districtsearch/>

<sup>218</sup> SB58 (2013); retrieved August 8, 2013, [http://www.leg.state.nv.us/Session/77th2013/Bills/SB/SB58\\_EN.pdf](http://www.leg.state.nv.us/Session/77th2013/Bills/SB/SB58_EN.pdf)

<sup>219</sup> Personal communication with Kim Loomis, Clark County School District, July 29, 2013

<sup>220</sup> Personal communication with WOLF, August 16, 2013. These three WOLF programs were all reported under the WOLF program in SY 2011-12.

Innovations, Washoe Inspire, and Washoe Reengagement Centers (blended) served 800 students in SY 2012-13, and most school districts serve at least some fully online students through either school or single-district programs.<sup>221</sup>

Some charter schools operate in blended modes. Silver State Charter Schools (grades 7-12) serves students statewide; students may attend optional synchronous courses in a cohort and meet with a teacher at the school once a week. Odyssey Charter School serves grades K-12 and has a face-to-face component.

### ***State policies***

SB58 (2013)<sup>222</sup> effects significant legislative changes for SY 2013-14.

- SB58 removes numerous restrictions on the circumstances under which electronic instruction can be delivered, e.g. the need to operate as “alternative” programs for at-risk, or as independent study, or for students excluded from traditional public schooling due to criminal or disruptive behavior. Section 2 of this bill deletes those requirements and provides that nearly all pupils may enroll in a program of distance education.
- The bill eliminates a requirement for pupils to obtain written permission of the board of trustees of the pupil’s home district to enroll in part-time out-of-district online courses. In cases where the trustees’ written permission continues to be required, section 3 requires that permission be granted in nearly all cases.
- Section 5 of this bill authorizes an unlicensed employee to supervise pupils attending a course of distance education while the pupils receive instruction from a licensed employee remotely, through electronic means.

SB58 does not address funding for part-time online courses.

Nevada online education policies set forth programmatic and reporting requirements, have the state maintain a list of courses and course providers that meet certain requirements, allow the state to review or audit distance programs, and allow the state to revoke its approval of a distance education program that does not meet requirements. These requirements apply to district programs and charter schools. The NDE has approved 35 “Distance Education Course Providers” to be used by district programs and charter schools for SY 2013-14.<sup>223</sup>

Extensive legislation surrounding distance education policy can be found in the Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS388) and Nevada Administrative Code (NAC388),<sup>224</sup> or on the NDE web page on distance learning. In 2011, the State Board of Education adopted alternatives to seat-time policies.<sup>225</sup> The Nevada Charter School Authority offers a document setting forth guidance for charter schools that wish to use distance delivery, which includes online, blended, video, or television.<sup>226</sup>

<sup>221</sup> Personal communication with Nevada Department of Education, and Administrative & Fiscal Services, August 16, 2013.

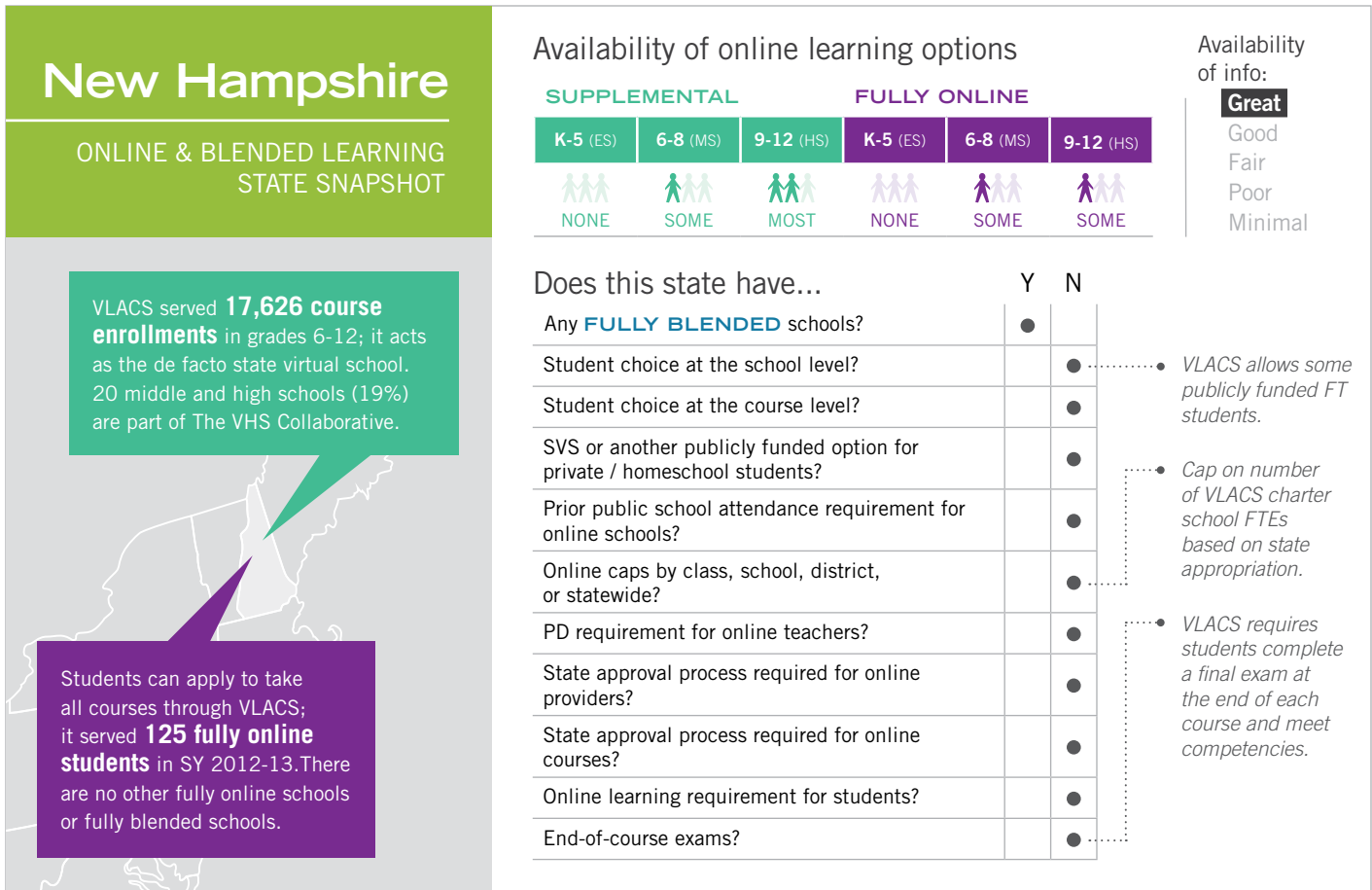
<sup>222</sup> SB58 (2013); retrieved August 8, 2013, [http://www.leg.state.nv.us/Session/77th2013/Bills/SB/SB58\\_EN.pdf](http://www.leg.state.nv.us/Session/77th2013/Bills/SB/SB58_EN.pdf)

<sup>223</sup> Distance Education Approved Course Provider List; retrieved August 26, 2013, [http://cteae.nv.gov/Adult\\_Education/Distance\\_Education/](http://cteae.nv.gov/Adult_Education/Distance_Education/)

<sup>224</sup> Nevada Revised Statutes 388; retrieved July 20, 2013, <http://www.leg.state.nv.us/nrs/NRS-388.html>; and Chapter 388 - System Of Public Instruction; retrieved July 20, 2013, <http://www.leg.state.nv.us/NAC/NAC-388.html>

<sup>225</sup> AB233; retrieved August 23, 2013, <http://www.leg.state.nv.us/76th2011/Reports/history.cfm?ID=519>

<sup>226</sup> Use of Online Curriculum and Distance Education; retrieved July 20, 2013, <http://charterschools.nv.gov/uploadedFiles/CharterSchoolsnvgov/content/OpenASchool/Use%20of%20Online%20Curriculum,%20Distance%20Education,%20etc...doc>



**New Hampshire has a statewide virtual charter school, Virtual Learning Academy Charter School (VLACS), which plays a role similar to that of other state virtual schools in that it primarily provides supplemental courses to students.** Most online learning activity in the state is through VLACS, which serves grades 6-12. In SY 12-13 it served 9,170 individual students with 17,626 course enrollments, a 13% increase from the previous year. Although 125 of its students were full-time, over 16,000 of the enrollments were in supplemental courses. In addition, 326 students from 20 schools (19% of middle and high schools in the state) took courses through The VHS Collaborative.

### **State policies**

There are two sections to New Hampshire charter school law: 1) open enrollment schools, which require a school district vote to authorize the charter school, and 2) a pilot charter program.<sup>227</sup> VLACS was established in 2007 under the pilot program and approved by the State Board of Education. It receives state-funded tuition through New Hampshire's Education Trust Fund. Local schools are funded by the same fund plus local property taxes.

Currently, all charter schools, including VLACS, receive \$5,498 for each FTE, which is defined as a unit of 12 completed half-credit courses. VLACS will receive funding for up to 1,051 FTE New Hampshire public school students in SY 2013-14; that number will increase to 1,209 FTE in SY 2014-15. VLACS receives funding

<sup>227</sup> Title XV education, Section 194-B:3-a; retrieved July 9, 2013, <http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/rsa/html/XV/194-B/194-B-mrg.htm>

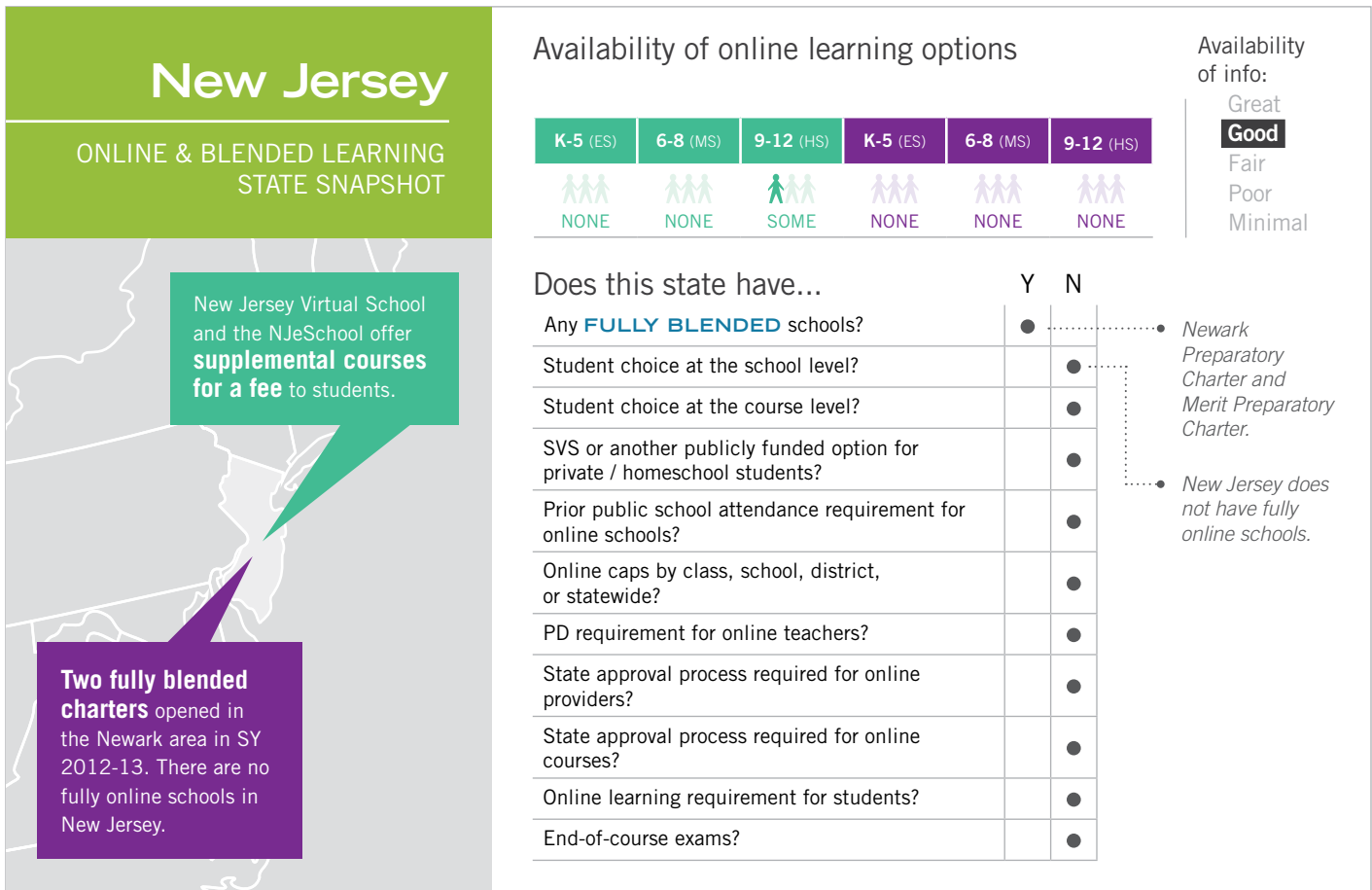
from three sources: state education aid, out-of-state tuition, and grants. As a competency-based school, VLACS does not receive funding based on seat-time attendance, but receives funding based on course/competency completion percentages (i.e. if a student completes 30% of the course, VLACS will receive 30% of the funding).

VLACS courses have rolling enrollment (students may start courses anytime between September and February), are self-paced, and must be completed by June 30. A dual enrollment program, eStart, is a collaboration between the state community college system and VLACS<sup>228</sup> that is offering 14 courses in SY 2013-14. In SY 2013-14, VLACS also will offer adult education courses.

New Hampshire does not have policies that govern online courses specifically, but state rules on distance learning have been in effect since July 2005.<sup>229</sup> Most of the rules describe policies local school boards must set for distance learning.

<sup>228</sup> eStart; retrieved July 9, 2013, [http://vlacs.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=158&Itemid=250](http://vlacs.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=158&Itemid=250)

<sup>229</sup> Section 306.22; retrieved July 9, 2013, <http://www.education.nh.gov/legislation/documents/ed306-2011.pdf>



**New Jersey has no fully online schools and few district programs, although two new fully blended charters opened in SY 2012-13 and at least two programs offer supplemental online courses.** The New Jersey Virtual School (NJVS) has offered tuition-based supplemental courses to students in grades 6-12 since 2002; it served 5,485 course enrollments in SY 2012-13, a 10% annual increase. NJeSchool reported 854 enrollments in supplemental courses in SY 2012-13. The 43 schools that are members of The VHS Collaborative served 1,973 course enrollments in SY 2012-13.

Two virtual charter school applicants were approved for two planning years in 2011 and 2012: the New Jersey Virtual Charter School and the New Jersey Virtual Academy Charter School. However, the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) rejected both virtual school applications in June 2013. Additional details can be found at [www.kpk12.com/states/](http://www.kpk12.com/states/).

New Jersey has two fully blended charter schools. Newark Preparatory Charter is using K12 Inc. curriculum and served 150 students in 9<sup>th</sup> grade in SY 2012-13; it expanded to include 10<sup>th</sup> grade students in SY 2013-14. Merit Preparatory Charter, operated by Touchstone Education, reported 84 students in 6<sup>th</sup> grade in SY 2012-13 and is expanding to include 7<sup>th</sup> grade in SY 2013-14.

# New Mexico

## ONLINE & BLENDED LEARNING STATE SNAPSHOT

IDEAL-New Mexico is the state virtual school, and **two fully online schools** serve students statewide in SY 2013-14.

Albuquerque Public Schools' eCADEMY VIRTUAL is a large district program with about **4,800 students and 7,280 course enrollments** in SY 2012-13. It uses a variety of blended learning approaches.

### Availability of online learning options

SUPPLEMENTAL			FULLY ONLINE		
K-5 (ES)	6-8 (MS)	9-12 (HS)	K-5 (ES)	6-8 (MS)	9-12 (HS)
NONE	SOME	SOME	SOME	SOME	SOME

### Availability of info:

- Great
- Good**
- Fair
- Poor
- Minimal

### Does this state have...

	Y	N	
Any <b>FULLY BLENDED</b> schools?	●		Albuquerque Public Schools' eCADEMY VIRTUAL and Gilbert L. Sena Charter High School.
Student choice at the school level?	●		
Student choice at the course level?		●	Choice for students at under-performing schools in law, but program has not started as of Sept. 2013.
SVS or another publicly funded option for private / homeschool students?		●	
Prior public school attendance requirement for online schools?		●	
Online caps by class, school, district, or statewide?		●	
PD requirement for online teachers?		●	
State approval process required for online providers?		●	One of 4 requirements to graduate: AP, honors, dual-enrollment, or online course.
State approval process required for online courses?		●	
Online learning requirement for students?		●	
End-of-course exams?	●		In 2 subjects.

**New Mexico has a state virtual school, IDEAL-NM (Innovative Digital Education and Learning New Mexico), a few district programs, and two fully online schools operating in SY 2013-14.** IDEAL-NM served 2,697 course enrollments in SY 2012-13, a 4% decrease from SY 2011-12.

State rules<sup>230</sup> allow for creation of fully online, multi-district schools, but stipulate that asynchronous distance learning, “shall not be used as a substitute for all direct, face-to-face student and teacher interactions unless approved by the local board of education.” Charter schools in New Mexico can be authorized either by the Public Education Commission (PEC) of the Public Education Department (PED) or local school district boards of education. In 2013, controversy arose over the authorization of the New Mexico Connections Academy (NMCA). The initial NMCA application was denied by the PEC, but after a series of appeals, it was approved by the secretary of education and is open for SY 2013-14 serving grades K-12. NMCA is capped at 500 students for SY 2013-14, but may expand to as many as 2,000 students at the end of its first five years in operation.<sup>231</sup>

In 2012, the first statewide virtual charter school, New Mexico Virtual Academy (NMVA), was authorized by Farmington Municipal Schools (FMS). NMVA serves grades 6-12; its enrollment is capped at 500 students annually by FMS, and it has a waiting list of over 400 students. Funding for fully online schools is the same State Equalization Guarantee per pupil funding as traditional schools.

<sup>230</sup> Title 6, Chapter 30, Part 8 analysis; retrieved July 1, 2013, <http://www.nmcp.state.nm.us/nmac/parts/title06/06.030.0008.htm>

<sup>231</sup> Enrollment caps are negotiated between the virtual charter board and the authorizer, and are not set by law or regulation.

Distance learning rules approved in 2008<sup>232</sup> set requirements for IDEAL-NM; the rules also allow public schools (including charters) to provide online learning courses to students in any district as long as there are written agreements in place between host and resident districts. The local school where the student is enrolled approves and registers students for online courses and pays course fees.

SB427 (2011)<sup>233</sup> provides students in failing schools the option to choose online alternatives, with funding for those courses coming from the underperforming districts. The law defined criteria for rating schools, including student proficiency, growth, graduation rates, and college and career readiness. Ratings<sup>234</sup> and grades were published by the PED for SY 2012-13, after a one-year delay due to debate over the criteria used to identify failing schools. Sixty-nine of 831 schools received a grade of F. As of September 2013 there was no timetable for implementing the requirements for online choice as an alternative for students at failing schools. Regardless, online choices for students in grades K-5 will remain limited even for those in failing schools because IDEAL-NM and district online programs offer online courses only for grades 6-12.

In 2009-10 several provisions of the 2007 High School Redesign bill (SB0561)<sup>235</sup> came into effect, including a requirement that at least one of the 24 units required for graduation must be an Advanced Placement, honors, dual enrollment, or distance learning course.

