



2022-23 Distance Learning: Guidance for Wyoming School Districts



Wyoming Department of Education

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The purpose of this document is to provide school districts with information about temporary virtual education, remote education classes, and virtual education programs within a resident district. A combination of any of the three types of distance delivery may be used during the 2022-23 school year for instruction and course delivery to students off-site. In each of the distance delivery options described in this guidance the resident district maintains student membership.

Temporary virtual education may be used when teachers or students must be off-site due to school building closures or other situations in which a school or classroom instruction is virtual. Remote education classes are only an option when schools are at least partially open with teachers and students in the classroom when instruction is provided to remote students.

A Note About Homebound Instruction

To maintain continuity and instruction, homebound instruction may be an option in appropriate circumstances. For example, homebound instruction agreements may be utilized for students ordered to quarantine or isolate because of exposure to COVID-19 or the need to reduce potential exposure because they or someone in their household is immunocompromised. Districts need to follow homebound instruction protocol established by their school boards and the Wyoming Department of Education guidance for the certified teacher or certified tutor to keep time and effort logs when utilizing this option.

W.S. 21-4-402 Instruction for hospitalization or homebound pupils.

(a) The board of trustees of each school district shall offer homebound instruction for each pupil in the district who is hospitalized or homebound for more than one (1) week because of injury or illness.

Table of Contents

Temporary Virtual Education	3
Definition.....	3
Distinguishing Features.....	3
Delivery Options.....	3
School Building Closure Status.....	3
Examples of Use.....	3
Technology and Course Materials.....	4
Requirements.....	4
Delivery Method.....	5
Attendance.....	5
Reporting.....	5
Temporary Virtual Education Policy.....	6
Remote Education Classes within Resident District	6
Definition.....	6
Distinguishing Features.....	6
Delivery Options.....	6
School Building Closure Status.....	7
Examples of Use.....	7
Technology and Course Materials.....	7
Requirements.....	7
Delivery Method - From Student’s Classroom to Home.....	8
Attendance.....	8
Reporting.....	8
Delivery Method - Between Schools.....	8
Attendance.....	9
Average Daily Membership.....	9
Reporting.....	9
Virtual Education within Resident District	10
Definition.....	10
Distinguishing Features.....	10
Delivery Options.....	10
School Building Closure Status.....	10
Examples of Use.....	10
Technology and Course Materials.....	11
Requirements.....	11

Delivery Method.....	12
Attendance.....	12
Reporting.....	13
APPENDIX A: Distance Delivery Options Best Practices.....	15
Temporary Virtual Education Days Best Practices.....	15
Remote Education Classes Best Practices.....	15
Virtual Education in Resident District Best Practices.....	15
APPENDIX B: Virtual Education Professional Development Provided Through the Wyoming Department of Education.....	17

Temporary Virtual Education

Definition

Temporary virtual education days are days in face-to-face classes in which either a student, or, in the case of building closures or planned virtual days, the majority of students, are receiving instruction outside of the physical classroom through virtual delivery. Temporary virtual education days must be less than 50% of the total number of school days as the majority of instruction is expected to occur in person.

Distinguishing Features

In-person, classroom instruction is used in conjunction with temporary virtual instruction for a limited portion of students off-site or a limited number of school days when all or most students and/or the teacher(s) are off-site. The majority of instruction, more than 50% of the total school days, is provided face-to-face for all students enrolled in a class.

Delivery Options

- Synchronous or asynchronous virtual instruction delivery of classroom-based, face-to-face courses when a student is off-site in conjunction with in-person, classroom instruction for classmates who are in school.
- Synchronous or asynchronous virtual instruction delivery of courses when all students and teachers are off-site.
- Synchronous or asynchronous virtual instruction delivery of courses when there are students in the classroom but teacher is off-site for situations such as quarantine.

School Building Closure Status

Districts may use temporary virtual education when the school building is open, partially closed, or entirely closed with or without a state or public health closure order. Even if no one is in the building, school is considered to be in session when instruction is being provided through temporary virtual education. When school is in session, the Temporary School Closure Form does not need to be submitted. If more than half of the students won't be able to attend on a temporary virtual education day, school closure is recommended.

Examples of Use

- Course instruction delivery to students who do not want to attend in person for a limited number of days (less than 50% of the total school days) when the school building is open, but they do not meet homebound instruction requirements pursuant to W.S. 21-4-402.
- Continued instructional delivery when students, teachers, and/or full classrooms, grade levels, etc., need to stay home in quarantine.
- Hybrid school schedules with mostly in-person days and some virtual days.
- Planned virtual school days in the approved school calendar.
- Virtual school days during inclement weather.
- Virtual school days for emergency building closures (i.e., gas leak, construction delays).

