

# WDE VIRTUAL 307

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **What is virtual education?**

Virtual education means Wyoming school district programs and courses 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 a 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. In virtual education, neither the teacher nor the student need to be on a school campus when providing or receiving instruction. Because of the physical distance between the teacher and the student locations, the teacher is typically unable to provide in-person instruction if needed.

### **What is remote education?**

Remote education is a type of distance delivery course passed into law during the 2019 legislative session, see W.S. 21-13-330(m)-(n). In remote education, real-time instruction is delivered through interactive technology to a student who is located in another school by a teacher who is simultaneously instructing students in their physical classroom. The remote student is physically located in their school of primary enrollment while taking the class and is able to interact in real time (e.g., ask questions, participate in discussions, make comments, etc.) with the teacher and other students. Remote education is synchronous delivery with the teacher instructing 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.

### **What are technology-based classes?**

Technology-based instruction is based on student responses to educational software or other computer program-based materials when the student is physically located in their school of primary enrollment. Even though the teacher assigned to the class may not always be in the same classroom as the student, the teacher is not separated from the student by location and is available to provide in-person instruction when needed (the teacher is in the same school as the student and the student is in the school when taking the course). Additionally, the vendor that the curriculum is purchased from does not provide any instructional support in the course.

### **How is average daily membership calculated for virtual education courses?**

Average daily membership is now measured by students meeting course participation requirements set forth by the program and approved by the Department that result in an attendance equivalence. Participation measures can include activities recorded in the learning management system, such as submission of required coursework, and items verified by the virtual education teacher, such as a log of communication between the teacher and student or the teacher and the learning coach. Please check each program's participation requirements to learn more.

### **What is a virtual education teacher?**

A virtual education teacher is the person who provides course instruction, facilitates student learning, monitors student progress, provides and grades assignments, and provides qualitative feedback to students through technology outside of the physical classroom. The virtual education teacher is not able to provide in-person instruction a preponderance of the time due to the student and teacher being in separate locations.

## **Why do virtual education teachers need to be certified in Wyoming?**

The requirement for teachers to be certified can be found in Wyoming statutes W.S. 21-7-303(a) and W.S. 21-2-202(a)(xxxi)(A). Any public funds being used to pay for instruction of a course, including purchased online courses taught by a K-12 teacher, require Wyoming certification. Assigning a Wyoming certified teacher to a student to provide instructional support does not alleviate the requirement for the online teacher to be state certified.

## **Does the virtual education teacher need to be employed by a Wyoming school district?**

No. It is no longer a statutory requirement that virtual education teachers be employed by the school district providing the course. But as stated above, virtual education teachers must obtain the appropriate Wyoming certification for the courses they are teaching.

## **What is a virtual education program?**

Virtual education programs in Wyoming may only be delivered through a Wyoming school district and approved by the WDE to provide virtual delivery courses. School districts may opt to deliver virtual education courses part-time or full-time and they may elect to provide courses only to students in their district, a selection of districts (region), or statewide.

## **What are virtual education courses?**

Virtual education courses are courses that are approved by the Department to be offered through an approved virtual education program. Virtual education courses can be district developed, purchased from a vendor, or a combination of both.

## **What are district responsibilities related to virtual education?**

Any district providing virtual education courses, whether purchased through a vendor or developed within the district, must submit an application to the WDE for program approval. Districts providing virtual education must adhere to all statutory and [Chapter 41 Virtual Education Rules](#) requirements including ensuring the courses are aligned to [Wyoming Content and Performance Standards](#) and taught by Wyoming certified teachers. Districts must also track participation in virtual education for the purposes of recording and reporting an attendance equivalent measure for average daily membership.

## **Are online dual enrollment courses part of the K-12 virtual education program?**

No. Distance delivery dual enrollment college courses taught by faculty employed by an appropriately accredited postsecondary institution are not part of the K-12 virtual education program. Faculty teaching dual enrollment courses are not required to have a Wyoming PTSB teaching license (W.S. 21-7-303(b)(i)).

## **What is the role of the Virtual Education Advisory Committee?**

The advisory committee recommends modifications to rules, policies, practices and procedures and serves in an advisory capacity to school districts to improve the delivery of virtual education courses across the state (W.S. 21-2-202(a)(xxxi)(F)).

## **Which district receives ADM for students taking virtual education K-12 concurrent enrollment courses?**

ADM goes to the school district that has primary enrollment for the student. The district with primary enrollment can enter agreements with virtual education program districts to provide a portion (part-time) or all (full-time) of the classes a student receives and is still eligible to receive full ADM for the student.