### **Online programs**

IDEAL-NM served 2,697 course enrollments in SY 2012-13, a 4% decrease. IDEAL-NM has provided a statewide LMS through which online K-12 and state agency training courses have been delivered since 2008. As of August 2013, 52 of New Mexico's 89 school districts (58%) and 20 charter schools operate independent domains within the LMS to create branded web portals to access all of the courses offered by IDEAL-NM at no cost.<sup>236</sup> Districts can also create content for their own blended and/or online programs in the LMS. In addition, a statewide eLearning Service Center supports the LMS for all the education and training entities.

School districts offering online programs include Albuquerque, Rio Rancho, Hobbs, Taos, Roy and Las Cruces Public Schools. Albuquerque Public Schools' eCADEMY VIRTUAL is an alternative school with a comprehensive blended learning program serving K-12 students, with about 4,800 students and 7,280 course enrollments in SY 2012-13. Gilbert L. Sena Charter High School operates a blended school for grades 9-12. The Las Cruces program has about 1,200 course enrollments.

<sup>232</sup> SB209 Bill Analysis; retrieved July 1, 2013, <http://www.nmlegis.gov/Sessions/07%20Regular/LESCAnalysis/senate/SB0209%20%20Cyber%20Academy%20Act.pdf>

<sup>233</sup> SB427; retrieved July 21, 2013, <http://www.nmlegis.gov/Sessions/11%20Regular/final/SB0427.pdf>

<sup>234</sup> NM PED School Grading; retrieved August 3, 2013, <http://webapp2.ped.state.nm.us/SchoolData/SchoolGrading.aspx>

<sup>235</sup> SB0561; retrieved July 1, 2013, <http://www.nmlegis.gov/Sessions/07%20Regular/final/SB0561.pdf>

<sup>236</sup> IDEAL-NM portal; retrieved August 13, 2013, <http://idealnewmexico.org/portals/>



# New York

## ONLINE & BLENDED LEARNING STATE SNAPSHOT

A \$17 million initiative launched in January 2013 provides online and blended AP courses to 160 school districts and **2,595 students**.

iLearnNYC provides nearly **200 schools** with a learning management system and content.

### Availability of online learning options

SUPPLEMENTAL			FULLY ONLINE		
K-5 (ES)	6-8 (MS)	9-12 (HS)	K-5 (ES)	6-8 (MS)	9-12 (HS)
NONE	NONE	SOME	NONE	NONE	NONE

Availability of info:

- Great
- Good
- Fair**
- Poor
- Minimal

### Does this state have...

	Y	N
Any <b>FULLY BLENDED</b> schools?		●
Student choice at the school level?		●
Student choice at the course level?		●
SVS or another publicly funded option for private / homeschool students?		●
Prior public school attendance requirement for online schools?		●
Online caps by class, school, district, or statewide?		●
PD requirement for online teachers?		●
State approval process required for online providers?		●
State approval process required for online courses?		●
Online learning requirement for students?		●
End-of-course exams?	●	

There are no fully online schools.

In 13 subjects.

**New York is expanding its online and blended learning activity with recent improvements to data collection methodology, providing evidence that numerous Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) and district-developed online programs are in place.** The majority of activity occurs in these BOCES and select school districts (New York City in particular). A statewide Basic Educational Data Sheets (BEDS) system figures prominently in ongoing New York State Education Department (NYSED) efforts to track distance learning data in schools statewide, and some distance learning data have been collected for SY 2011-12 and SY 2012-13, but have not yet been formally published. Although several initiatives make online and blended courses available statewide, there are no fully online statewide schools, nor is there a state virtual school.

In June 2011, the Board of Regents modified state diploma requirements to clarify requirements for earning both initial course credit and credit recovery through online and blended coursework.<sup>237</sup> Online courses must include “regular and substantive interaction” with the teacher in all cases.

### Online programs

In SY 2012-13, the primary work supporting online learning at the state level focused on a \$17 million Virtual Advanced Placement® (VAP) initiative funded under Race to the Top (RTTT) funds through the NYSED.<sup>238</sup> The initiative is intended to develop the capacity of school districts and BOCES to provide both

<sup>237</sup> CR100.5(d)(10); retrieved June 10, 2013, <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/part100/pages/1005.html#Credit>

<sup>238</sup> Virtual Advanced Placement® (VAP) Program; retrieved June 12, 2013, <http://usny.nysed.gov/rttt/rfp/sa-08/>

online and blended AP coursework to eligible students; 17 grantees have been funded from January 2013 to August 2014. One hundred sixty school districts, 2,595 students, and 474 teachers participated in this new program during its first quarter (January-March 2013).<sup>239</sup> VAP funding ranges from \$259,000 to \$2 million depending on school district size.

Numerous small-scale online and/or blended efforts are underway in school districts and BOCES statewide, particularly among those selected as VAP grantees. The Greater Southern Tier (GST) BOCES offers a virtual learning initiative that enrolled 809 students in online or blended courses for SY 2012-13 (793 in high school and 16 in middle school); of these, 769 were fully online students and 40 were supplemental courses.<sup>240</sup> Wayne Finger Lakes BOCES' Accelerate-U/Edu-Tech and the New York State Distance Learning Consortium provide online courses for students (and professional development for teachers), making online courses available statewide. In SY 2012-13, Accelerate-U served 359 one-semester enrollments.<sup>241</sup>

iLearnNYC is an online and blended learning program run by the New York City Department of Education (the largest school district in the United States). iLearnNYC provides nearly 200<sup>242</sup> participating schools with a citywide learning management system and other learning tools (e.g. from Apex Learning, Edgenuity, Desire2Learn, and others).<sup>243</sup> Any middle or high school may apply to join iLearnNYC, but special consideration is given to schools designated as persistently lowest achieving (among other criteria).<sup>244</sup> In SY 2012-13, 25,757 students (an increase of 3% from SY 2011-12) participated in virtual learning programs in a mix of online and blended modes, with 48,773 total course enrollments.<sup>245</sup>

### **State policies**

The Regents Statewide Learning Technology Plan (2010) included a provision for opening a statewide virtual high school,<sup>246</sup> but no further initiative has yet been taken.

State policies have not changed significantly since 2011 and are available in *Keeping Pace 2012* and at [www.kpk12.com/states](http://www.kpk12.com/states).

### **Funding**

NYSED administers over \$20 billion annually through various education programs and formulas, few of which distinguish between virtual and brick-and-mortar programs. Many aid distance learning and related professional development cooperative service agreements (CO-SER)<sup>247</sup> without making reference to online K-12 learning specifically.

Online courses are currently funded by an enrollment fee paid by districts or students. Funding can be delivered by any district or BOCES in the state under a CO-SER. Districts that meet certain state requirements receive aid from the state in the subsequent fiscal year, ranging from 50% to 75% of the amount paid.

<sup>239</sup> Personal Communication with Office of Educational Design and Technology, NYSED, July 8, 2013

<sup>240</sup> Personal communication with Erin T. Schiavone, Virtual Learning Coordinator, GST BOCES, June 30, 2013

<sup>241</sup> Personal communication with Mike Morone, Administrator of Online Instruction, Accelerate-U, June 30, 2013

<sup>242</sup> 2012-2013 iZone360 and iLearnNYC schools; retrieved June 10, 2013, <http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/rdonlyres/D115C778-42A8-4B92-9FB4-E4C7C25A28E3/0/2012Schools.pdf>

<sup>243</sup> iLearnNYC; retrieved June 10, 2013, <http://schools.nyc.gov/community/innovation/izone/Innovations/ilearnnyc>

<sup>244</sup> Application FAQ: School Year 2012-2013; retrieved June 10, 2013, [http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/rdonlyres/247F14A7-7BD8-4A6C-BE21-8809548BFC6/0/FAQ\\_AppOverview\\_.pdf](http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/rdonlyres/247F14A7-7BD8-4A6C-BE21-8809548BFC6/0/FAQ_AppOverview_.pdf)

<sup>245</sup> Personal communication with Azoulay-Lewin Celine, Executive Director, iLearnNYC, July 1, 2013

<sup>246</sup> New York Statewide Educational Technology Plan; retrieved June 10, 2013, <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/technology/techplan/>

<sup>247</sup> State Aid for Ed-Tech Programs, retrieved June 12, 2013, <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/technology/funding/StateAid.html>

# North Carolina

## ONLINE & BLENDED LEARNING STATE SNAPSHOT

NCVPS is the country's second largest state virtual school; it served **94,716 course enrollments** in SY 2012-13. It also approves all other online courses offered in the state.

Extensive requirements allowing virtual charter schools passed in 2013, but no virtual charter schools—or other fully online options—are available in SY 2013-14.

### Availability of online learning options

SUPPLEMENTAL			FULLY ONLINE		
K-5 (ES)	6-8 (MS)	9-12 (HS)	K-5 (ES)	6-8 (MS)	9-12 (HS)
NONE	SOME	MOST	NONE	NONE	NONE

### Availability of info:

- Great
- Good**
- Fair
- Poor
- Minimal

### Does this state have...

	Y	N
Any <b>FULLY BLENDED</b> schools?		●
Student choice at the school level?		●
Student choice at the course level?		●
SVS or another publicly funded option for private / homeschool students?		●
Prior public school attendance requirement for online schools?		●
Online caps by class, school, district, or statewide?	●	
PD requirement for online teachers?		●
State approval process required for online providers?		●
State approval process required for online courses?	●	
Online learning requirement for students?	●	
End-of-course exams?	●	

- *Virtual charters must maintain a student:teacher ratio of no more than 50:1 per class.*
- *SBE is enhancing license-renewal requirements to integrate digital teaching and learning.*
- *Providers other than virtual charters must apply to NCVPS for each course.*
- *SBE requirement; implementation expected in 2014.*
- *In 4 courses.*

**Essentially all the online education activity in North Carolina is through North Carolina Virtual Public School (NCVPS), the state virtual school.** Legislation<sup>248</sup> and state board policy<sup>249</sup> prohibit any state-funded entity from offering “e-learning opportunities” without the approval of NCVPS, whether it is programmatic or at the course level.

In 2011, North Carolina’s SB8 revised charter school law, but did not specifically address the creation and operation of virtual charter schools. After more than a year of controversy and confusion, the State Board of Education (SBE) in 2013 approved policy on the procedures and operation of virtual charter schools.<sup>250</sup> Funding for virtual charters is based on the same funding amount as eight full-year courses (\$438 per course) at NCVPS, or \$3,504 per year (63% of average state funding).<sup>251</sup> Virtual charters do not receive local contributions.

Virtual charter schools must:

- maintain a student-to-teacher ratio of no more than 50:1 per class.

<sup>248</sup> SB897 (2009); retrieved June 19, 2013, <http://www.ncleg.net/Sessions/2009/Bills/Senate/PDF/S897v8.pdf>

<sup>249</sup> State Board Policy GCS M-001. Section 10; retrieved June 19, 2013, <http://sbepolicy.dpi.state.nc.us/policies/GCS-M-001.asp?pri=01&cat=M&pol=001&acr=GCS>

<sup>250</sup> State Board Policy TCS-U-015; retrieved July 9, 2013, <http://sbepolicy.dpi.state.nc.us/policies/TCS-U-015.asp?pri=04&cat=U&pol=015&acr=TCS>, with statutory reference to North Carolina state statute 115C-238.29A; [http://www.ncleg.net/EnactedLegislation/Statutes/HTML/ByArticle/Chapter\\_115C/Article\\_16.html](http://www.ncleg.net/EnactedLegislation/Statutes/HTML/ByArticle/Chapter_115C/Article_16.html)

<sup>251</sup> NC Public Schools, Facts and Figures 2012-13, Per Pupil Expenditure in Average Daily Membership; retrieved June 20, 2013, <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/fbs/resources/data/factsfigures/2012-13figures.pdf>

- keep graduation rates no more than 10% below the state average (which was about an 80% graduation rate in SY 2012-13) in any two of three years.
- not have a withdrawal rate higher than 15% in any two out of three years.
- only enroll students in grades 6-12.

All charter applications must be approved by the SBE and submitted to “every local education agency (LEA) in North Carolina from which the virtual charter school may attract students.” Schools must complete a mandatory planning year, maintain a physical location in the state, and provide face-to-face, synchronous activities. The Appropriations Act of 2013 (S402)<sup>252</sup> includes a provision for the SBE to study and suggest modifications to the approval process and oversight of virtual charter schools, including application requirements, enrollment growth, and funding allocations, by February 1, 2014.

SB402 “ensures that all high school students have access to advanced courses in language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies,” and notes enrollment in advanced courses may be provided through NCVPS.

NCVPS is the second largest state virtual school with 94,716 course enrollments in SY 2012-13, a decrease of 3% from SY 2011-12. Several circumstances contributed to the decline. A significant number of courses were removed from the NCVPS course catalog in SY 2012-13 to allow time for revisions necessary to meet Common Core standards and to accommodate the move to a new learning management system. In addition, some districts limited online course enrollments for some students when faced with budget reductions.

Session Law 2011-145<sup>253</sup> (2011) removed the cap on NCVPS operating costs, and removed prohibitions against offering physical education and courses to grades K-8. It directed NCVPS to use funds generated by a formula created in 2010 to provide online courses to all public school students at no cost to the student. Students must get permission to enroll in NCVPS courses from their district. The legislation directed NCVPS to develop a revenue plan, submitted in 2013, that would permit non-public students and out-of-state students to enroll in NCVPS, and would allow the sale of online courses and content to out-of-state organizations. A related bill, SB189 (2013),<sup>254</sup> revised the definition of “home school” to allow homeschooled students to take online courses in core subject areas, which had been prohibited based on a previous interpretation of the definition by the Division of Non-Public Education.<sup>255</sup> For details about the NCVPS funding formula see [www.kpk12.com/states](http://www.kpk12.com/states).

In December 2012, the SBE directed NCVPS to develop a plan “requiring each student in North Carolina to successfully complete a teacher-led online course before they graduate beginning with the class of 2020.”<sup>256</sup> The NCVPS policy was endorsed by the SBE in 2013, and implementation is expected to begin in 2014.

Two additional bills passed in 2013 that impact online learning.

- HB23 (SL2013-11)<sup>257</sup> requires that the SBE, in cooperation with the Board of Governors of the University of North Carolina, integrate digital teaching and learning into the requirements for teacher licensure renewal. It also requires that all lateral-entry teachers<sup>258</sup> demonstrate digital teaching and learning competencies, as well as to be able to apply formative and summative assessments within the classroom through technology-based assessment systems.

<sup>252</sup> S402 (2013), Section 8.48, page 82-83; retrieved June 18, 2013, <http://www.ncleg.net/gascrpts/BillLookUp/BillLookUp.pl?Session=2013&BillID=s402>

<sup>253</sup> H200 (2011); retrieved June 19, 2013, <http://www.ncleg.net/sessions/2011/bills/house/pdf/h200v9.pdf>

<sup>254</sup> SB189; retrieved June 10, 2013, <http://www.ncga.state.nc.us/Sessions/2013/Bills/Senate/PDF/S189v3.pdf>

<sup>255</sup> The Division of Non-Public Education had interpreted earlier language to prohibit homeschooled students from taking core courses online.

<sup>256</sup> North Carolina State Board of Education, December 2012 meeting notes; retrieved September 22, 2013, <https://eboard.eboardsolutions.com/Meetings/ViewMeetingOrder.aspx?S=10399&MID=728>

<sup>257</sup> H23 (2013); retrieved June 11, 2013, <http://www.ncleg.net/Sessions/2013/Bills/House/PDF/H23v5.pdf>

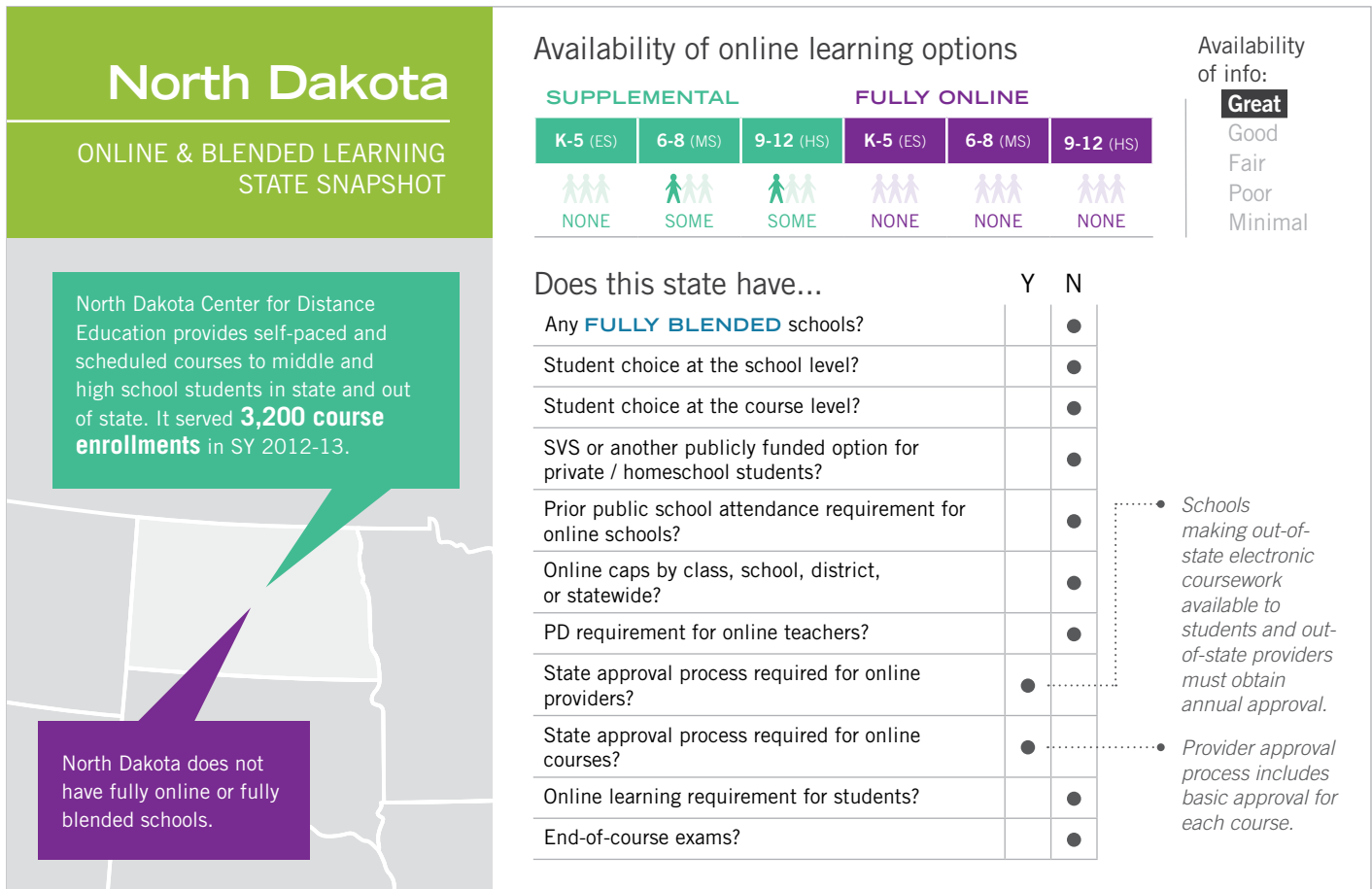
<sup>258</sup> The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction defines lateral entry as an “alternate” route to teaching for qualified individuals outside of the public education system. Lateral entry allows qualified individuals to obtain a teaching position and begin teaching right away, while obtaining a professional educator’s license as they teach. Retrieved June 11, 2013, <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/licensure/lateral/>.