Technology and Course Materials

- Internet access for students off-campus or a plan to provide downloadable or printed materials and telephonic interaction with the teacher when Internet access is not possible if temporary virtual education occurs for more than one consecutive day.
- A device with the software needed for each student off-campus to participate in the class through whatever medium is being used for the virtual instruction delivery including video and audio technology for any synchronous interaction that may be provided.

- Digital materials for students off-campus to complete and submit electronically.
- Printed materials for students off-campus may be provided when appropriate or when Internet access isn't available. If Internet access isn't available and students will be receiving temporary virtual education for more than one consecutive day, teachers must regularly contact them by telephone.

Requirements

Authority

W.S. 21-2-304(b)(viii), Chapter 22 School Schedules Rules, and Chapter 41 Virtual Education Rules.

Teacher Location

The teachers can be in their physical classrooms within the district instructing students in the classroom at the same time they are synchronously or asynchronously instructing students off-site. Teachers may also be off-site while instructing all students through temporary virtual education.

Student Location

Students will be on-site for in-person instruction the majority of the time and may be off-site for temporary virtual instruction depending on need, school alternating schedule, school building closures, implementation of a virtual day, etc.

Teacher Employment

Teachers must be employed by the district and assigned to the face-to-face classroom course(s) students attend in person.

Program Approval

Each school district that elects to provide temporary virtual education days is required to develop board policy as described in the "Temporary Virtual Education Policy" section below.

Course Approval

Classroom courses are approved through the state accreditation process.

Teacher Professional Development

There is no professional development required for teachers to provide temporary virtual education for a limited number of students or school days.

Delivery Method

The classroom teacher instructs the students physically present and students off-site synchronously or asynchronously through virtual instruction methods and activities. There may be times when all students and the teacher are off-site due to a school building closure, either ordered or elective, but instruction continues for all students assigned to the class through temporary virtual education delivery.

Attendance

Attendance in the student information system (SIS) indicates in-person attendance and off-site attendance. Off-site attendance for temporary virtual education days must be verified by the classroom teacher on a daily basis in accordance with Chapter 8 School Finance Rules. Attendance should be recorded for each class period for middle, junior high, and high school and a minimum of twice daily in elementary school. The district is responsible for determining the attendance requirements for each course which may include items such as homework submissions, synchronous participation with the teacher and/or class, completion of assignments, quizzes, assessments, etc. Any attendance requirements set for a class or school day must be completed by the start of the next school day.

Off-site Attendance Reporting:

- The Wyoming Department of Education (WDE) has worked with each SIS vendor to ensure there is a methodology available for districts to record and report off-site attendance in the format needed for the WDE600 WINDS Attendance and Membership data collection at the end of the year.
- Districts should verify the method to track off-site attendance with their SIS vendor to ensure correct reporting of the attendance summary associated with each student enrollment in the WDE600 collection.

Reporting

All of the data collections for courses that utilize temporary virtual education days are reported in the same manner as typical face-to-face classroom courses, including the medium-of-instruction being listed as face-to-face for the school year. Starting with the 2021-22 school year, the WDE will collect off-site attendance for temporary virtual education days through the WDE600 WINDS Attendance and Membership collection.

Temporary Virtual Education Policy

Pursuant to Section 12 of the [Chapter 41 Virtual Education Rules](#) (starting on page 41-16), each school district that plans to provide temporary virtual education is required to develop board policy. The policy must be submitted to the Wyoming Department of Education (WDE) by November 1 as part of the annual accreditation evidence submission. The WDE will review and approve the policy during the accreditation verification process.

Districts have the discretion to determine the specific circumstances temporary virtual education will be used. Temporary virtual education days may be implemented at the individual student level, at specific school/grade levels (e.g., middle school and high school only), at the district level, or in any combination the district deems necessary. If districts elect not to provide temporary virtual education, they do not need to develop or submit a policy. Districts may adopt or amend a temporary virtual education policy depending on needs and submit the changes or new policy to the WDE during the annual accreditation evidence submission.

Remote Education Classes within Resident District

Definition

Remote education means classes delivered by a teacher located in a physical classroom with students present while also providing simultaneous remote instruction. Remote education instruction is delivered through interactive, synchronous technology which allows the student receiving the remote education to ask questions, make comments, and interact in real-time with the teacher, classroom students, and other remote students.