- HB44 (SL2013-12)<sup>259</sup> allows schools to transition funding from textbooks to digital learning content, with all content being available in digital format “effective for all learners by 2017.”

North Carolina has one fully blended program, Polk County Early College, that annually allows up to 20 students to complete high school while earning college credits, leading to early completion of an associate’s degree while earning a high school diploma.

North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics (NCSSM) Online is a program of NCSSM, a public high school, that offers online courses in science and math to about 230 juniors and seniors in North Carolina who are enrolled in different secondary institutions including public and private schools, and homeschooled students.

<sup>259</sup> H44 (2013); retrieved June 10, 2013, <http://www.ncleg.net/Sessions/2013/Bills/House/PDF/H44v3.pdf>



### The only statewide online program in North Dakota is the North Dakota Center for Distance Education (ND CDE), which offers online and print courses that are either self-paced within a 20-week time period or scheduled.

ND CDE is a supplemental program launched in fall 1996 that serves middle and high school students. In SY 2012-13 it served 3,200 online course enrollments, a 7% annual increase; 1,800 of those enrollments were from out-of-state. Districts are beginning to partner with local colleges on dual credit courses and to utilize out-of state providers to create their own online programs and alternative school curricula. ND CDE is funded via state appropriation (20%) and course fees. Local school districts must approve enrollment of local students and determine whether the student or school pays the course fee.

North Dakota Century Code 15.1-21-15 allows schools to provide academic services through the use of out-of-state electronic course providers.<sup>260</sup> The approval process is twofold: 1) schools making out-of-state electronic coursework available to students must obtain annual approval; and 2) out-of-state providers also must obtain annual approval. As part of the approval process, providers must make available course details for each course they plan to offer. As of September 2013, five supplemental providers were approved: Aventa Learning, Jefferson County eSchool, Nelson Academy of Agriculture Sciences, e2020 Virtual Academy, and Bridgewater Academy.

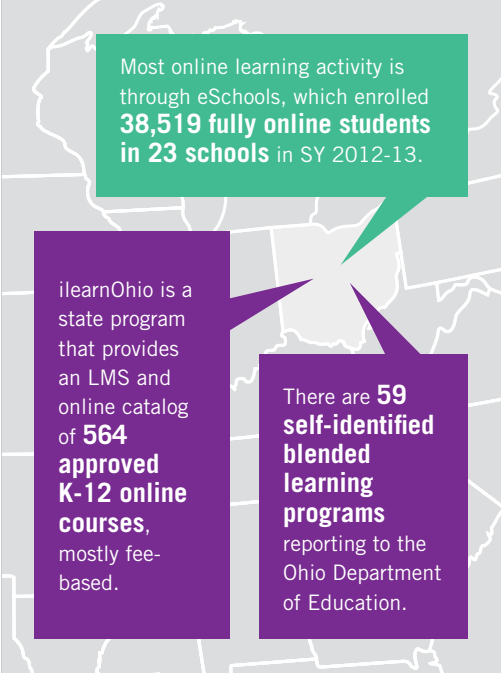
Apart from the legislation that created the North Dakota Division of Independent Study<sup>261</sup> and the law that established the name for the Center for Distance Education, North Dakota state policies have not changed significantly from 2011-2013 and are available at [www.kpk12.com/states/](http://www.kpk12.com/states/).

<sup>260</sup> School and provider forms; retrieved June 11, 2013, <http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/approve/electronic.shtm>

<sup>261</sup> Chapter 15-19; retrieved June 11, 2013, <http://www.legis.nd.gov/cencode/t15c19.pdf>

## Ohio

ONLINE & BLENDED LEARNING  
STATE SNAPSHOT



### Availability of online learning options

SUPPLEMENTAL			FULLY ONLINE		
K-5 (ES)	6-8 (MS)	9-12 (HS)	K-5 (ES)	6-8 (MS)	9-12 (HS)
NONE	SOME	MOST	ALL	ALL	ALL

Availability of info:  
Great  
**Good**  
Fair  
Poor  
Minimal

#### Does this state have...

	Y	N	
Any <b>FULLY BLENDED</b> schools?	●		At least 3 Nexus Academy schools.
Student choice at the school level?	●		
Student choice at the course level?		●	One-time waivers for AP courses through iLearnOhio.
SVS or another publicly funded option for private / homeschool students?	●		Blended schools capped at 125 students per teacher.
Prior public school attendance requirement for online schools?		●	
Online caps by class, school, district, or statewide?	●		Content providers/management companies and schools are considered separately.
PD requirement for online teachers?		●	
State approval process required for online providers?	●		
State approval process required for online courses?		●	No, although approved courses are listed in iLearnOhio catalog.
Online learning requirement for students?		●	
End-of-course exams?		●	

**Most of Ohio’s online learning activity is through its eCommunity schools, which are expanding with the end of a moratorium.** There is some district-level activity (including 59 blended schools), and iLearnOhio provides an online catalog of 564 mostly fee-based online courses for students in grades 5-12 (mainly at high school level).

**Online and blended programs**

Twenty-three Ohio eCommunity schools (often called eSchools and e-Schools in legislation) served 38,519 students in SY 2012-13, a 4% annual increase and among the highest number of fully online students of any state in the country. Online students are from all but three of Ohio’s 614 public school districts. The largest two eSchools, among the largest in the country, are Ohio Virtual Academy High School, which served 13,160 students, and the Electronic High School of Tomorrow, which served 12,496 students.<sup>262</sup> Effective in SY 2015-16, all eSchools with over 3,000 students can grow up to 15% annually, while those with fewer than 3,000 can grow up to 25% per year. Newly opened schools in SY 2013-14 are limited to 1,000 students.<sup>263</sup>

Three new district-based eSchools received approval to open in 2013-14: the Mosaica Online Academy of Ohio (grades K-12), Provost Academy of Ohio (grades 6-12), and Insight School of Ohio (grades 6-12).

<sup>262</sup> Ohio Educational Directory; retrieved July 9, 2013, [http://odevax.ode.state.oh.us/htbin/ohio\\_educ\\_dir.com?dtype=09.+Community+Schools&dirn=&birn=&county=All+Counties](http://odevax.ode.state.oh.us/htbin/ohio_educ_dir.com?dtype=09.+Community+Schools&dirn=&birn=&county=All+Counties). A community school is similar to a charter school in other states; an eCommunity school is an Internet- or computer-based community school.  
<sup>263</sup> Status of HB 59 After Conference Committee on June 27, 2013, Ohio Alliance for Public Charter Schools; retrieved August 18 2013, [http://www.oapcs.org/files/u1/budget\\_handout\\_from\\_june\\_27\\_0.pdf](http://www.oapcs.org/files/u1/budget_handout_from_june_27_0.pdf)

In addition, Connections Education opened three Nexus schools in SY 2012-13, offering a fully blended learning experience to students in grades 9-12 in Cleveland, Columbus, and Toledo. These are among 59 blended programs reported to the Ohio Department of Education (ODE).<sup>264</sup>

ilearnOhio is the state-supported distance learning clearinghouse and e-learning platform funded by appropriation at \$1.5 million in FY 2012. ilearnOhio launched in response to HB153 (2011)<sup>265</sup> that reviews providers and courses before listing them in its catalog;<sup>266</sup> there are 13 approved providers as of September 2013. One-time tuition waivers are available to pay for Advanced Placement® courses for public, private, or homeschooled Ohio students. Ohio is the first state to guide students to MOOCs (massive open online courses), which previously have only been used in higher education. ilearnOhio has authorized 14 MOOCs offered for free by Coursera. The course descriptions state that, “There is no academic credit for taking any Coursera online course, but completing a course offered through Coursera may qualify a student for Flex Credit.”<sup>267</sup>

### **State policies**

SB316 (2012)<sup>268</sup> made explicit the ability of LEAs to create or convert traditional schools, all or in part, to blended schools. These schools must openly declare their blended learning status (or any change to this) each year. Internet- or computer-based eCommunity schools may not declare themselves blended schools. State Code 3302.4 (2012)<sup>269</sup> further clarified that blended schools have enrollment caps of 125 students per teacher; must provide students with access to necessary digital tools; may allow students to earn credits or advance grade levels through competency-based learning models (providing exemption from seat time); and must provide for teacher licensing, training, equipment, library facilities, reporting mechanisms, grade promotion criteria, requirements for graduation, and such other factors as the board finds necessary.

HB555 (2012)<sup>270</sup> terminated the moratorium on new eSchools, but delayed the authorization of new e-schools until July 1, 2013, and limited the number of new eSchools that might open to five per year. The State Board of Education adopted rules regarding applications for new eSchools in May 2013.<sup>271</sup>

HB59 (2013) provides \$675,000 to ilearnOhio for FY 2014 to assess the alignment of online courses with state standards. It also establishes an Electronic Textbook Pilot Project to provide an additional \$675,000 in grants to public and chartered nonpublic schools for purchase of digital texts and electronic educational content through the existing ilearnOhio platform (as well as related professional development and training resources). Up to \$24,150 in each fiscal year will be distributed on a grant basis to eligible school districts (the 490 districts with lowest wealth per pupil) to establish distance learning.<sup>272</sup>

Community schools, including eCommunity schools, receive state funds directly from the state at the same per-pupil base formula and special education weighted amount as traditional districts (\$5,703 in SY 2012-13); these funds have been transferred from school district allocations. They are not eligible for additional state assistance.<sup>273</sup> District-based eSchools are funded at the same levels as other district schools, and are eligible for other funding categories.

Additional details about Ohio’s online learning history can be found at [www.kpk12.com/states](http://www.kpk12.com/states).

<sup>264</sup> Unpublished list of 59 schools provided by Office of Community Schools, ODE, August 22, 2013

<sup>265</sup> HB153 (2011); retrieved July 19, 2013, [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/BillText129/129\\_HB\\_153\\_EN\\_N.html](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/BillText129/129_HB_153_EN_N.html)

<sup>266</sup> ilearnOhio Provider Guidelines; retrieved July 9, 2013, <http://www.ilearnohio.org/pdf/CourseProviderGuidelines.pdf>

<sup>267</sup> Flex credits offer students a way to earn course credit toward high school diplomas in ways not limited solely to “seat time.” See Accelerating and Empowering Student Learning; retrieved July 25, 2013, <http://education.ohio.gov/getattachment/State-Board/State-Board-Reports-and-Policies/Ohio-s-Credit-Flexibility-Plan/FINAL-CreditFLEX-8-4-ExSummarySPREADS.pdf.aspx>

<sup>268</sup> SB316 (2012); retrieved July 9, 2013, [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/BillText129/129\\_SB\\_316\\_EN\\_N.html](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/BillText129/129_SB_316_EN_N.html)

<sup>269</sup> State Code 3302.41 (2012) Use of blended learning model; retrieved August 9, 2013, <http://codes.ohio.gov/orc/3302.41>

<sup>270</sup> Amended Substitute HB555; retrieved July 9, 2013, [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=129\\_HB\\_555](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=129_HB_555)

<sup>271</sup> Ohio Administrative Code 3301-102-09; retrieved July 25, 2013, <http://codes.ohio.gov/oac/3301-102-09>

<sup>272</sup> Amended Substitute HB59; retrieved August 9, 2013, [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/BillText130/130\\_HB\\_59\\_EN\\_N.html](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/BillText130/130_HB_59_EN_N.html)

<sup>273</sup> Community School Funding Information; retrieved July 9, 2013, <http://education.ohio.gov/getattachment/Topics/Finance-and-Funding/State-Funding-For-Schools/Community-School-Funding/School-Options-Enrollment-System/Community-School-Funding-Information-Copy.pdf.aspx>



# Oklahoma

## ONLINE & BLENDED LEARNING STATE SNAPSHOT

The Oklahoma Supplemental Online Course Program (OSOCP) makes courses available to students statewide through **17 approved providers**.

**Four fully online schools served 6,298 students** in SY 2012-13; other district programs exist.

### Availability of online learning options

SUPPLEMENTAL			FULLY ONLINE		
K-5 (ES)	6-8 (MS)	9-12 (HS)	K-5 (ES)	6-8 (MS)	9-12 (HS)
NONE	NONE	MOST	ALL	ALL	ALL

### Availability of info:

- Great
- Good
- Fair
- Poor**
- Minimal

### Does this state have...

	Y	N	
Any <b>FULLY BLENDED</b> schools?		●	
Student choice at the school level?	●		By transferring into another district.
Student choice at the course level?		●	
SVS or another publicly funded option for private / homeschool students?		●	OSOCP gives students choice, but decision lies with the district.
Prior public school attendance requirement for online schools?	●		
Online caps by class, school, district, or statewide?		●	
PD requirement for online teachers?		●	
State approval process required for online providers?		●	Only to be listed in the OSOCP.
State approval process required for online courses?		●	
Online learning requirement for students?		●	
End-of-course exams?	●		In 7 subjects.

### Oklahoma has four fully online schools and two supplemental online programs operating statewide, as well as several district programs.

The Oklahoma Department of Education reports 10,585<sup>274</sup> unique students took online courses in SY 2012-13 through 17 approved full-time and supplemental online providers;<sup>275</sup> this number includes credit recovery and alternative education students.

SB280 (2011)<sup>276</sup> directed the State Board of Education to adopt rules to provide “a process by which students are not denied the opportunity to enroll in educationally appropriate courses by school districts.” In June 2012, board rule<sup>277</sup> created the Oklahoma Supplemental Online Course Program (OSOCP) to establish a framework for school districts to offer supplemental online courses. That rule allows students to take up to five hours of supplemental online instruction at no cost to the student; funding is prorated to the prior year’s per pupil expenditure. The original legislation was further clarified in SB419 (2013), which defined “educationally appropriate” to mean, “any instruction that is not substantially a repeat of a course or portion of a course that the student has successfully completed, regardless of the grade of the student, and regardless of whether a course is similar to or identical to the instruction that is currently offered in the school district.”

<sup>274</sup> Enrollment numbers are DOE estimates based on self-reported data from schools. In SY 2011-12, it is unclear if the enrollment number included credit recovery.

<sup>275</sup> Supplemental Online Course Providers; retrieved June 7, 2013, <http://ok.gov/sde/node/3544#List>

<sup>276</sup> SB280 (2011); retrieved June 7, 2013, <http://www.oklegislature.gov/BillInfo.aspx?Bill=sb280&Session=1100>

<sup>277</sup> State Board rule; retrieved June 7, 2013, <http://ok.gov/sde/sites/ok.gov/sde/files/Rules-Ch15Sub34SuppOnlineCourses.pdf>

Under the OSOCP, the board has approved 17 providers and seen an increase in unique students taking an online course. While each school district must adopt its own rules regarding the OSOCP, those rules must not deny a student the opportunity to enroll in supplemental online courses, although the district does have the final say in regard to choosing a provider. While each school district is responsible for paying each course provider, “payment to the provider will be based upon continued course enrollment and subsequent course completion.”

The rule also allows students to earn one required or elective course credit by demonstrating “mastery of Oklahoma’s PASS and/or CCSS in one-credit courses without specified instructional time.”

The state has two fully online charter schools: Oklahoma Virtual Charter Academy served 2,782 enrollments<sup>278</sup> and Epic One Charter School served 2,241 enrollments in SY 2012-13. There are also two fully online non-charter schools: Oklahoma Virtual High School (run by Advanced Academics), which reported 765 students, and Oklahoma Connections Academy (run by Connections Academy), which served 510 enrollments in SY 2012-13. Tulsa Public Schools also offers a full-time virtual school to its students. Supplemental online programs include the University of Oklahoma Independent Learning High School and Oklahoma State University K-12 Distance Learning Academy.

SB1816<sup>279</sup> (2012) created the Statewide Virtual Charter School Board; SB267 (2013) amended the original legislation as follows:

- The Statewide Virtual Charter School Board offers oversight of the operations and becomes the sole authorizer of all statewide virtual charter schools.
- The board establishes policies and procedures for accepting, approving, disapproving, and renewing statewide virtual charter school applications. By 2014, all existing virtual charter schools must be approved by the board.
- SB267 prevents a school district from offering a fully online education to students who reside outside the district, which will force two of the current fully online schools to seek a charter with the board in order to continue operations.

Students can transfer across districts during the state’s annual open transfer period of January 1 through April 1, or apply for an “emergency” transfer, which must be approved by both the sending and receiving districts. State funding is paid to the school district based on standard per-pupil public school funding regardless of the delivery method or authorizer.

<sup>278</sup> 2013 K12 Academic Report; retrieved August 6, 2013, <http://www.k12.com/sites/default/files/pdf/2013-K12-Academic-Report-Feb6-2013.pdf>

<sup>279</sup> SB1816 (2012); retrieved June 7, 2013, <http://www.oklegislature.gov/BillInfo.aspx?Bill=SB1816&session=1200>

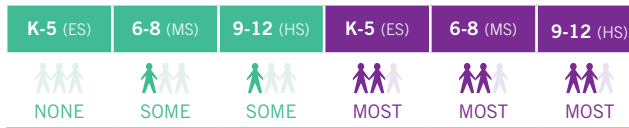
# Oregon

## ONLINE & BLENDED LEARNING STATE SNAPSHOT

Twelve fully online charter schools served 6,637 students statewide in SY 2012-13.

There are several fully online single-district programs and varied providers offering supplemental courses statewide. 2013 legislation introduces Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) requirements for SY 2014-15.

### Availability of online learning options



Availability of info:

- Great
- Good
- Fair**
- Poor
- Minimal

### Does this state have...

	Y	N
Any <b>FULLY BLENDED</b> schools?		●
Student choice at the school level?	●	
Student choice at the course level?		●
SVS or another publicly funded option for private / homeschool students?	●	
Prior public school attendance requirement for online schools?		●
Online caps by class, school, district, or statewide?	●	
PD requirement for online teachers?		●
State approval process required for online providers?		●
State approval process required for online courses?		●
Online learning requirement for students?		●
End-of-course exams?		●

● 12 virtual charters.

● OVSD serves homeschooled students.

● 3% cap on the number of students in all virtual schools from each district.

**Oregon has fully online schools, district-level part- and full-time online programs, and the Oregon Virtual School District (OVSD), a state program.** New legislation passed in 2013 provides for teacher resources and introduces Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) legislation for SY 2014-15.

### Online and blended programs

Twelve fully online charter schools served 6,637 students statewide in SY 2012-13;<sup>280</sup> several fully online single-district programs and other providers offer supplemental courses statewide.<sup>281</sup> The largest fully online schools are Oregon Connections Academy with 3,268 students, Oregon Virtual Academy with 1,164 students, and Clackamas Web Academy with 459 students in SY 2012-13.

OVSD is a state program that provides a platform of supplemental courses, content, teaching applications, and Google Applications for Education Implementation support; in SY 2012-13, almost 300,000 user accounts were created, and approximately 75,000 users from 132 districts and education service districts used OVSD course materials consistently.