Distinguishing Features

Remote education is synchronous delivery with the teacher instructing a face-to-face class with students assigned to the class located in a physical classroom interacting with a student, or portion of students, located off-site. Remote education classes are term length courses rather than temporary instruction for a limited number of days.

Delivery Options

- Synchronous delivery from student's live classroom to student off-site at home.
- Synchronous delivery from a live classroom in another school located within or outside the district to the student located in a classroom at their school.
- Synchronous delivery from a live classroom in another school located within or outside the district to a student off-site at home.

School Building Closure Status

The school where the remote teacher is located must be open for the teacher and at least a portion of students also assigned to the remote student's class(es) to be in a physical classroom during synchronous delivery. Remote education classes cannot be used to deliver instruction during school building closures.

Examples of Use

- Course delivery to students who do not want to enter campus when school is open but do not meet homebound instruction requirements pursuant to W.S. 21-4-402.
- Course delivery to students off-site during an alternating schedule of students on- and off-campus providing the schedule includes teachers on-campus with students in their classrooms each day of the school week (i.e., each of the class periods and days that are scheduled to constitute the school calendar must occur with the remote teacher and a portion of students assigned to the class physically present in the classroom during the remote instruction).

Technology and Course Materials

- Interactive video and audio setup for the classroom to include teacher instruction, classroom student participation, and remote student participation.
- A device for each remote student to participate in the class through interactive video and technology.
- Sufficient internet bandwidth and reliable connectivity at the school and in students' homes.
- Printed or digital materials for remote students to complete the same reading assignments, homework assignments, quizzes, assessments, etc., as the students in the classroom.

Requirements

Authority

W.S. 21-13-300(m)-(n)

Teacher Location

Regardless of the remote education delivery option (see descriptions above), the teacher is always in the physical classroom in the district instructing students present at the same time they are instructing remote students.

Student Location

Students may be off-site at home or at their school when receiving remote instruction from another school located within or outside the district.

Teacher Employment

Teachers must be employed by the district providing the instruction.

Program Approval

No approval from the Wyoming Department of Education is necessary for districts to implement remote education courses and instruction.

Course Approval

Remote education courses are approved through the state accreditation process.

Teacher Professional Development

The remote education statutes don't require teacher professional development specific to instructing students in the classroom while at the same time instructing remote education students.

Delivery Method - From Student's Classroom to Home

Classroom teacher instructs the students physically present while also instructing students from the class who are off-site at home through interactive video and audio technology that allows remote students to participate in real-time with the teacher, classroom students, and other remote students.

Attendance

The classroom teacher takes attendance in the student information system indicating any students attending off-site through remote education. The teacher does this each class period for middle, junior high, and high school and twice daily in elementary school.

Off-site Attendance Reporting:

- The Wyoming Department of Education (WDE) has worked with each SIS vendor to ensure there is a methodology available for districts to record and report off-site attendance in the format needed for the WDE600 WINDS Attendance and Membership data collection at the end of the year.
- Districts should verify the method to track off-site attendance with their SIS vendor to ensure correct reporting of the attendance summary associated with each student enrollment in the WDE600 collection.

Reporting

All of the data collections for remote education classes are reported in the same manner as typical classroom courses except for the medium of instruction. The school the student is enrolled in uses the WDE684 WISE/Teacher/Course/Student collection MediumOfInstruction element "RO - Remote Off-site" for reporting remote education classes delivered to students at home.

Delivery Method – Between Schools

Classroom teacher instructs the students physically present while also instructing students located in another school or at home through interactive video and audio technology that allows remote students to participate in real-time with the teacher, classroom students, and other remote students.

Attendance

- **Student at School:** The school where the student is primarily enrolled, and is located in, during remote instruction delivery from another school, takes seat time attendance in the student information system for the remote education class(es).
- **Student Off-Site:** The classroom teacher takes attendance in the student information system indicating any students off-site participating through remote education each class period for middle, junior high, and high school and a minimum of twice daily in elementary school. The attendance record must be shared with the school where the student is enrolled.