In SY 2012-13 there were 2,017 course enrollments across the Portland, Hillsboro, Astoria, Fossil, Beaverton, and Southern Oregon ESD districts using Florida Virtual School (FLVS) courses through OVSD. Based on the successes of this exploratory program, for the 2013-15 biennium all public schools statewide

<sup>280</sup> Enrollment numbers retrieved from Oregon Department of Education Fall Membership Reports 2012-13; retrieved August 12, 2013, <http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/page/?=3225>

<sup>281</sup> Personal communication with Oregon Department of Education, August 29, 2013

will have unlimited use of 35 FLVS Courses and 46 National Repository of Online Courses (NROC) high school courses;<sup>282</sup> teacher training and support will be freely available to all district teachers providing courses. All courses are available at no charge to public and homeschool students statewide. Teachers have used the portal to create 6,500 customized teaching units to supplement their traditional curricula. In SY 2012-13 OVSD also provided free online Advanced Placement® exam prep review courses in 12 subjects to 4,500 students. OVSD receives \$900,000 annually from the State School Fund.

In SY 2013-14 Lebanon Community Schools launched the fully online iOregon using multiple vendor curricula, and many schools are opening blended programs through OVSD. OSU Extension, Portland State University Independent Study, and Chemeketa Community College Early College offer dual credit early college programs for high school students.

### ***State policies***

Oregon passed a series of education reform bills in 2012 designed to align the state public education system from pre-kindergarten through college; several 2013 initiatives have resulted.

HB2426 (2013)<sup>283</sup> requires that, effective SY 2014-15, each district school board “adopt policies for the use of personal electronic devices in the schools of the school district” to “support academic activities and independent communications.”

HB3232<sup>284</sup> and HB3233,<sup>285</sup> passed in July 2013, are designed to “help turn around under-performing schools and improve student outcomes statewide.”<sup>286</sup> This includes the Network for Quality Teaching and Learning, which will receive \$33 million every two years<sup>287</sup> in addition to one-time grant money of almost \$13 million. The network provides an online dashboard for teacher networking, professional development, and course development in line with Common Core standards.

The Task Force on Virtual School Governance made recommendations in December 2011 on new governance standards for online schools.<sup>288</sup> This resulted in HB2301<sup>289</sup> (2011), which allowed students to choose at the course level; the student’s resident district and the provider district were required to come to an agreement on “the amount of moneys to be transferred” from the home district to the provider district, with all OVSD courses fully funded by per-pupil allocation. Students may enroll in virtual charter schools without approval of the school district where the student resides. However, if more than 3% of the students who reside in the district are enrolled in virtual charter schools not sponsored by the district, then the student must receive permission from the district. While that permission is not guaranteed, the student can appeal to the State Board of Education. Up to 5% of a virtual charter school’s instructional hours may be taught by teachers who are not licensed in Oregon.

<sup>282</sup> Ibid

<sup>283</sup> HB2426 (2013); retrieved August 3, 2013, <http://www.leg.state.or.us/13reg/measpdf/hb2400.dir/hb2426.en.pdf>

<sup>284</sup> HB3232 (2013); retrieved August 30, 2013, <http://www.leg.state.or.us/13reg/measpdf/hb3200.dir/hb3232.en.pdf>

<sup>285</sup> HB3233 (2013); retrieved August 30, 2013, <http://www.leg.state.or.us/13reg/measpdf/hb3200.dir/hb3233.en.pdf>

<sup>286</sup> Strategic Initiatives; retrieved August 30, 2013, <http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/page/?id=3958>

<sup>287</sup> HB2506 (2013); retrieved September 11, 2013, <http://gov.oregonlive.com/bill/2013/HB2506/>

<sup>288</sup> Joint Interim Task Force on Virtual School Governance Report; retrieved August 13, 2013 [http://content.govdelivery.com/attachments/ORLEG/2011/12/14/file\\_attachments/74680/JVSG\\_Report\\_Full\\_Final.pdf](http://content.govdelivery.com/attachments/ORLEG/2011/12/14/file_attachments/74680/JVSG_Report_Full_Final.pdf)

<sup>289</sup> HB2301; retrieved August 13, 2013, <http://www.leg.state.or.us/11reg/measpdf/hb2300.dir/hb2301.intro.pdf>

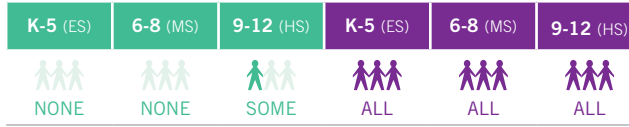
# Pennsylvania

## ONLINE & BLENDED LEARNING STATE SNAPSHOT

Pennsylvania had **16 cyber charter schools** serving **34,694 students** in grades K-12 in SY 2012-13, a 7% annual increase. Districts, IUs, and consortia are starting programs to draw students back from cyber charters.

There are no statewide supplemental options for students, although there are some district, IU, and consortia options available for students.

### Availability of online learning options



### Availability of info:

- Great
- Good
- Fair**
- Poor
- Minimal

### Does this state have...

	Y	N	
Any <b>FULLY BLENDED</b> schools?	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	• Several fully blended schools using Blended Schools Network.
Student choice at the school level?	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Student choice at the course level?	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	• Students may enroll in any cyber charter in the state.
SVS or another publicly funded option for private / homeschool students?	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	
Prior public school attendance requirement for online schools?	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	• Philadelphia has a moratorium on new cyber charters, and imposes enrollment caps on renewals.
Online caps by class, school, district, or statewide?	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	
PD requirement for online teachers?	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	• In 10 subjects.
State approval process required for online providers?	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	
State approval process required for online courses?	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	
Online learning requirement for students?	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	
End-of-course exams?	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	

**Pennsylvania had 16 cyber charter schools<sup>290</sup> serving 34,694 students in grades K-12 in SY 2012-13,<sup>291</sup> a 7% annual increase from SY 2011-12.** A growing number of districts, independent units (IU), and consortia are providing online courses for area students in an attempt to draw students back from cyber charters. However, these programs do not report to the state, so it is unclear how many there are or how many students they are serving. The state does not have a state virtual school. The non-profit organization Blendedschools.net (BSN) has a significant presence in the state, enabling schools to set up their own online, supplemental, and blended learning programs. BSN is currently working with 77,000 students in 169 out of 500 school districts, providing a mix of supplemental, blended, and technology-enhanced programs, as well as a number of fully blended programs.

### Online programs

Cyber charters have dominated K-12 online options in Pennsylvania since SusQ-Cyber Charter School first opened in 1998. Enrollments have grown steadily, and Pennsylvania Cyber Charter School, with 10,434 students, is one of the largest online schools in the country; it graduated 1,500 students in 2013.<sup>292</sup> In addition, Agora Cyber Charter served 9,175 students and Commonwealth Connections Academy served

<sup>290</sup> 2012-2013 Cyber Charter Schools Listing; retrieved June 27, 2013, [http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/charter\\_schools/7356](http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/charter_schools/7356)

<sup>291</sup> Charter School Annual Reports and Enrollment Data; retrieved June 27, 2013, [http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/annual\\_reports\\_and\\_statistics/7357](http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/annual_reports_and_statistics/7357). These data represent total cyber charter school enrollment in SY 2012-13; the state has no definition for “full-time” or “fully online.”

<sup>292</sup> PA Cyber graduates 1,500; retrieved June 25, 2013, [http://www.pacyber.org/view-press.jsp?restrictids=nu\\_repeatitemid&restrictval=ues=0500280840951370416032792](http://www.pacyber.org/view-press.jsp?restrictids=nu_repeatitemid&restrictval=ues=0500280840951370416032792)

6,667 students in SY 2012-13.<sup>293</sup> While five of 16 cyber charters saw double, or even triple, digit percentage growth in enrollments, the other seven in operation prior to SY 2012-13 saw either less than 5% growth or a drop in enrollments. Four new cyber charters operated in SY 2012-13, while one surrendered its charter. Enrollment details for all 16 cyber charters are available on the *Keeping Pace* website at <http://kpk12.com/states/>.

Current policy requires school districts to pay tuition to cyber charter schools based on per-pupil expenses in the student's resident district, a figure that ranges from \$5,400 to \$15,000 per student to attend the same cyber school<sup>294</sup> (averaging \$12,657 according to a 2012 report from the state auditor general).<sup>295</sup> Through SY 2011-12, when a student left a district for a charter or cyber charter, the state would partially reimburse the district at the end of the school year for the cost of the student. In SY 2010-11 the reimbursement dropped to an average of 25% of the cost, and it was completely eliminated in SY 2011-12. The auditor general's report recommended setting the cyber charter funding rate at \$6,500 per student; it also recommended the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) increase oversight of charters and cyber charters.<sup>296</sup> Thirteen separate cyber and charter school reform bills were introduced during the 2013-14 legislative session, mainly targeting cost-reduction measures for districts, but as of September 2013, there have been no further changes to the funding of cyber school students.

Districts have responded to what they see as lost funding by opening their own online academies and working to bring students back. IUs are also opening cyber service programs for students in their districts. These programs typically offer supplemental or blended courses (although some offer a fully online option); do not have to be authorized by the PDE; and do not require separate reporting as they simply roll into overall district accountability. As a result, the total number of district online academies and online service programs is unknown.

### ***State policies and accountability***

With the passage of Act 88 (2002), the General Assembly allowed for the establishment of cyber charter schools in Pennsylvania.<sup>297</sup> Oversight is regulated by a combination of charter school laws that oversee all charter schools, as well as regulations specific to cyber charters. Pennsylvania System of Cyber Charter Review (PASCCR), the charter school's annual report to the state, and the original charter school application to PDE explain how each school meets Pennsylvania's academic standards and assessment requirements, what technical support will be given to students, how student work will be monitored, what type of communication will be held with students and parents, and how often that communication will take place.

In July 2013 the Department of Education released new guidance to cyber charter applicants and operators relating to the requirements for online course delivery, and in particular the proper use of a cyber charter schools' physical facilities.<sup>298</sup> It states that cyber charters "offer a structured education program in which the school utilizes technology in order to provide a significant portion of its curriculum and instruction through the Internet or other electronic means without a school-established requirement that the student be present at a supervised physical facility designated by the school, except on a very limited basis, such as for standardized tests."

Additional details about charter authorization, reporting, funding, and requirements can be found at [www.kpk12.com/states/](http://www.kpk12.com/states/).

<sup>293</sup> The Public Charter Schools Dashboard; retrieved June 26, 2013, <http://dashboard.publiccharters.org/dashboard/schools/state/PA/year/2013>

<sup>294</sup> Charter/Cyber Charter Costs for Pennsylvania School Districts (PA School Boards Association); retrieved June 26, 2013, <http://www.psba.org/issues-advocacy/issues-research/research-resource-center/psba-charterschool-white-paper-oct2010.pdf>

<sup>295</sup> Charter and Cyber Charter Education Funding Reform Should Save Taxpayers \$365 Million Annually; retrieved June 28, 2013, <http://www.auditorgen.state.pa.us/department/press/cybercharterspecialreport201206.pdf>

<sup>296</sup> Ibid.

<sup>297</sup> HB4 (2001); retrieved June 25, 2013, <http://www2.legis.state.pa.us/WU01/LI/BI/BT/2001/0/HB0004P4196.pdf>

<sup>298</sup> Cyber Charter School Operations and Proper Use of Physical Facilities (BEC 24 P.S. §§ 17-1741-A – 17-1751-A); retrieved August 7, 2013, [http://www.education.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/basic\\_education\\_circulars/7497](http://www.education.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/basic_education_circulars/7497)

# Rhode Island

## ONLINE & BLENDED LEARNING STATE SNAPSHOT

Northern Rhode Island Collaborative served students in grades 3-12 in **80 online courses**, and The VHS Collaborative served **796 course enrollments** in SY 2012-13.

Rhode Island does not have fully online schools.

### Availability of online learning options

SUPPLEMENTAL			FULLY ONLINE		
K-5 (ES)	6-8 (MS)	9-12 (HS)	K-5 (ES)	6-8 (MS)	9-12 (HS)
NONE	NONE	SOME	NONE	NONE	NONE

### Availability of info:

- Great
- Good**
- Fair
- Poor
- Minimal

### Does this state have...

	Y	N
Any <b>FULLY BLENDED</b> schools?	●	●
Student choice at the school level?		●
Student choice at the course level?		●
SVS or another publicly funded option for private / homeschool students?		●
Prior public school attendance requirement for online schools?		●
Online caps by class, school, district, or statewide?		●
PD requirement for online teachers?		●
State approval process required for online providers?		●
State approval process required for online courses?		●
Online learning requirement for students?		●
End-of-course exams?		●

At least 3: Village Green Virtual Public Charter High School, Sheila C. "Skip" Nowell Leadership Academy, and Pleasant View Elementary School.

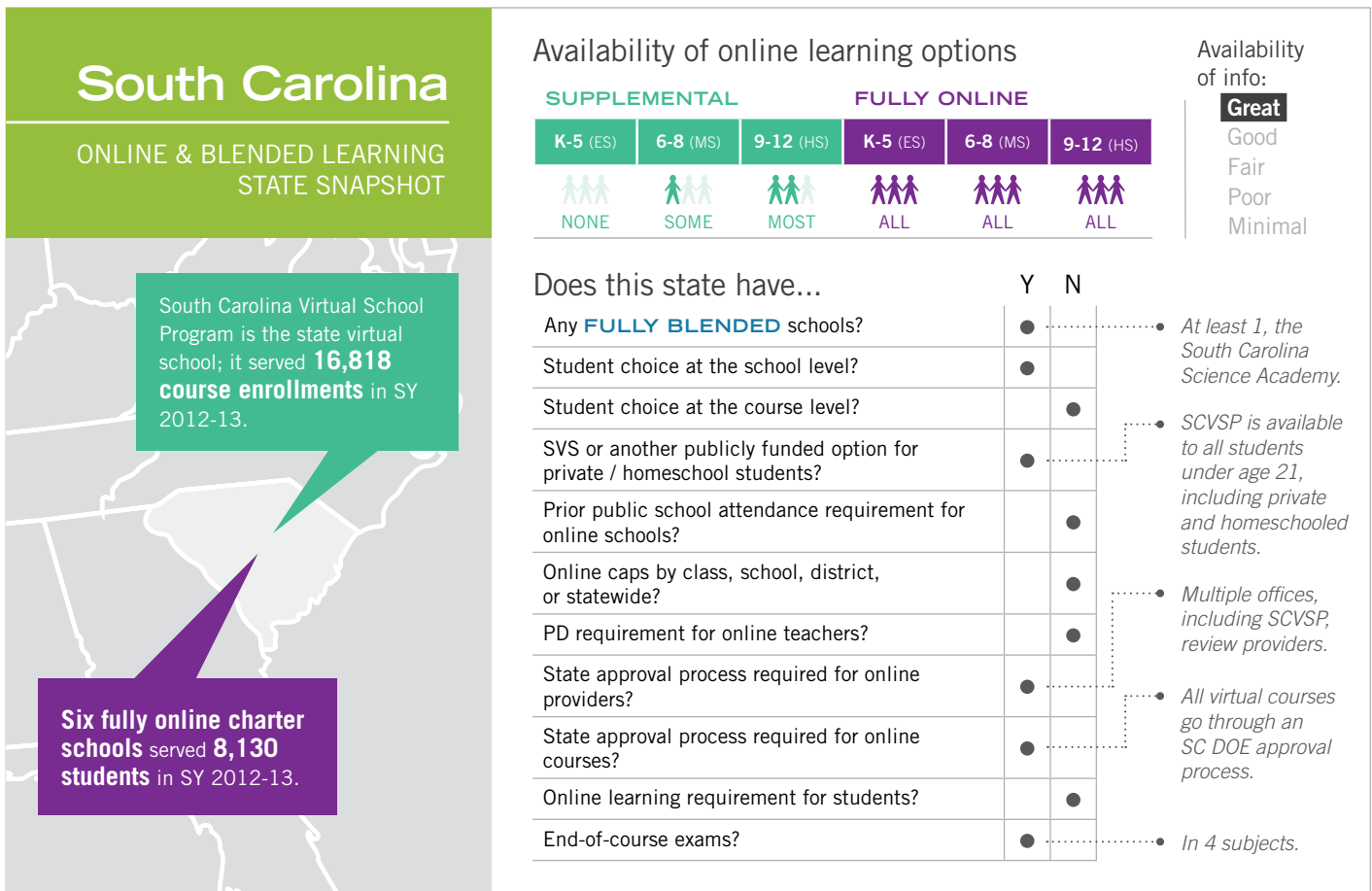
**The Northern Rhode Island Collaborative, in association with the Virtual Learning Academy of the Jefferson County Educational Service Center in Ohio, offers online courses that are paid for by individual school districts.** It offered 80 courses to students in grades 3-12 in SY 2012-13. The VHS Collaborative reported 796 course enrollments from 24 Rhode Island middle and high schools<sup>299</sup> in SY 2012-13. The Village Green Virtual Public Charter High School and Sheila C. "Skip" Nowell Leadership Academy opened in fall 2013 and are the first two fully blended charter schools in Rhode Island. Pleasant View Elementary School<sup>300</sup> in Providence implemented a blended learning model for its 460 K-8 students SY 2012-13.

The Statewide Virtual Education Act (S2276, 2012)<sup>301</sup> formalized virtual learning regulations and definitions and instructed the commissioner of education to develop policies in support of and guidelines for virtual education, including specifics on an annual report to be delivered to the legislature. It also "ensures teachers of virtual courses and other online learning activities are appropriately trained and qualified and meet certification requirements set forth by the commissioner of education." This allowed teachers outside of Rhode Island to teach virtual courses to Rhode Island students.

<sup>299</sup> The VHS Collaborative; retrieved July 2, 2013, <http://www.govhs.org/Pages/AboutUs-ParticipatingSchools>

<sup>300</sup> Rhode Island Annual Report, retrieved August 14, 2013, [http://www2.ride.ri.gov/OMP/ML/docs/2013/VL\\_Annual\\_Report\\_FY2013\\_Binder.pdf](http://www2.ride.ri.gov/OMP/ML/docs/2013/VL_Annual_Report_FY2013_Binder.pdf)

<sup>301</sup> S2276 The Statewide Virtual Education Act (2012); retrieved July 24, 2013, <http://www.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText12/SenateText12/S2276Aaa.pdf>



## South Carolina has a state virtual school, the South Carolina Virtual School Program (SCVSP); six online charter schools; and several district programs.

SCVSP served 16,818 course enrollments in SY 2012-13, a 6% annual increase. SCVSP was established by Act 26 (2007),<sup>302</sup> and expands with the passage of H3752<sup>303</sup> in 2013. H3752 lifts the cap of three online credits allowed per student per year, allows students in grades 8-12 (expanding to 6-12 by SY 2014-15) to take unlimited courses via SCVSP, and expands course listings to include more electives and AP courses. SCVSP is available to all students under age 21, including adult education, private school, and homeschooled students. It had a budget of \$3 million in SY 2012-13. For \$3,500 per course, SCVSP offers a curriculum and certified teacher to schools that need an in-demand course or a teacher in a particular area.

Six fully online charter schools enrolled 8,130 students in SY 2012-13, a 2% annual increase.<sup>304</sup> A few districts offer online programs to their own students, although some only offer summer school. South Carolina Science Academy is a fully blended school that opened in fall 2013 and serves grades 6-8. Additional details about online options can be found at [www.kpk12.com/states](http://www.kpk12.com/states).

The South Carolina Public Charter School District (SCPCSD) approves virtual charter school applications; there are no enrollment limits for charter schools. The SCPCSD is one of the first charter-authorizing agencies in the country to also be an LEA. Virtual charter schools are funded by the same formula applied to all charter schools in the state; funds are distributed by the SCPCSD.

<sup>302</sup> Act 26 (2007) and H3097; retrieved July 11, 2013, [http://www.scstatehouse.gov/sess117\\_2007-2008/bills/3097.htm](http://www.scstatehouse.gov/sess117_2007-2008/bills/3097.htm)

<sup>303</sup> H3752 (2013), retrieved July 12, 2013, [http://www.scstatehouse.gov/sess120\\_2013-2014/bills/3752.htm](http://www.scstatehouse.gov/sess120_2013-2014/bills/3752.htm)

<sup>304</sup> Active Student Head Count; retrieved July 11, 2013, [http://www.ed.sc.gov/data/student-counts/Student\\_Headcounts/ActiveStudentHeadcounts.cfm](http://www.ed.sc.gov/data/student-counts/Student_Headcounts/ActiveStudentHeadcounts.cfm)



# South Dakota

## ONLINE & BLENDED LEARNING STATE SNAPSHOT

South Dakota Virtual School is a consortium of course providers approved by the state department of education; providers served **4,052 course enrollments** in SY 2012-13

The first statewide fully online school, Black Hills Online Learning Community, opened in SY 2012-13 and served **50 students**; it expands to include grades 9-12 in SY 2013-14. Districts can prevent a student from enrolling.

### Availability of online learning options

SUPPLEMENTAL			FULLY ONLINE		
K-5 (ES)	6-8 (MS)	9-12 (HS)	K-5 (ES)	6-8 (MS)	9-12 (HS)
NONE	SOME	MOST	NONE	NONE	NONE

Availability of info:

**Great**

- Good
- Fair
- Poor
- Minimal

### Does this state have...

	Y	N	
Any <b>FULLY BLENDED</b> schools?		●	
Student choice at the school level?		●	● Districts can refuse a student's request to enroll.
Student choice at the course level?		●	
SVS or another publicly funded option for private / homeschool students?		●	● HB1113 (2007) restricted districts from putting a grade on a student transcript unless the course is from an approved provider.
Prior public school attendance requirement for online schools?		●	
Online caps by class, school, district, or statewide?		●	
PD requirement for online teachers?		●	
State approval process required for online providers?	●		● All courses listed with SDVS are required to be approved.
State approval process required for online courses?	●		
Online learning requirement for students?		●	
End-of-course exams?	●		● In 12 subjects.

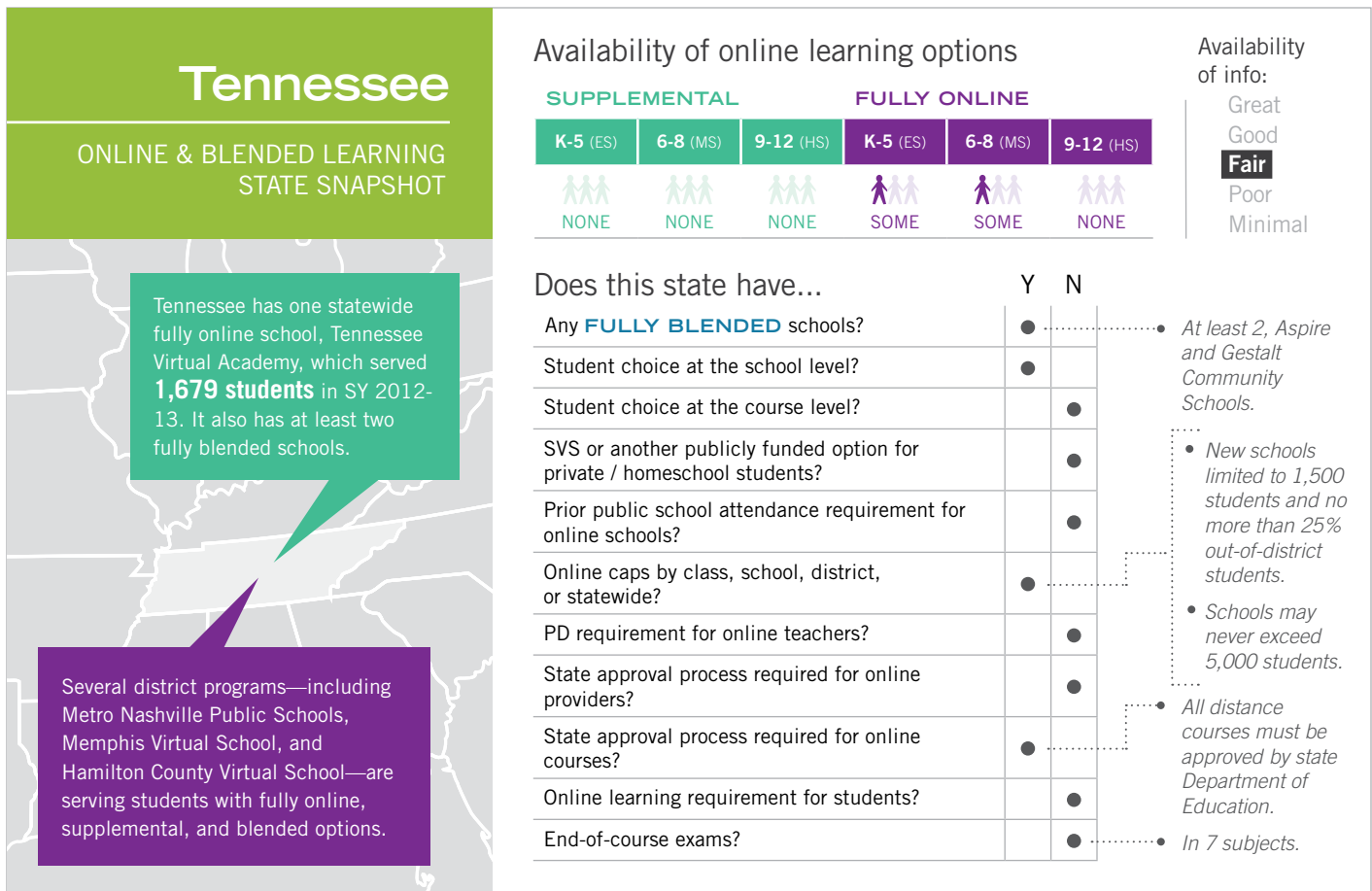
### The South Dakota Virtual School (SDVS), a consortium of approved distance education providers managed from within the South Dakota Department of Education (SDDOE), is the main online learning option for students.

The SDVS was created by HB1236 (2006) and launched in March 2007. The SDVS acts as a clearinghouse: Providers set course fees and are paid directly by school districts, which have the right to refuse students' requests for an online course. It served 4,052 course enrollments in SY 2012-13, an increase of 6% from the previous year. The SDDOE approves all distance learning providers (DLP) and their courses for inclusion in the SDVS. More than 400 courses have been approved. HB1113 (2007) restricted districts from putting a grade on a student transcript unless the course was from an approved DLP.<sup>305</sup> Each certified DLP is required to report on the types of courses offered, the number and names of districts served, the number of course registrations, completion rates, and other information. The certification only applies to programs originating from outside the school district being served, which effectively limits any other programs from operating statewide.<sup>306</sup>

In SY 2012-13 the Black Hills Online Learning Community piloted a fully online option for 50 K-8 statewide students using curriculum from K12 Inc. It expanded to serve grades 9-12 in SY 2013-14, and is listed as an SDVS provider. Other approved providers include Dakota Interactive Academic Link (DIAL) Virtual School; the E-Learning Center, which offers college-prep and AP courses; Learning Power, which offers AP classes; and High Plains Alternative School. In addition, the Sioux Falls School District offers online courses to its students.

<sup>305</sup> List of approved providers; retrieved June 7, 2013, <http://www.sdvs.k12.sd.us/Students/Providers.aspx>

<sup>306</sup> From South Dakota administrative rules specific to distance learning and the virtual school; retrieved June 7, 2013, <http://legis.state.sd.us/rules/DisplayRule.aspx?Rule=24:43:12>



## Tennessee has one fully online statewide school and a few district programs serving students with online and blended options.

The first fully online school, Tennessee Virtual Academy, serves grades K-8 and reported 1,679 students in SY 2012-13.<sup>307</sup> Several district-run programs, including Hamilton County Virtual School, Memphis Virtual School, and MNPS Virtual School in Nashville, are serving their own students with online and blended options. At least two fully blended schools exist in the state, Aspire Public Schools and Gestalt Community Schools.

HB1030 (2011),<sup>308</sup> the Virtual Public School Act, allowed online schools. HB3062 (2012)<sup>309</sup> allows students the option to move through a course at their own pace. According to Board of Education policy,<sup>310</sup> virtual schools may increase enrollment in online classes by up to 25% over numbers established for brick-and-mortar classes in T.C.A. § 49-1-104 if the school “has a school effect score of three (3) or higher as reported by the Tennessee Department of Education in the prior year.” A state virtual school, the Effective Engaging E-learning Environment for Tennessee (e4TN), was funded through Enhancing Education Through Technology (E2T2) funds, but it lost funding in 2011 and did not operate in SY 2011-12.

SB157 (2013)<sup>311</sup> puts restrictions on new public virtual schools. It states that:

- Initial enrollment is limited to 1,500 students.

<sup>307</sup> Tennessee Department of Education School Report Card; retrieved September 11, 2013, <http://edu.reportcard.state.tn.us/pls/apex/f?p=200:1:8634842859105599::NO:::> (Tennessee Virtual Academy is authorized by Union County.)

<sup>308</sup> House Bill 1030 (2011); retrieved August 6, 2013; <http://www.capitol.tn.gov/Bills/107/Bill/HB1030.pdf>

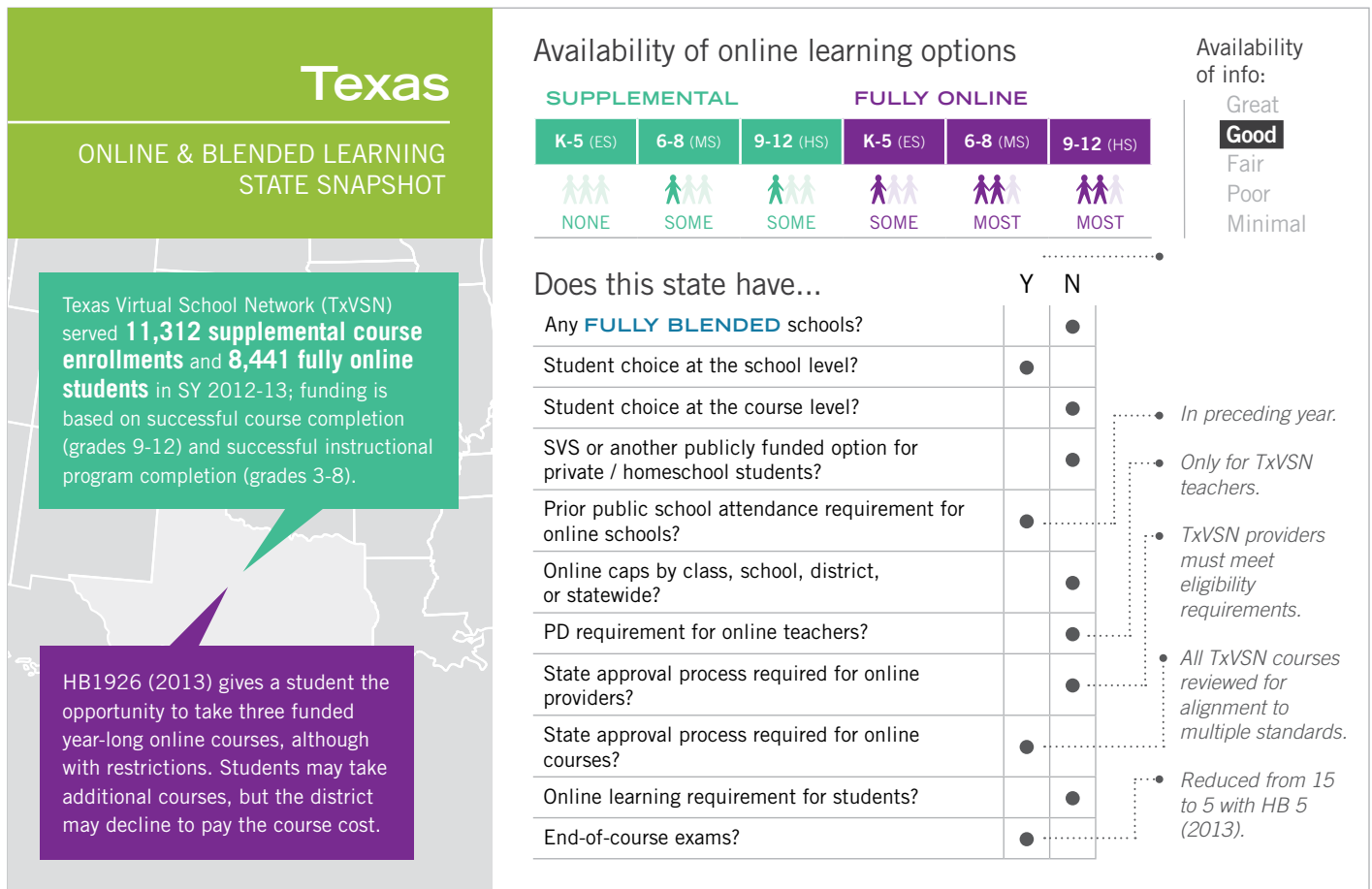
<sup>309</sup> House Bill 3062 (2012); retrieved August 6, 2013; <http://state.tn.us/sos/acts/107/pub/pc0999.pdf>

<sup>310</sup> State Board of Education Policy on Distance Learning and eLearning [http://www.tn.gov/sbe/Policies/3.208\\_Distance\\_Learning\\_and\\_e-Learning.pdf](http://www.tn.gov/sbe/Policies/3.208_Distance_Learning_and_e-Learning.pdf)

<sup>311</sup> SB157 (2013); retrieved September 11, 2013, <http://www.capitol.tn.gov/Bills/108/Bill/SB0157.pdf>

- No more than 25% of a virtual school's students may come from outside the LEA.
- No school shall exceed 5,000 students.

Existing virtual public schools may continue to serve students who were enrolled as of January 1, 2013. The first two restrictions will be lifted when a “virtual public school demonstrates student achievement growth at a minimum level of “at expectations” as represented by the Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System.” The legislation also states that if a school demonstrates “student achievement growth at a level “significantly below expectations” for two consecutive years ... the commissioner shall have the authority to reinstitute the enrollment caps ... or direct the LEA to close the school.” This last requirement is in effect as of SY 2012-13.



## Most online activity in Texas is through the Texas Virtual School Network (TxVSN), which has two components: a supplemental statewide course catalog of high school courses and the full-time TxVSN Online Schools (OLS) program for grades 3-12.

Texas passed legislation in 2013 that gives students the option to take up to three funded TxVSN courses each year, although with restrictions, as well as a bill that expands existing options for competency-based learning options. Texas also has some district programs in Houston, Katy, Plano, and Irving, as well as a consortium of several small rural districts in East Texas known collaboratively as SUPERNet.

HB1926 (2013)<sup>312</sup> amends the legislation authorizing the TxVSN; it allows students to take up to three year-long supplemental online courses, or the equivalent, each year funded by their district or open-enrollment charter school. Courses must be taken as part of the student's normal course load, which is defined as seven credit hours per instructional year. Districts and charter schools are not required to pay for more than three courses (although a student may enroll in additional courses but may be required to pay), may deny a student's enrollment request if the district or charter school offers a substantially similar course, and has discretion to select the course provider for the course a student requests.<sup>313</sup>

Additional highlights of HB1926 (2013) include:

- Adds the option—outside the TxVSN—for a school district or open-enrollment charter school that provides a course through distance learning and seeks to inform other districts or schools of the

<sup>312</sup> HB1926 (2013); retrieved July 14, 2013, <http://www.lrl.state.tx.us/scanned/83ccrs/HB1926.PDF>

<sup>313</sup> A clause in HB1926 states that "districts or open-enrollment charter schools may decline to pay for more than three year-long online courses, or the equivalent, per student each instructional year unless a student was enrolled in a full-time online program that was operating on January 1, 2013." Three additional full-time online schools that requested and received approval from the commissioner of education for a waiver to this funding limitation began operation in the SY 2013-14.

availability of the course to submit information about the course for publication by the TEA; prevents the commissioner from adopting rules governing course pricing, allowing price to be determined by the school districts or open-enrollment charter schools involved.

- Adds nonprofits and private entities to the list of possible TxVSN statewide course catalog providers. These entities must abide by additional requirements, including providing evidence of prior successful experience offering online courses to middle or high school students by demonstrating student success in course completion and performance.
- Includes entities that provide professional development courses as eligible TxVSN course providers.
- Requires districts and open-enrollment charter schools to send a copy of the written local policy providing students with the opportunity to enroll in TxVSN online courses to parents of every middle and high school student at least once per school year.
- Clarifies the eligibility requirements for open-enrollment charter schools wishing to offer courses through the TxVSN.
- Allows the TEA to enter into reciprocity agreements with other states to facilitate expedited course approval; courses must be evaluated to ensure compliance with state law and curriculum standards. It also requires all course providers to apply for renewed course approval to coincide with revisions to the required curriculum but not later than every 10 years.
- Prohibits course providers from offering inducements for student enrollment.
- Clarifies additional details about each course that must be published on the website, including aggregate student performance.
- Directs the commissioner to study the network capabilities of each school district by December 1, 2015.

Texas Administrative Code (TAC), Chapter 70,<sup>314</sup> which provides the Commissioner's Rules guiding the TxVSN, was modified in February 2013 as follows:

- The maximum enrollment cap for fully online schools was removed.
- Eligible districts and open-enrollment charter schools do not need to go through a lengthy application and approval process, but rather can notify TEA annually that they intend to open a virtual school. Three additional districts, Grapevine-Colleyville ISD, Huntsville ISD, and Red Oak ISD opened new TxVSN online schools in fall 2013 as a result of this rule change and per waiver of the commissioner of education.

Also passed in 2013, SB1365<sup>315</sup> expands existing opportunities for students in grades K-12 to earn credit for courses or accelerate on the basis of an examination using one of at least four exams selected by a school district board of trustees. Students who receive credit for the course are not required to take an end-of-course (EOC) exam.

### **Online programs**

TxVSN began offering courses through its statewide course catalog in January 2009. Course enrollments grew quickly to 22,910 in SY 2010-11,<sup>316</sup> but with the elimination of allotment funding for catalog course fees with SB1 (2011),<sup>317</sup> course enrollments dropped by 76% in SY 2011-12; enrollments then increased by 102% in SY 2012-13.

<sup>314</sup> Texas Administrative Code, Chapter 70; retrieved July 29, 2013, <http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/rules/tac/chapter070/ch070aa.html>

<sup>315</sup> SB1365 (2013); retrieved July 14, 2013, <http://www.legis.state.tx.us/tlodocs/83R/billtext/html/SB01365F.htm>

<sup>316</sup> TxVSN Enrollment data; retrieved September 4, 2013, [http://www.txvsn.org/custom/rpt\\_enrollments.aspx](http://www.txvsn.org/custom/rpt_enrollments.aspx)

<sup>317</sup> SB1 (2011); retrieved July 14, 2013, <http://www.journals.senate.state.tx.us/sjrn1/821/pdf/82S106-28-F.PDF>

TxVSN also offers the TxVSN OLS program, a fully online program for public school students in grades 3-12 (grade 12 was added in SY 2012-13). Six schools are authorized by the TEA to offer fully online programs through the TxVSN OLS program—one charter school, Responsive Education Solutions' Texas College Preparatory Academies (Texas Virtual Academy), and five independent school districts (ISDs): Grapevine-Colleyville ISD (iUniversity Prep); Huntsville ISD (Texas Online Preparatory Elementary School, Texas Online Preparatory Middle School, and Texas Online Preparatory High School); Houston ISD (Texas Connections Academy @ Houston); Red Oak ISD (iScholars Magnet Academy of Red Oak ISD); and Texarkana ISD (Texarkana ISD Virtual Academy). There were 8,441 students served in grades 3-12 in SY 2012-13; this represents a 36% increase over the previous year. Maximum enrollment caps were removed in 2013.