Average Daily Membership

The average daily membership is maintained by the school where the student is enrolled, including when the student has a concurrent enrollment and is receiving remote instruction from another school located within or outside the district. The school where the student is enrolled will report off-site summary attendance in the format needed for the WDE600 WINDS Attendance and Membership data collection at the end of the year

Reporting

If the remote education is a concurrent enrollment, both the school where the student is enrolled and the school providing the remote education class(es) follow remote education and concurrent enrollment reporting methods per guidance in Appendix C of the [WDE684 WISE Teacher/Course/Student Guidebook](#). The following WDE684 WISE/Teacher/Course/Student collection MediumOfInstruction elements are used for remote education classes that are concurrent enrollments:

- AS – From another school. Instruction is being provided in a K-12 remote education class from a teacher located in another school within or outside the district that is not the school the remote student is enrolled in. The school the student is enrolled in uses this medium of instruction.
- RM – Remote Education. Real-time instruction is delivered through interactive technology to a student who is located in another school within or outside the district. The school where the teacher is located and simultaneously instructing students in their physical classroom uses this medium of instruction to indicate the section enrollment as remote education.
- RO – Remote Off-site. Real-time instruction is delivered through interactive technology to a student who is located off-site at home. The school where the teacher is located and simultaneously instructing students in their physical classroom uses this medium of instruction to indicate the section enrollment as remote education off-site.

Virtual Education within Resident District

Definition

Virtual education means school district programs and classes approved by the Wyoming Department of Education pursuant to W.S. 21-2-202(a)(xxxi), W.S. 21-13-330(f-k), and the Chapter 41 Virtual Education Rules for delivery when the teacher and student are in separate locations. Virtual education instruction is primarily delivered through technology outside of the physical classroom and can be asynchronous, synchronous, or a combination of both.

Distinguishing Features

Virtual education classes are designed exclusively for distance delivery and include a teacher who instructs students and interacts with them through the technology in the course platform. The separation between the student and the teacher substantially limits or prevents in-person instruction. Students and teachers are typically not on a school campus when taking or instructing virtual education classes.

Delivery Options

- Districts may purchase part-time or full-time virtual education courses from another district with an approved virtual education program through an agreement with the district providing the virtual education. The courses are delivered by the other district as concurrent enrollment while the resident district maintains student membership and accountability.
- Districts may apply to provide part-time or full-time virtual education using vendor courses and teachers, district-developed courses and teachers, or any combination thereof.

School Building Closure Status

Virtual education may be used when schools are open or when schools are closed for any reason.

Examples of Use

- Course delivery to students who do not want to be on campus when school is open but they do not meet homebound instruction requirements pursuant to W.S. 21-4-402.
- Course delivery to students who need part-time, supplemental courses not offered by the district.
- Purchase and delivery of courses that may be challenging for districts to convert to virtual education platforms.
- Full-time virtual education delivery to eligible students in higher grade levels to free up building space for lower grade levels to attend school in person.

Course delivery by a teacher who cannot or does not want to be on campus when school is open.

Technology and Course Materials

- Students must have reliable Internet access and a computer to receive virtual education delivery on- or off-site.
- A learning management system is required for district virtual education programs. If a district is using vendor purchased courses, the vendor learning management system is sufficient.
- The full scope and sequence of virtual education courses must be available through a learning management system and students must be provided with any materials needed for hands-on, experiential learning such as science lab kits, art materials, etc.

Requirements

Authority

W.S. 21-2-202(a)(xxxi), W.S. 21-13-330(f-k), and Chapter 41 Virtual Education Rules.

Teacher Location

The teacher may be located on a school campus or off-site at home to deliver virtual education providing they have the required equipment and technology.

Student Location

Students may be located anywhere for virtual education providing they have the required equipment and technology. Students may be in their school or off-site at home while taking virtual education classes from approved programs from another district, another school in their resident district, or delivered by a vendor secured by their district.

Teacher Employment

Teachers may be employed by the district with the approved virtual education program or they may be employed by a virtual education vendor. Vendor teachers must have Wyoming certification and the courses must be offered through a virtual education program approved by the Wyoming Department of Education (WDE).

Program Approval

A school district must obtain annual program approval from the WDE to offer virtual education courses. Program approval is not required when a resident district purchases virtual education courses for their students through an agreement with a district that has an approved virtual education program. The virtual education program application information is provided on the Virtual307.com [Policy](#) page under the Virtual Education Program Application and Renewal tab. Applications submitted after the July 31 deadline will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Course Approval

Virtual education courses must be approved by the WDE through submission of the WDE638 WISE Course Inventory Course File and Virtual Education File.