Some district programs and consortia exist. SUPERNet offers supplemental online courses to students at no cost to 20 rural districts who pay a membership fee; courses may be TxVSN courses that are scheduled at a computer lab for all SUPERNet students, or may be locally built. It served 736 course enrollments in SY 2012-13.

### ***State policies***

Outside the TxVSN, districts may use outside providers and courses at their discretion. To award credit, districts must assure that a course meets all the state curriculum requirements. For the district to receive state funding—which is based on average daily attendance (ADA)—students must be in attendance at school and meet the normal attendance accounting rules of the state. A student may generate either part-time or full-time Foundation School Program (FSP) funding.

### ***Funding***

**Grades 3-8, TxVSN Online Schools:** Students generate state FSP funding based on successful program completion, which is defined as a student having demonstrated academic proficiency by earning a minimum passing grade of 70% or above on a 100-point scale, sufficient for promotion to the next grade level. Funding is equivalent to state funding for a student enrolled full time in a traditional classroom.

**Grades 9-12:** State funding is generated when a student successfully completes a course provided through the TxVSN, which is defined as having demonstrated academic proficiency of the content for a high school course by earning a minimum passing grade of 70% or above on a 100-point scale, sufficient to earn credit for the course. The district is eligible to earn this FSP funding regardless of whether the student is physically present at school when taking the TxVSN online course. If a student who resides in Texas but is not enrolled in a Texas school district or open-enrollment charter school, registers for a course through the TxVSN statewide course catalog (other than a student in foster care or certain dependents of military personnel), no state funding is provided.

### ***Quality assurance, teaching, and curriculum***

TxVSN Course Providers offer courses through the TxVSN statewide course catalog and are responsible for instruction. TxVSN Receiver Districts (student's home district) approve their students' TxVSN course requests, provide ongoing support to local students enrolled in TxVSN statewide catalog courses, and award credits and diplomas. Online courses offered through the TxVSN are reviewed to ensure they meet state curriculum standards, the Texas Educational Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), and the current iNACOL *National Standards for Quality Online Courses*. Beginning in 2012, TxVSN also began to review TxVSN courses against accessibility standards. Districts and open-enrollment charter schools serving as TxVSN Course Providers may seek a waiver from the TxVSN course review and approval process administered by the TEA, but they must certify that the district or charter has verified that each course meets 100% of all TxVSN course standards. As of September 2013 no Course Provider has yet applied.

Additional policies affecting the TxVSN and online students, including course requirements, funding, and program requirements, are detailed on the *Keeping Pace* website at [www.kpk12.com/states/](http://www.kpk12.com/states/).

# Utah

## ONLINE & BLENDED LEARNING STATE SNAPSHOT

Utah is a course choice state, allowing students to select online courses from multiple providers and have the funding follow the student at the course level. The course choice program served **1,279 course enrollments** in SY 2012-13.

**Four fully online schools served 3,075 students** in SY 2012-13.

The Electronic High School served **10,308 course enrollments** in SY 2012-13.

### Availability of online learning options

SUPPLEMENTAL			FULLY ONLINE		
K-5 (ES)	6-8 (MS)	9-12 (HS)	K-5 (ES)	6-8 (MS)	9-12 (HS)
SOME	SOME	MOST	ALL	ALL	ALL

Availability of info:

- Great**
- Good
- Fair
- Poor
- Minimal

### Does this state have...

	Y	N	
Any <b>FULLY BLENDED</b> schools?	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	At least 2.
Student choice at the school level?	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Student choice at the course level?	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	4 fully online charters.
SVS or another publicly funded option for private / homeschool students?	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Prior public school attendance requirement for online schools?	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Through Statewide Online Education Program (SOEP).
Online caps by class, school, district, or statewide?	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	
PD requirement for online teachers?	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Access via SOEP.
State approval process required for online providers?	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Provider approval process to participate in SOEP.
State approval process required for online courses?	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	
Online learning requirement for students?	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	
End-of-course exams?	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	In 3 subjects.

Utah has a state virtual school (the Utah Electronic High School), four statewide fully online charter schools, and many districts offering online courses via the Statewide Online Education Program<sup>318</sup> (SOEP), which is among the first and best-known course choice programs in the country. Although course choice in Utah has received extensive attention, it is still quite small, serving 1,279 course enrollments and 664 unique students in SY 2012-13.

SB65 creating the SOEP<sup>319</sup> was signed into law on March 30, 2011, and was amended with SB178 in July 2012. Key elements of the state’s online policy, as amended, are:

- Students and parents, including homeschooled and private students, can choose online courses and providers to supplement the students’ brick-and-mortar education. Subject mastery replaces seat time, allowing students to advance based on competency.
- An eligible student may enroll in an online course offered through the SOEP if it is aligned with the student’s Student Education Occupation Plan or Individualized Education Program (IEP).
- Funding follows the student down to the course level, from “Primary Local Education Agency (LEA) of enrollment” to “Provider LEA.”

<sup>318</sup> Statewide Online Education Program, retrieved August 19, 2013, <http://schools.utah.gov/edonline/>

<sup>319</sup> SB65 (2011); retrieved July 17, 2013, <http://le.utah.gov/~2011/bills/sbillint/sb0065s01.htm>

- Full funding is based upon successful completion within one year for a 1.0 credit course and nine weeks past the end of the semester for a .5 credit course. The provider receives 50% (25% per .5 credit) after the withdrawal period and 50% upon credit earned.
- To encourage an online provider to provide remediation to a student who remains enrolled in an online course (and avoid the need for credit recovery), a provider receives part of the final payment if the student completes the course after the allowable time periods, but before the student graduates.
- There are different levels of funding for core and elective courses.
- Students may generate no more than 1.0 FTE.

### **Online programs**

The SOEP providers serve any student enrolled in any school district or Utah charter school in grades 9-12. The courses offered range from core language arts, math, and science courses to electives such as health, fitness, and financial literacy. As of September 2013, there were 12 approved providers<sup>320</sup> listed on the DOE website.

Any LEA—charter or district—can apply to be an online provider, or can contract with private providers to offer an online program. Course providers may not limit class sizes. Open-entry, open-exit online courses are permitted. Each provider administers state assessments; the state is required to make assessments available upon course completion. The State Board of Education must develop a report on the performance of online course providers; the SY 2012-13 report is scheduled to be available in October 2013.<sup>321</sup>

There are four statewide online charter schools in Utah. Utah Virtual Academy served 2,051 K-12 students in SY 2012-13, an annual increase of 3%. Mountain Heights Academy, formally the Open High School of Utah, enrolled 334 students in SY 2012-13, a 2% annual increase. Utah Connections Academy reported 449 enrollments, a 61% increase, and Alianza Academy reported 502 enrollments in SY 2012-13, an increase of 7%.

The Utah Electronic High School (EHS) is primarily a supplemental program that works with local school districts. It is also able to grant diplomas to restricted groups of Utah students: those who are homeschooled exclusively, those who have dropped out of school and their class has graduated, and district referrals. All of the courses are open-entry/open-exit. EHS started in 1994 as a statewide virtual school located at the Utah State Office of Education (USOE), which funded it via USOE funds. Annual line item funding, which began in 2001, was \$2 million each school year from 2007 through 2012, \$1 million for SY 2012-13, and \$900,000 for SY 2013-14. EHS does not receive per-pupil state funding allocations. During SY 2012-13, EHS granted 20,615 quarter credits to 10,556 individual students, a 15% decrease from the previous year. To put this into perspective with similar programs, this is roughly the equivalent of 10,308 individual semester course completions. EHS implemented proctored final tests for every quarter credit granted beginning October 2007. EHS offers an open source content initiative called the Utah Electronic High School Curriculum and is rolling it out via iTunesU.

Brigham Young University (BYU) runs the BYU Independent Study program. Credits earned through BYU Independent Study can transfer to other educational institutions outside of Utah that are accredited by the Northwest Association of Accredited Schools. As of September 2012, the National Collegiate Athletic Association accepts credits from its high school elective courses, but does not accept credits for its core courses.<sup>322</sup>

<sup>320</sup> Statewide Online Education Program provider list, retrieved August 8, 2013, <http://schools.utah.gov/edonline/Students-and-Parents/Courses.aspx>

<sup>321</sup> The 2012-13 report will be available at [kpk12.com](http://kpk12.com)

<sup>322</sup> NCAA eligibility, retrieved July 17, 2013, <http://is.byu.edu/site/courses/ncaa.cfm>



# Vermont

## ONLINE & BLENDED LEARNING STATE SNAPSHOT

VTVLC reported **1,842 enrollments** including enrollments from partner schools and supported schools (course leasing, learning recovery, algebra-readiness program).

There are no dedicated fully online schools in Vermont, although VTVLC served its first **6 fully online students** in SY 2012-13.

### Availability of online learning options

SUPPLEMENTAL			FULLY ONLINE		
K-5 (ES)	6-8 (MS)	9-12 (HS)	K-5 (ES)	6-8 (MS)	9-12 (HS)
NONE	SOME	SOME	NONE	NONE	NONE

Availability of info:

- Great**
- Good
- Fair
- Poor
- Minimal

### Does this state have...

	Y	N
Any <b>FULLY BLENDED</b> schools?		●
Student choice at the school level?		●
Student choice at the course level?		●
SVS or another publicly funded option for private / homeschool students?		●
Prior public school attendance requirement for online schools?		●
Online caps by class, school, district, or statewide?		●
PD requirement for online teachers?		●
State approval process required for online providers?	●	
State approval process required for online courses?		●
Online learning requirement for students?		●
End-of-course exams?		●

● Limited opportunity for funded seats.

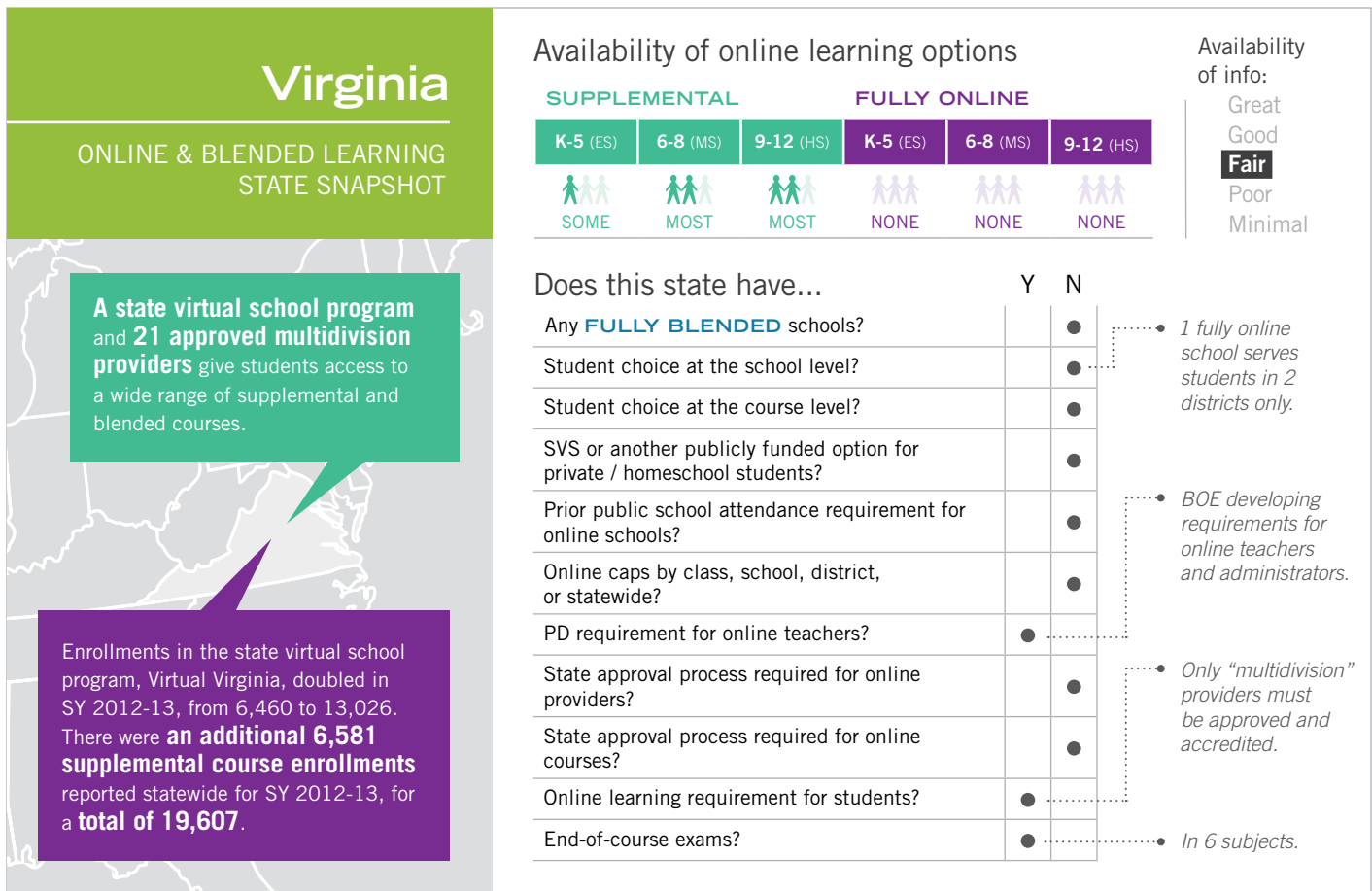
● 25 tuition-free VTVLC seats per partner school.

● For fully online schools.

**The Vermont Virtual Learning Cooperative (VTVLC) is the state virtual school; in SY 2012-13 it partnered with 76% of the state’s high schools, including 35 schools and 12 supported schools (described below).** The VHS Collaborative also delivers online classes to 710 students in 30 high schools (48% of high schools). Aside from VTVLC and VHS, there are no major district online programs and no fully online schools.

VTVLC is run by the Vermont Department of Education (VTDOE). It served 940 course enrollments in 80 courses to 35 partner schools in SY 2012-13, an annual increase of 22%. This includes course leasing, learning recovery (credit recovery), and 258 enrollments served through an algebra pre-readiness program. VTVLC also supported 900 enrollments at supported schools, which are receiving courses and/or professional development to create blended classrooms. VTVLC enrolled its first six fully online students, who completed all coursework online through VTVLC while enrolled in their local school.

VTVLC received \$400,000 through federal programs and grants to launch in 2010; it now receives about \$250,000 annually from the state. Partner schools pay an annual fee of \$3,500 for the first teacher and \$850 each for additional teachers. For each teacher allocated by the partner school to facilitate a class through VTVLC, the school may enroll up to 25 students tuition-free. Non-partner schools (in- and out-of-state) and homeschooled students may access courses on a space-available basis for \$300 per half credit. VTVLC is managed by River Valley Technical Center School District in partnership with the Springfield and Burlington school districts, Community College of Vermont, Marlboro College Graduate School, Florida Virtual School, Global Classroom, and Learning Network of Vermont.<sup>323</sup> The partnership with the Community College of Vermont expanded in SY 2012-13 to allow juniors and seniors to take dual enrollment courses for college credit.



## Virginia has a state virtual school program, Virtual Virginia (VVA), as well as several single-district programs, including those in Chesterfield, Fairfax, Prince William County, and York County.

In addition, state-authorized providers may serve students statewide in grades K-12 with fully online, supplemental, and blended programs through partnerships with local school boards, but no fully online statewide schools exist. An online course graduation requirement passed in 2012.<sup>324</sup> In SY 2012-13, course enrollments at VVA more than doubled, from 6,460 to 13,026. There were an additional 6,581 supplemental course enrollments reported by the multidivision providers for SY 2012-13, for a statewide total of 19,607 supplemental course enrollments.<sup>325</sup>

### State policies

SB738 (2010)<sup>326</sup> allowed local school boards to contract with approved multidivision online providers to provide out-of-district online learning programs to students in grades K-12. As of September 2013, there were 21 providers approved: York County, Chesterfield County Public Schools, and 18 commercial providers.<sup>327</sup> Local school division programs, or consortia of division online programs, in which “fewer than 10 per cent of the students enrolled reside outside the geographical boundaries of the school division,” need not participate in the approval process.

SB738 did not provide additional funding for districts to cover the cost of students enrolling in online courses, nor does the legislation establish a uniform per-student cost, per-course cost, or funding formula. Instead, a

<sup>324</sup> Chapter 642 22.1-253.13:4; retrieved July 10, 2013, <http://leg1.state.va.us/cgi-bin/legp504.exe?121+ful+CHAP0642>

<sup>325</sup> Personal communication with Cheri Kelleher, Program Coordinator, Virtual Virginia, Virginia Department of Education, August 1, 2013

<sup>326</sup> SB738 (2010); retrieved July 10, 2013, <http://leg1.state.va.us/cgi-bin/legp504.exe?101+sum+SB738>

<sup>327</sup> Approved multidivision providers; retrieved July 11, 2013, [https://p1pe.doe.virginia.gov/amop\\_public/](https://p1pe.doe.virginia.gov/amop_public/)

student's local education agency (LEA) or school must contract with each approved multidivision provider separately (this may or may not include an additional course-level approval process on a per-student basis), and the state reimburses the enrolling school division at that division's state funding level (which averages \$4,400 per student annually, but varies). Repeated attempts to alter funding mechanisms for fully online education failed in the 2011-13 legislative sessions. Students enrolling in out-of-district courses through approved providers are assured full per-pupil funding by the state. However, tuition may be charged to out-of-district students in districts that contract with vendors that are not approved providers.

Additional policies affecting virtual education include SB986 (2013), which requires the BOE to prescribe initial and renewal licensure requirements for teachers who teach only online courses. "Such license shall be valid only for teaching online courses. Teachers who hold a five-year renewable license issued ... may teach online courses for which they are properly endorsed."<sup>328</sup> Also passed in 2013, HB1215 requires the BOE to put forth future regulations establishing standards for accreditation of virtual schools that enroll students full time.<sup>329</sup> Distance learning courses are governed by the Virginia Standards of Accrediting Public Schools and SB738 (2010); details can be found at [www.kpk12.com/states/](http://www.kpk12.com/states/).

### **Online programs**

Virtual Virginia (VVA), the state virtual school program operated out of the VDE, has been open since 2005. VVA funding is based almost entirely on state appropriations, which increased in SY 2012-13 to \$3.3 million (reversing budget cuts in effect since SY 2010-12). VVA reported 13,026 supplemental course enrollments in for-credit courses for SY 2012-13, an annual increase of 102% (compared to a 2% increase in SY 2011-12). Growth is attributed to both the funding increase and correlated enrollment in a single new course that supports school compliance with 2010 legislation requiring that all students complete an economics and personal finance course before graduation; an online version was developed with the Virginia Department of Education (VDE).<sup>330</sup> World language, elective, and core academic courses are free to Virginia public school students, who may take as many courses as their districts and schools will permit (up to seven). A per-student, per-course fee ranging from \$70 to \$300 is charged to school districts for Advanced Placement® courses, based upon the local composite index of each school district's ability to pay, although school districts may request reimbursement for some AP exam fees,<sup>331</sup> and some students may enroll in AP courses tuition-free if they participate in the Early College Scholar program.

Prior to SB738, K12 Inc. was one of the first providers to open a statewide fully online school, Virginia Virtual Academy. As of September 2013, it may serve students in grades K-5 in its partner districts, King and Queen County and Patrick County school districts; out-of-district students must pay a registration fee, and there are limited seats available. Virginia Virtual Academy had 447 students in SY 2012-13 (at that time serving grades K-8).<sup>332</sup> Virginia has a charter school law and several charter schools in operation, but there are no fully online charter schools and no other fully virtual schools have been authorized.

A significant number of supplemental district and regional online programs also exist, both within the approved multidivision provider framework and independently. One of the larger district programs is Fairfax Public Schools Online Campus, which reported 4,285 supplemental course enrollments in SY 2012-13, an annual decrease of 15%. Its courses are available only to students to whom a class is otherwise unavailable. A partial list of online programs in Virginia is available at [www.kpk12.com/states](http://www.kpk12.com/states).

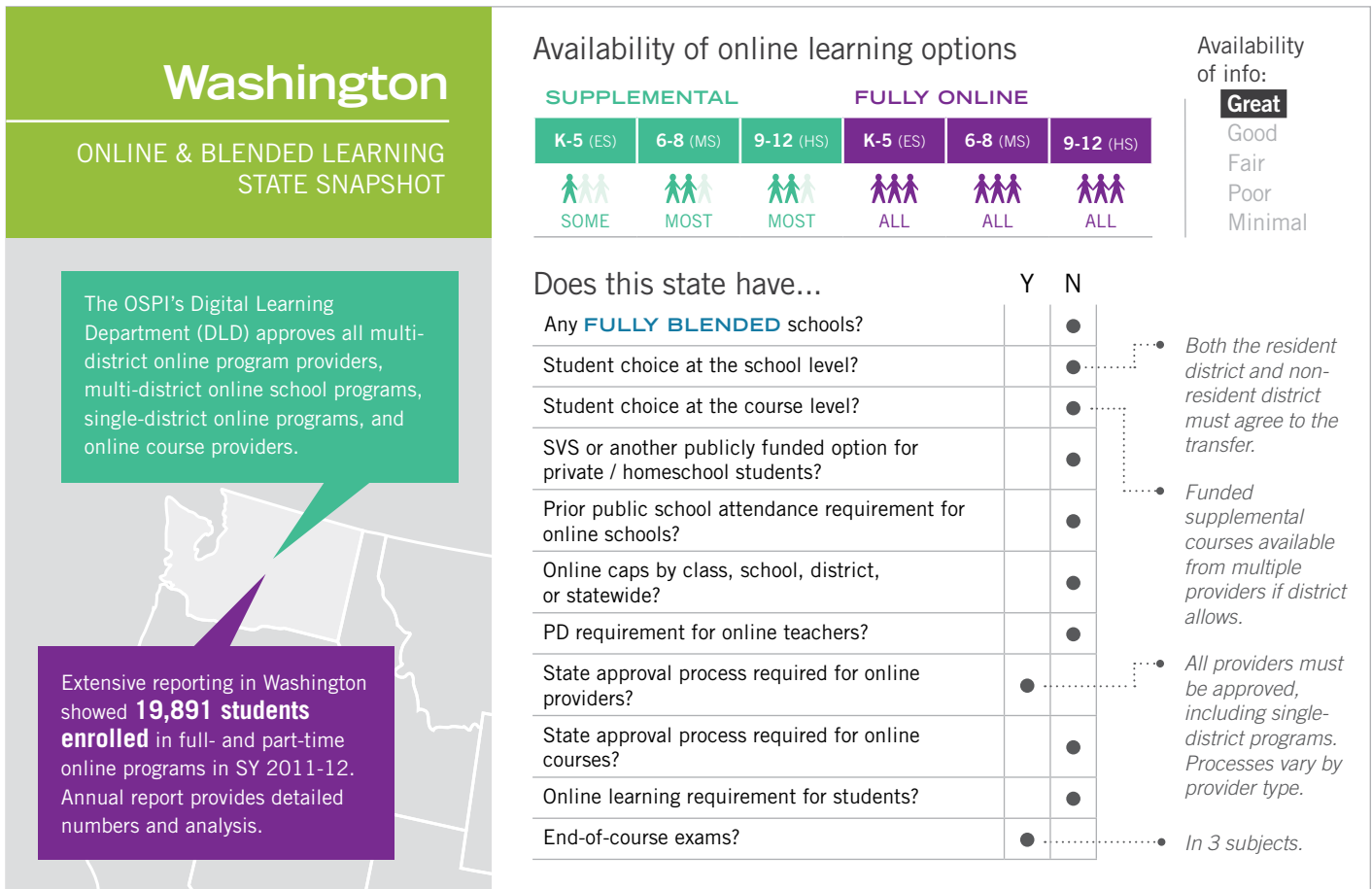
<sup>328</sup> SB986 (2013); retrieved July 17, 2013, <http://leg1.state.va.us/cgi-bin/legp504.exe?131+ful+CHAP0530> See also Virginia Board of Education Agenda Item; retrieved July 17, 2013, [http://www.doe.virginia.gov/boe/meetings/2013/06\\_jun/agenda\\_items/item\\_k.pdf](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/boe/meetings/2013/06_jun/agenda_items/item_k.pdf)

<sup>329</sup> HB1215 (2013); retrieved July 10, 2013, <https://leg1.state.va.us/cgi-bin/legp504.exe?121+sum+HB1215>

<sup>330</sup> Personal communication with Cheri Kelleher as above. See also VA Administrative Code 8VAC20-131-280; retrieved August 2, 2013, <http://leg1.state.va.us/cgi-bin/legp504.exe?000+reg+8VAC20-131-50>

<sup>331</sup> VVa Frequently Asked Questions; retrieved August 2, 2013, <http://www.virtualvirginia.org/faqs/>

<sup>332</sup> 2013 K12 Academic Report; retrieved August 2, 2013, <http://www.k12.com/sites/default/files/pdf/2013-K12-Academic-Report-Feb6-2013.pdf>



**Washington has many part- and full-time online and blended learning options available for students.<sup>333</sup> The state reported 19,891 students enrolled in part- and full-time programs in 2011-12** (the most recent year for which data are available), a 7% increase from SY 2010-11. There were 2,745 fully online students, an increase of 8% from SY 2010-11.

Most state-level activity is tied to administering policies that govern the online schools. The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction's (OSPI) Digital Learning Department (DLD) approves all multi-district online program providers, multi-district online school programs, single-district online programs, and online course providers. Online programs represent a mix of districts, private providers, and consortia, some of which offer multiple options to students (there are no virtual charters at present, though that may change as a result of the approval of Initiative 1240 (2013),<sup>334</sup> which allows for charter schools). Many districts partner with private online providers to operate online schools. There are four categories of approved providers: 18 online course providers, 14 online program providers, 17 multi-district online school programs, and 39 single-district (serving no more than 10% out-of-district students) online school programs as of September 2013.<sup>335</sup>

<sup>333</sup> Most state providers are known to offer primarily online courses, and there are no significant fully blended schools in the state. However, based on the definition of the term "online" in legislation, which notes that any course that delivers more than half of its curriculum and instruction online can be considered an online course, some of these courses may include face-to-face components. <http://digitalllearning.k12.wa.us/approval/glossary.php#courses>

<sup>334</sup> Washington state charter schools association; retrieved June 5, 2013, <http://www.wacharters.org/>

<sup>335</sup> Approved Providers List; retrieved June 5, 2013, <http://digitalllearning.k12.wa.us/approval/providers>

### **Online programs**

Extensive information about OSPI-approved providers is available on the DLD website, including teacher-student ratio, course completion rate, and course pass rate.<sup>336</sup>

State-level reporting is collected each year from the state's student information system (CEDARS) and other data sources. Detailed reports are available for the 2009-10, 2010-11, and 2011-12 school years that provide a useful picture of online learning activity in the state. For the fourth consecutive year, the DLD released an Online Learning Annual Report; the January 2013 report analyzes data from SY 2011-12. With this report, Washington continues to offer one of best examples of online student data reporting and analysis in the country.<sup>337</sup> The recent report notes:

- 75% of online students are in high school, a rate nearly identical to previous years.
- 215 schools in 123 districts reported online course enrollments, a 47% and 38% increase, respectively, over SY 2010-11 figures (146 schools in 89 districts). Students took a total of 66,048 K-12 online courses in SY 2011-12, a 9% decrease from 72,180 enrollments in 2010-11.<sup>338</sup>
- High school students make up 77% of the online student population, a rate virtually unchanged from SY 2010-11.
- Districts can purchase access to individual online courses either through the DLD course catalog or from vendors directly. During SY 2011-12, 1,333 students enrolled in 2,665 courses. These enrollments came from 88 schools in 71 different school districts. Use of the DLD catalog was significantly higher in SY 2011-12 than in SY 2010-11; the number of unique students accessing courses rose 50% and the number of enrollments was 40% higher.
- Of the 19,891 online students listed in CEDARS, 1,305 (7%) were students in special education; 900 (5%) were enrolled part time in a public school district and were also homeschooled.
- Students in online school programs performed on assessments at a lower rate than the state average. The subject areas with the smallest gaps were reading (7%), writing (9%), and biology (11%). The gaps were more significant in math and science: online students taking the science assessments met standard at 23% lower and 18% lower than the state average, respectively. (The study did not report any student academic growth figures, so it is unclear to what extent these assessment scores are below state average due to students' entering online schools already under-credited or below average in academic achievement.)
- Of the 1,266 12<sup>th</sup> graders who took at least one online course in 2011-12, 430 (34%) had a year-end status that indicated a successful outcome, such as graduation or completion of an individualized education program. Of the 111,437 12<sup>th</sup> grade students who had not taken an online course, 65,688 (59%) had a successful outcome. Students taking four or more online courses had a successful outcome in only 100 (27%) cases.

### **State policies**

Washington's online learning policies are found in RCW28A.250.<sup>339</sup> SSB5410 created the DLD within the OSPI and developed initial approval and reporting requirements. Reporting standards included in RCW28A.250.040 requiring districts to designate online courses came into effect with SY 2010-11. In addition, districts must accept all course credits that meet district graduation requirements and are earned from OPSI-approved providers.

<sup>336</sup> Ibid

<sup>337</sup> Online Learning Annual Report 2011-12; retrieved June 5, 2013, <http://www.k12.wa.us/LegisGov/2013documents/OnlineLearningAnnualReport.pdf>

<sup>338</sup> The DLD reports that the decrease in online course enrollments is unexpected, given an increase in headcount and the number of schools and districts offering online courses. The legislative report posits that while online options may now be available in more districts, fewer students in each school are making use of the opportunities.

<sup>339</sup> RCW 28A.250; retrieved June 5, 2013, <http://apps.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=28A.250>

All online programs (multi-district or single-district) available statewide must be reviewed and approved by the DLD. The DLD also directly offers online courses from approved course providers to districts. All providers, including those originally grandfathered into approved status when the process changed in 2011, have been reviewed and approved.<sup>340</sup>

Engrossed Substitute House Bill (ESHB) 2065 (2011) modified funding for Alternative Learning Experience (ALE) programs. A 20% cut was administered to general apportionment for all ALE programs, unless a program provides face-to-face teacher/student contact for each student for an average of one hour per week during each month the student is enrolled (in which case the cut was reduced to 10%). An exception was made for online ALE programs, allowing for synchronous digital contact for students enrolled in only online courses. The programs that met these contact-time requirements received a 10% cut to general apportionment. This funding cut is scheduled to end after the 2011-13 biennium.

ESHB2065 clarified the statutory definition of online courses to specify that at least half of the instruction be provided remotely, via Internet or other computer-based learning. In July 2013, the legislature passed Engrossed SB5946, which included further changes to the ALE and online learning regulations as follows:<sup>341</sup>

- SB5946 modifies the definition of an “online course” by adding the requirement that certificated teachers have primary responsibility for students’ instructional interactions (to delineate online courses from other remote courses, e.g. “Parent Partnerships”).
- It restructures ALE to define three ALE course types. In addition to online courses, ALE includes “remote courses,” with in-person instructional contact for less than 20% of total class time, and “site-based courses,” with in-person instructional contact for at least 20% of the time.
- From SY 2013-14, all ALE programs will be audited every two years until 2016-17.

Engrossed second substitute HB2337 (2012) provided OSPI with a budget of \$250,000 to identify existing openly licensed courseware aligned with the Common Core State Standards. These open educational resources (OER) will, through 2018, be placed under an attribution license, registered by a nonprofit organization with domain expertise in OER, and made available statewide.<sup>342</sup>

In November 2012, Washington voters passed Initiative 1240 to support the creation of the first 40 public charter schools across the state. However, there are no charter schools operating in the state as of September 2013.

Other relevant state policies prior to 2011 are available at [www.kpk12.com/states](http://www.kpk12.com/states).

## **Funding**

ESHB2065 (2011) led to modification of WAC 392-121-182 by changing the funding of ALE for students (the method through which most online programs operate). It also included new ALE definitions, restrictions on purchasing, and a prohibition against compensating staff as an incentive to increase ALE enrollments.<sup>343</sup> ALE definitions are further clarified by SB5946 (2013). Beginning with SY 2013-14, school districts may claim state funding, to the extent otherwise allowed by state law, for students enrolled in online courses or programs only if the online courses or programs are offered by an OSPI-approved online provider. School districts can also claim funding for online students using either the ALE or basic education funding rules, depending on the circumstances. Funding varies by district regardless of whether the student is enrolled online or in an on-ground school.

<sup>340</sup> RCW 28A.250.020, Multidistrict provider approval process; retrieved June 5, 2013, <http://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=28A.250.020>

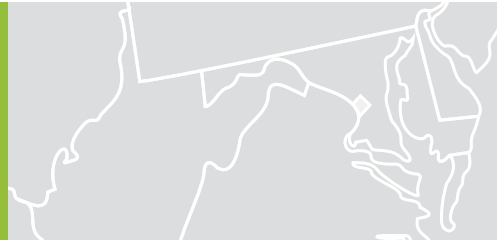
<sup>341</sup> SB5946 (2013); retrieved July 3, 2013, <http://apps.leg.wa.gov/billinfo/summary.aspx?bill=5946>

<sup>342</sup> Engrossed second substitute HB2337; retrieved June 5, 2013, <http://apps.leg.wa.gov/documents/billdocs/2011-12/Pdf/Bills/House%20Passed%20Legislature/2337-S2.PL.pdf>

<sup>343</sup> Permanent ALE Rules Filed–August 22, 2011; retrieved June 5, 2013, <http://digitalllearning.k12.wa.us/ale/>

## Washington DC

### ONLINE & BLENDED LEARNING STATE SNAPSHOT



**There is a significant amount of online and blended learning activity in all grades in the single district of Washington DC.** The district supports four fully blended schools, one fully online school, and extensive blended learning activity.<sup>344</sup>

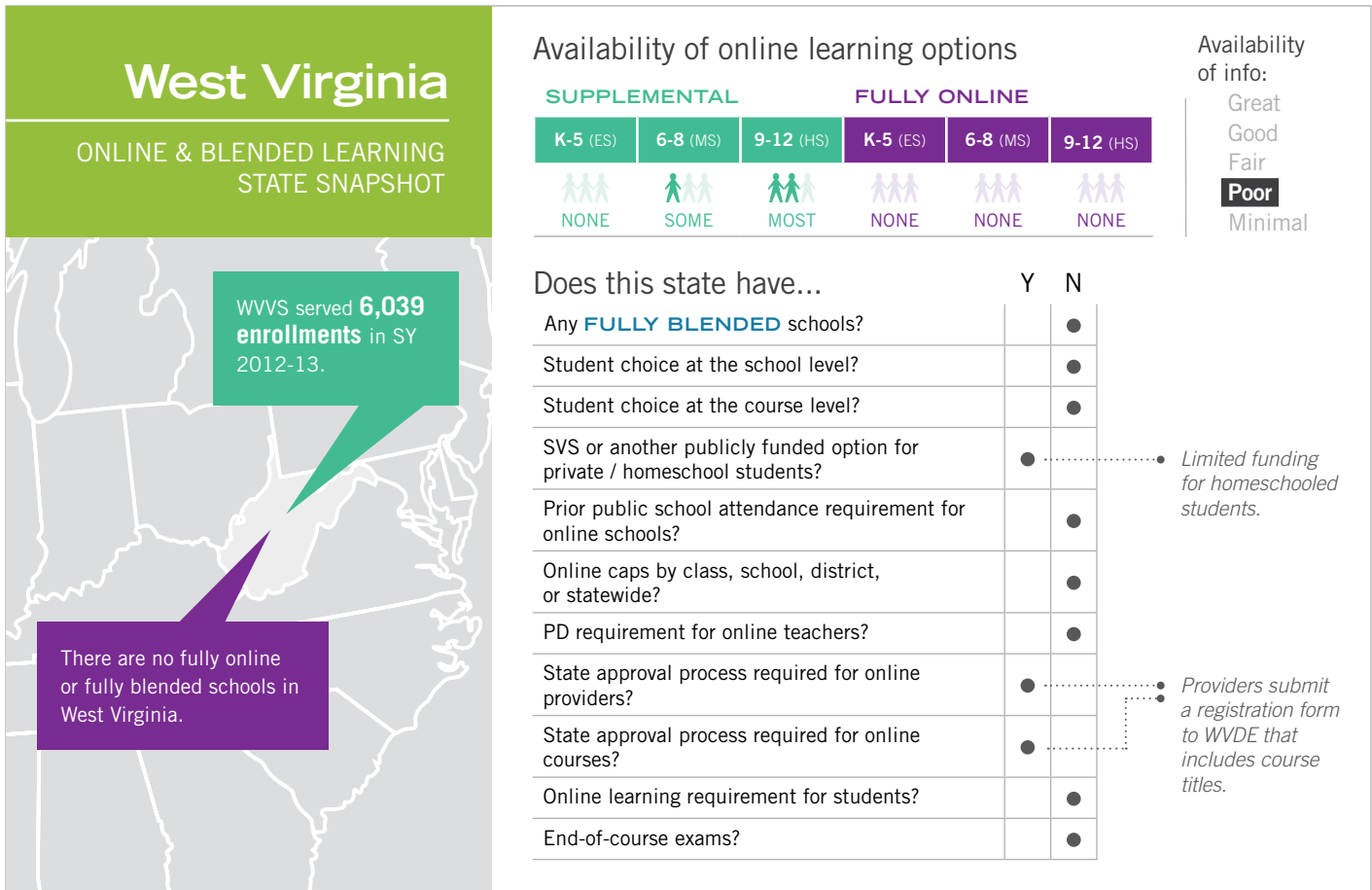
- Four fully blended schools: Two K-5 elementary schools partner with Education Elements, one middle school has a 1:1 laptop program that uses content from Florida Virtual School, and Ingenuity Prep is the district's first fully blended charter school, which opened in SY 2013-14 and is serving students in grades PreK-K in its first year. In addition, Rocketship Education has been approved to open two schools in SY 2015-16.
- Credit recovery: Students access credit recovery classes through PLATO Learning (Edmentum) and Apex at 14 high schools across the district.
- One fully online school: CAPCS Online, a fully online charter school, is one of five campuses authorized by Community Academy Public Charter School. It served about 100 students throughout Washington DC in grades K-8 in SY 2013-14.