Teacher Professional Development

Teachers who instruct virtual education classes, including vendor teachers, are required to complete one, seven-hour Wyoming Professional Teaching Standards Board (PTSB) approved workshop focused primarily on using virtual education methods to instruct students. Teachers may complete the workshop between August 1, 2022, and July 31, 2023. See Appendix B for additional information. In addition to the opportunities described in Appendix B, the WDE sponsors a variety of training opportunities located on the Department's [Professional Development](#) web page and calendar that may also be offered for PTSB virtual education credit.

District-Assigned Learning Coach

The district must assign a staff member to monitor student progress in part-time or full-time virtual education courses being delivered by another district or instructed by a vendor teacher. The district-assigned learning coach may coordinate instructional support, assist in collecting data, and serve as the point-of-contact for the school the student is enrolled in.

Family-Designated Learning Coach

A parent or another responsible adult must serve as the point-of-contact for virtual education teachers and programs for full-time virtual education students receiving their instruction off-site.

Delivery Method

Districts may structure virtual education program delivery methods for students to be at school or off-site depending on student needs and resources available:

- **Students Off-Site** - Full-time virtual education students typically participate in virtual education classes from home. There may be the opportunity for students to receive in-person instruction when their teacher and the program are located in the resident district, but the majority of instructional delivery is through technology with the virtual education teacher and student in separate locations. Students may also be off-site when taking part-time virtual education classes.
- **Students at School** - Full-time and part-time virtual education students may be located in their school of enrollment when the courses are being delivered from an approved virtual education program in another district, from another school in the resident district, or through a vendor in the resident district's approved program. Students may also be off-site for delivery of those same programs.

Attendance

- **Student at School:** Seat-time attendance in the student information system is recorded for the virtual education classes when the student attends school and is physically present during virtual education course delivery from another district, another school, or a vendor in the resident district's approved program. To use this method of attendance, the student must be consistently physically present at school.
- **Student Off-Site - District Program & District Teacher:** Virtual education course participation requirements are set by the resident district for the district-level virtual education program and are tracked in the learning management system used for course delivery. The district virtual education teacher verifies attendance in the student information system weekly, based on the student's participation during the past week and records the off-site attendance.
- **Student Off-Site - District Program & Vendor Teacher:** As part of the agreement with the virtual education vendor, the vendor provides participation tracking documentation from the learning management system that is verified by the vendor virtual education teacher. The district-assigned learning coach has access to the participation documentation and the virtual education teacher's verification of attendance and records off-site attendance weekly in the district student information system for the class(es) based on the information received. The participation documentation is stored by the resident district for five years for future audit or monitoring purposes.
- **Student Off-Site - Another District's Program & Teacher:** If the virtual education courses are being delivered by another district's approved virtual education program and teacher, as part of the agreement between districts, the district with the program provides participation tracking documentation from the learning management system that is verified by the virtual education teacher. The resident district's district-assigned learning coach has access to the participation documentation and the virtual education teacher's verification of attendance and records the off-site attendance weekly in the district student information system for the class(es) based on the information received. The participation documentation is stored by the resident district for five years for future audit or monitoring purposes.

Off-site Attendance Reporting:

- The Wyoming Department of Education (WDE) has worked with each SIS vendor to ensure there is a methodology available for districts to record and report off-site attendance in the format needed for the WDE600 WINDS Attendance and Membership data collection at the end of the year.
- Districts should verify the method to track off-site attendance with their SIS vendor to ensure correct reporting of the attendance summary associated with each student enrollment in the WDE600 collection.

Reporting

Courses Provided Through Another District - Resident districts purchasing part-time or full-time virtual education courses from another district with an approved program follow these reporting guidelines:

- K-12 concurrent enrollment reporting guidance in Appendix C of the [WDE684 WISE Teacher/Course/Student Guidebook](#).
- The [Chapter 8 School Finance Rules](#) membership regulations for virtual education courses as they apply.

Resident District Virtual Education Program - Virtual education course, enrollment, teacher, and membership reporting are described in the following data collection guidebooks and rules:

- [WDE638 WISE Course Inventory for Current School Year](#) A virtual education course file is required for courses being delivered by the district including those purchased from a vendor. The virtual education participation requirements set by the district are included in the WDE638 report.
- [WDE684 WISE Teacher/Course/Student](#) Virtual education courses reported on the WDE638 may only have enrollments with the medium-of-instruction "DE - Distance Education." Also, virtual education teachers employed by a vendor are reported on the WDE684 as the teacher assigned to virtual education classes they are instructing.
- [WDE628 Virtual Education Vendor Teacher Collection](#) If the district program utilized virtual education teachers employed by a vendor, this collection is submitted to report the certification and assignments of those teachers.
- The [Chapter 8 School Finance Rules](#) membership regulations for virtual education courses as they apply.
- The [Chapter 41 Virtual Education Rules](#) for participation regulations as they apply.