The district is ensuring that students who learn in a blended environment in elementary school, continue to learn in a blended environment in middle and high school. Every middle school in the district is using a blended math program, and one school is using Teach to One Math, an adaptive learning program, with 550 students. Schools are also using ST Math, Think Through Math, and Plato (Edmentum). The district is expanding its efforts in SY 2013-14, piloting Common Core literacy programs in 40 schools.

The CityBridge Foundation is a key district partner. In SY 2012-13, it identified 12 Education Innovation Fellows from teachers in the district; they received extensive training and mentoring, and are now working with their principals and the district blended learning office to expand blended learning in their schools. In addition, Next Generation Learning Challenges and CityBridge have announced that they will make \$2 million available to public schools, including charter schools that wish to change their instructional models through the Breakthrough Schools: DC competition.<sup>345</sup> Up to six initial planning grants of \$100,000 will be awarded in early 2014, and those recipients will be eligible to win up to \$450,000 to open a new or newly designed school in fall 2015.

<sup>344</sup> Personal communication, John Rice, Blended Learning Coordinator, Washington DC Public Schools, September 19, 2013

<sup>345</sup> Breakthrough Schools: D.C.; retrieved September 19, 2013, <http://nextgenlearning.org/breakthrough-schools-dc>



**Most of the online education activity in West Virginia is through the West Virginia Virtual School (WVVS), the state virtual school that mostly serves students in grades 6-12, but is authorized to offer courses to all grade levels.** WVVS served 6,039 enrollments in 2012-13, an annual increase of 35%, 2,059 of these were through the onTargetWV credit recovery program. WVVS is governed by statute and State Board Policy 2450,<sup>346</sup> and offers about 270 courses via third-party providers, which supply most courses or work with WVVS to develop courses. The WVVS budget, \$789,000 for SY 2012-13, is mostly provided by the state and pays student tuition for fully online courses on a first-come, first-served basis. If more than 10 students from one school enroll in a course, the school pays \$200 per additional student; however, most enrollment fees (other than summer school and credit recovery) were covered by the WVVS appropriation in SY 2012-13.

WVVS provides a blended course for Spanish 1A and 1B for students in 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades, and Spanish I and II for grades 9-12. Eight WVVS teachers provide a blended course to students in over 70 schools without world language teachers. There are no other major online programs or initiatives, although some districts such as Kanawha County and Harrison County have online programs. West Virginia does not have a charter school law.

WVVS provides a blended course for Spanish 1A and 1B for students in 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades, and Spanish I and II for grades 9-12. Eight WVVS teachers provide a blended course to students in over 70 schools without world language teachers. There are no other major online programs or initiatives, although some districts such as Kanawha County and Harrison County have online programs. West Virginia does not have a charter school law.

<sup>346</sup> Title 126, Legislative Rule, State Board of Education, Series 48, Distance Learning and the West Virginia Virtual School (2450); retrieved July 29, 2013, <https://wvde.state.wv.us/policies/p2450.html>



## Wisconsin

ONLINE & BLENDED LEARNING  
STATE SNAPSHOT

### Availability of online learning options

SUPPLEMENTAL			FULLY ONLINE		
K-5 (ES)	6-8 (MS)	9-12 (HS)	K-5 (ES)	6-8 (MS)	9-12 (HS)
NONE	SOME	MOST	ALL	ALL	ALL

Availability of info: Good  
Great  
Fair  
Poor  
Minimal

### Does this state have...

		Y	N	
Any <b>FULLY BLENDED</b> schools?	<input checked="" type="radio"/>			• <i>Rocketship Southside Community Prep-Milwaukee opened in SY 2013-14.</i>
Student choice at the school level?	<input checked="" type="radio"/>			
Student choice at the course level?		<input checked="" type="radio"/>		
SVS or another publicly funded option for private / homeschool students?			<input checked="" type="radio"/>	
Prior public school attendance requirement for online schools?			<input checked="" type="radio"/>	• <i>29 virtual charter schools operating in SY 2013-14.</i>
Online caps by class, school, district, or statewide?			<input checked="" type="radio"/>	• <i>Virtual charter caps removed in 2011.</i>
PD requirement for online teachers?			<input checked="" type="radio"/>	• <i>Act 20 (2013) repealed a teacher training requirement.</i>
State approval process required for online providers?			<input checked="" type="radio"/>	
State approval process required for online courses?			<input checked="" type="radio"/>	
Online learning requirement for students?			<input checked="" type="radio"/>	• <i>Some districts have online learning requirements.</i>
End-of-course exams?			<input checked="" type="radio"/>	

The Wisconsin eSchool Network is a consortium of 19 districts that served **10,219 course enrollments** in SY 2012-13.

Wisconsin Virtual School served **5,036 course enrollments** in SY 2012-13.

29 virtual charter schools are authorized to operate in SY 2013-14; 25 virtual charter schools served **6,146 students** in SY 2012-13.

**Wisconsin has a wide range of online learning options for students across the state.**

The Department of Public Instruction (DPI) lists several supplemental online programs, as well as 29 fully online schools authorized to operate in 2013-14.<sup>347</sup> In SY 2012-13, 25 online charter schools served 6,146 students, a 37% increase from the prior year.

Since 2007, Wisconsin has been one of very few states to require in statute<sup>348</sup> that teachers complete at least 30 hours of “professional development designed to prepare a teacher for online teaching” prior to teaching an online course in a public school.<sup>349</sup> In 2013, Act 20<sup>350</sup> repealed the teacher training requirement. The bill also prohibits the DPI from requiring a teacher licensed to teach in a virtual charter school to complete professional development not required of teachers who do not teach in a virtual charter school.

Act 20 (2013) also:

- Creates WISELearn<sup>351</sup> to provide educational resources for teachers, students, and parents, including, but not limited to, an educator resource portal, a learning management system, content repository, collaboration cloud, regional technical support centers, professional development for teachers, and the

<sup>347</sup> Any authorized virtual charter may choose not to operate in a given year. The list is subject to change. Retrieved June 13, 2013, [http://sms.dpi.wi.gov/files/sms/pdf/cs\\_2014\\_VirtualSchs.pdf](http://sms.dpi.wi.gov/files/sms/pdf/cs_2014_VirtualSchs.pdf)  
<sup>348</sup> Act 222; retrieved July 2, 2013, <http://www.legis.state.wi.us/2007/data/acts/07act222.pdf>  
<sup>349</sup> Wisconsin State Statute 118.19 (13); retrieved July 2, 2013, <https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/statutes/statutes/118/19/13>  
<sup>350</sup> Act 20; retrieved July 26, 2013, <https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2013/related/acts/20>  
<sup>351</sup> Act 20, Section 1735.115.28 (27); retrieved July 26, 2013, <https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2013/related/acts/20>

ability to do videoconferencing. No budget is provided for WISELearn until FY 2014-15; until then, the DPI is overseeing the development of WISELearn using existing department resources.

- Changed the part-time open enrollment program, now referred to as “Course Options,” to allow students in all grades to take courses from a nonresident school district or other educational institution. Although online courses are expected to be included under the Course Options program in some form, the DPI had not determined the details of the rules, course costs, or funding as of September 2013. A student is permitted to take two courses at one time. The provision prohibits the educational institution from charging a pupil or resident district any additional payment for attending the course. The provision also allows a resident school district to reject a part-time enrollment application if the course does not satisfy a high school graduation requirement or conform to the student’s academic and career plan.
- Prohibits the DPI from requiring a licensed Wisconsin teacher to be physically present in a classroom in which the delivery of content or collaborative instruction is being delivered through an online course.<sup>352</sup>

Wisconsin Virtual School (WVS) was created as a statewide online program originating out of Cooperative Educational Service Agency # 9 (CESA #9) in 2000. Through a partnership between the DPI and CESA #9,<sup>353</sup> WVS has operated independently as the state virtual school since 2008. WVS offers courses for students in grades 6-12; it served 5,036 course enrollments in 226 of Wisconsin’s 426 school districts in SY 2012-13. WVS had a budget of \$1.38 million SY 2012-13 and is funded largely through course fees; middle and high school courses cost \$325 per semester per course.

The Wisconsin eSchool Network (WEN) is a consortium of 19 partnering school districts, eight of which are among the 11 largest districts in the state. WEN served 10,219 course enrollments in SY 2012-13, a 98% increase over the previous year. WEN was formally established as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization in 2012.

WVS and WEN signed an MOU with the DPI in 2012 to operate under the umbrella of the Wisconsin Digital Learning Collaborative<sup>354</sup> and meet the statutory requirement of the Wisconsin Web Academy.<sup>355</sup> The collaboration allows the DPI to expand the offerings of the Web Academy and provide a single point of access to online courses and blended learning options, although both organizations are continuing to operate autonomously for SY 2013-14. WVS and WEN are using common learning management and student information systems. They also are using multiple content providers.

The cap on student enrollments in fully online charter schools since 2008 was removed as part of state budget bill AB40 (2011).<sup>356</sup> Additional policy history is available at [www.kpk12.com/states/](http://www.kpk12.com/states/).

The DPI is working with Virtual Education Research Alliance<sup>357</sup> to survey all districts in Wisconsin in fall 2013 to identify online opportunities.

<sup>352</sup> Act 20, Section 1736.115.28 (54); retrieved July 26, 2013, <https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2013/related/acts/20>

<sup>353</sup> Ibid

<sup>354</sup> Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, press release; retrieved July 30, 2013, [http://www.wisconsinvirtuallschool.org/about/dpinr2012\\_87\\_WIDigitalLearningCollaborative.pdf](http://www.wisconsinvirtuallschool.org/about/dpinr2012_87_WIDigitalLearningCollaborative.pdf)

<sup>355</sup> Act 222 (2008); retrieved June 19, 2013, <https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/statutes/statutes/115/II/28/53>

<sup>356</sup> Act 20, “SECTION 2507. 118.40 (8) (h) of the statutes is repealed,” section 2507 on p. 377; retrieved August 20, 2012, <http://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2011/related/proposals/ab40>. Although other 2011 legislative initiatives proposed a removal of the cap on virtual charter school enrollments, it was the state budget bill (AB40, Act 20) that repealed the cap.

<sup>357</sup> Virtual Education Research Alliance; retrieved July 10, 2013, <http://www.relmidwest.org/VirtualLearningResearchAlliance.php>

# Wyoming

## ONLINE & BLENDED LEARNING STATE SNAPSHOT

The Wyoming Switchboard Network (WSN) is a collection of distance learning programs that deliver numerous K-12 fully online and supplemental options.

A total of **1,942 unique students** participated in full- and part-time online programs in SY 2012-13, an annual increase of 30%.

### Availability of online learning options

SUPPLEMENTAL			FULLY ONLINE		
K-5 (ES)	6-8 (MS)	9-12 (HS)	K-5 (ES)	6-8 (MS)	9-12 (HS)
NONE	SOME	MOST	ALL	ALL	ALL

Availability of info:

- Great**
- Good
- Fair
- Poor
- Minimal

### Does this state have...

	Y	N	
Any <b>FULLY BLENDED</b> schools?	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<i>Ft. Washakie High School.</i>
Student choice at the school level?	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Student choice at the course level?	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<i>5 statewide fully online schools.</i>
SVS or another publicly funded option for private / homeschool students?	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<i>Each instructor is limited (unless a waiver is requested) to a max of 6 sections and 25 students.</i>
Prior public school attendance requirement for online schools?	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	
Online caps by class, school, district, or statewide?	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<i>WSN requires distance education preparation.</i>
PD requirement for online teachers?	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<i>WSN has one for single-district / statewide providers, and one for out-of-state providers.</i>
State approval process required for online providers?	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	
State approval process required for online courses?	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	
Online learning requirement for students?	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	
End-of-course exams?	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	

### Most online learning activity in Wyoming is delivered via a collection of distance education (DE) providers that constitute the Wyoming Switchboard Network (WSN).

The Wyoming Department of Education (WDE) established the WSN in 2008-09 in response to SB0070<sup>358</sup> and based on recommendations from the Wyoming K-12 Distance Education Task Force, which convened in 2007. Statewide, the WDE estimates there were 1,377 fully online students in SY 2012-13, an increase of 21%, and 1,096 supplemental online enrollments, an increase of 68% (see Table 8). A total of 1,942 unique students participated in full- and part-time programs in Wyoming in SY 2012-13, an increase of 30%.

Five Wyoming school districts operate statewide online programs. Fremont County's Wyoming "e" Academy of Virtual Education (WeAVE) offers a full-time curriculum to in-district students and supplemental courses to high school students statewide. Campbell County Virtual School serves students full time in grades K-6. Uinta County School District #1 sponsors the Evanston Virtual High School, which offers supplemental high school courses for grades 9-12. Wyoming Connections Academy (formerly Jackson Hole Connections Academy) is authorized by Big Horn County School District #1; it offers both full-time and supplemental course options to K-12 students. The Wyoming Virtual Academy (Niobrara County) offers both a full-time program and supplemental curricula to students in grades K-12. Students may participate in fully online programs through their resident district, or they may transfer directly into a district that manages a fully online program.

The WSN website acts as the central repository of distance education resources. The site provides access to curriculum mapping for over 700 DE courses available statewide, detailed information about the various DE program providers, and Wyoming's key policy documents and DE information.

<sup>358</sup> SB0070 (2008); retrieved June 13, 2013, <http://legisweb.state.wy.us/2008/Bills/SF0070.pdf>

With its annual report to the legislature,<sup>359</sup> Wyoming is one of few states that can cross-reference state assessment and course completion data with a student's DE provider and can break down enrollments to create a comprehensive picture of some of the details about DE students and providers. In addition to the summary numbers above, the report<sup>360</sup> identified six postsecondary institutions providing 579 dual enrollment courses, a 43% annual increase, to 294 students. In addition, it found that 44% of DE students were in grades 10-12, and most took supplemental courses; 24% were in grades 7-9 and mostly full-time students; 32% were K-6 students, nearly all of whom were full-time students.

Unique Students	Grades K-6			Grades 7-9			Grades 10-12			Total		
	2011-12	2012-13	Growth	2011-12	2012-13	Growth	2011-12	2012-13	Growth	2011-12	2012-13	Growth
<b>Full-time</b>	501	616	23%	342	439	28%	295	322	9%	1,138	1,377	21%
<b>Supplemental</b>	1	3	200%	53	34	-36%	297	528	78%	351	565	61%
<b>TOTAL</b>	502	619	23%	395	473	20%	592	850	44%	1,489	1,942	30%

**Table 8: WDE online student and enrollment estimates for SY 2012-13**

Course Enrollments	Grades K-6			Grades 7-9			Grades 10-12			Total		
	2011-12	2012-13	Growth	2011-12	2012-13	Growth	2011-12	2012-13	Growth	2011-12	2012-13	Growth
<b>Full-time</b>	4,038	4,677	16%	3,191	3,861	21%	3,737	3,767	1%	10,966	12,305	12%
<b>Supplemental</b>	7	14	100%	82	79	-4%	564	1,003	78%	653	1,096	68%
<b>TOTAL</b>	4,045	4,691	16%	3,273	3,940	20%	4,301	4,770	11%	11,619	13,401	15%

## State policies

During SY 2008-09, the WDE promulgated the Chapter 41 Rules and Regulations that govern DE processes and procedures within the state.<sup>361</sup> Wyoming Statute WS§21-2 202(a) (xxxi)<sup>362</sup> charged the WDE with establishing a state network of DE courses that meet state standards for course content and delivery by Wyoming-certified teachers. The WDE also must provide training and technical assistance to districts for DE delivery; monitor the design, content, delivery, and accreditation of DE programs provided by districts; and establish criteria and necessary components of individual student distance learning plans. Finally, the WDE implemented a reporting process to meet federal and state funding requirements, and established data collection instruments and systems to monitor and improve DE programs statewide. Per WS§21-13-330, districts where students reside have a variety of responsibilities, including completing a distance learning plan for each student, monitoring progress, supporting the student, and ensuring students are enrolled in programs approved by the WDE.

WS§21-13-330 and the Chapter 41 Distance Education Rules also established policies for funding DE course enrollments. The statute allows districts to include DE courses in ADM calculations via the use of milestones or course objectives, and to agree to release students to participate full-time in DE in a non-resident district. Each year the Wyoming Distance Education Grant Program makes about \$250,000 in total funding available to assist DE providers with development and maintenance of their programs and courses.

The WSN Resident District Handbook<sup>363</sup> is a guide for K-12 DE in Wyoming. Additional information about Wyoming policies, particularly around governance, tracking, and funding as well as local district policies, is available at [www.kpk12.com/states/](http://www.kpk12.com/states/).

<sup>359</sup> The SY 2011-12 report is available at <http://www.wyomingswitchboard.net/Providers.aspx>; the SY 2012-13 report will be released fall 2013 and added to [www.kpk12.com/states/](http://www.kpk12.com/states/) when available.

<sup>360</sup> Personal communication with Scott Bullock, distance education consultant, Wyoming Department of Education, August 1, 2013

<sup>361</sup> Chapter 41 Distance Education Rules; retrieved June 12, 2013, <http://soswy.state.wy.us/Rules/RULES/7334.pdf>

<sup>362</sup> Chapter 21, WS§21-2 202 and WS§21-13-330; retrieved August 7, 2013 <http://legisweb.state.wy.us/statutes/statutes.aspx?file=titles/Title21/Title21.htm>

<sup>363</sup> WSN Resident District Handbook; retrieved June 11, 2013, <http://wyomingswitchboard.net/Policy.aspx>

## Appendix A: Methodology

The information found in *Keeping Pace 2013* came from a combination of Internet research, emails, and phone interviews with personnel from state education agencies, state virtual schools, online programs, and other sources.

For state profiles, research and reviews of state laws were combined with phone interviews and emails. For states with little new activity in 2013, in many cases personnel reviewed and made minor changes to state profiles presented in *Keeping Pace 2012*, sometimes moving historical information to the individual state pages on the *Keeping Pace* website at [www.kpk12.com/states/](http://www.kpk12.com/states/). In most cases, the state education agency or other knowledgeable individuals reviewed the final version of the profile for accuracy. In a field that is growing and changing as rapidly as online education, timeliness of information is imperative, and indeed timeliness has been one of the drivers of interest in *Keeping Pace*. Research for this year's report was conducted from May through mid-September of 2013, and every effort has been made to ensure currency of information as of September 15, 2013.

Enrollment data was collected from a variety of sources. The preferred source is a state department of education reporting website. However, some states do not publish enrollment data, in some states the data are not yet available for SY 2012-13, or online programs may not have to report online or blended enrollments specifically to the state. In those instances, enrollment data was typically collected via personal communication with a program or state education agency leader. For most states, enrollment data are reported for summer 2012, fall 2012, and spring 2013, often combined into one number that we call school year (SY) 2012-13.

In addition to the methods discussed above, the sponsoring organizations for *Keeping Pace* provided extensive expertise and knowledge of the state of online and blended learning across the country. This report would not be possible without their thoughtful contributions, and expertise. Any errors or omissions, however, are fully the responsibility of the Evergreen Education Group.

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