APPENDIX A: Distance Delivery Options Best Practices

Temporary Virtual Education Days Best Practices

- Consider how to deliver hands-on, experiential course content and activities through virtual delivery, such as lab kits, art supplies, math manipulatives, etc., students can take home or common household items they may have available to use.
- Develop, collect, or purchase digital and online curriculum and course materials for use in the classroom as well as off-site to smooth the transition from school to home when an alternating schedule is in place, or in the event of sudden school building closures.
- As much as possible, provide uniform platform(s) across a school and across the district to ease the burden in terms of scaling and training for teachers, students, and parents who may have multiple students at home.
- Provide uniform expectations, daily schedules, and regular teacher interaction for students off-site.
- Develop an intervention plan to implement when students aren't participating or meeting temporary virtual education expectations
- Record off-site attendance in accordance with the methods established by the district's SIS vendor to ensure accurate reporting on the WDE600 collection at the end of the year.

Remote Education Classes Best Practices

- Limit remote education classes at lower grade levels when possible.
- Instruction and course materials allow for remote students to actively participate in all classroom activities and discussions.
- Closely monitor progress when students are receiving remote education classes from another school.
- Closely monitor attendance when students are receiving remote education class instruction from another school while off-site.
- Record off-site attendance in accordance with the methods established by the district's SIS vendor to ensure accurate reporting on the WDE600 collection at the end of the year.

Virtual Education in Resident District Best Practices

- Students are screened for eligibility to be self-directed learners and are provided with a structured schedule and clear participation expectations and requirements.
- Course content is well designed and engaging and students have the opportunity to frequently interact with other virtual education students and their teachers both synchronously and asynchronously.
- Adequate staff and resources are available to deliver and/or monitor virtual education program classes.
- An intervention plan is in place when students are not meeting participation expectations or attendance requirements.

APPENDIX B: Virtual Education Professional Development Provided Through the Wyoming Department of Education

The Wyoming Department of Education (WDE) sponsors virtual education professional development opportunities available to all Wyoming educators through [Quality Matters](#). The Quality Matters training includes in-person and virtual workshops which may be scheduled specifically for district staff, short classes available online on a rolling schedule, and a Teaching Online Certificate program. Information about the sponsored professional development is located on the Virtual307.com [Policy](#) page under the Quality Matters Professional Development tab.

The WDE also offers an open enrollment, self-paced course on classroom implementation of the Wyoming Digital Learning Guidelines. The Guidelines are based on the ISTE Standards for Students and are intended to be used across all content areas to help students leverage technology to deepen and strengthen their learning experience. The online course is delivered through Canvas with registration available year round at the [WDE Wyoming Digital Learning Guideline](#) web page.

The Wyoming Professional Teaching Standards Board (PTSB) has developed a workshop request form specific to virtual education professional development credit which must be completed and submitted by the district on behalf of their teachers. The training teachers receive to fulfill the virtual education professional development must meet the qualifications of teaching, developing, and using online and blended course content. The form is posted to the PTSB website on the [Hosting a Professional Development Workshop](#) page.



Wyoming Professional Teaching Standards Board Facilitator's Request for Virtual Education Professional Development Credit

Directions

1. Submit the following documentation to PTSB to request PTSB Professional Development Credit:
 - Facilitator's Request for Professional Development Credit form
 - Statement of intended outcomes/objectives of the professional development workshop (**must include information related to instructing students utilizing virtual education methods**)
 - Agenda, syllabus, and schedule of proposed workshop (or workshops)
 - Instructor qualifications (resume, vitae, or bio describing qualifications for this workshop)
2. **Qualifications for Virtual Education Professional Development:**
 - Teaching online content in a blended or virtual environment - Utilizing digital/online delivery platforms (LMS, etc.)
 - Developing or enhancing, or utilizing online/digital course content - Utilizing education technology tools (OER, etc.)****Provide a written narrative for review if you feel that your workshop qualifies, but does not fit within the listed areas. ****
3. Requests must be received by the PTSB at least 10 working days prior to the Start Date of the workshop.
4. Submit complete requests to PTSB via email to ptsbworkshoprequests@wyo.gov, or via fax to 307.777.8718.