# Attendance Policy Considerations

## Tracking Attendance During COVID-19 Related Closures

There is currently no state requirement for districts or schools to report individual attendance numbers while students are receiving remote instruction due to school closures. In these situations, schools may submit appropriate waivers to account for instructional days missed.

Resources are currently available on the TEA COVID-19 site to inform which waivers are available and how such waivers will be processed.

* [School Finance FAQ](https://tea.texas.gov/sites/default/files/School%20Finance%20FAQ%20March%2019%202020.pdf)
* [2019‐20 COVID‐19 Missed School Day Waiver Attestation Statement](https://tea.texas.gov/sites/default/files/instructional_continuity_attestation_while_closed.pdf)

While attendance tracking is not required for reporting purposes, tracking student participation can further operationalize remote learning and ensure student welfare during school closures.

## Goals of Tracking Student Participation

Consistent, accurate tracking of student participation in remote learning can assist teachers and administrators in the following ways:

1. Ensuring equal access to instruction for all students
2. Promoting student success by informing instructional leaders of student engagement levels
3. Providing local data to keep a pulse on continued instruction

## Recommendations for Tracking Student Participation

Remote learning environments can be characterized by whether instruction is happening in real time (synchronously, as in a virtual classroom) or without real time interaction (asynchronously, as in viewing a video remotely). These environments each present unique participation measurement hurdles that are also affected by the level of technology available. While specific measures chosen by districts may vary according to technological capacity and instructional design, below are some guiding principles:

1. Students should have multiple opportunities to demonstrate their participation, potentially in any given instructional day.
2. Measures should be easily tracked by teachers or administrators to reduce limits on instructional time.
3. To the extent possible, measures should readily indicate whether a student or group of students is engaging in remote learning content and activities.

The following table characterizes example participation methods depending on the learning environment and technology available. Districts may find it helpful to use one or more of these methods depending on which box best characterizes their remote learning situation:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Example participation tracking methods* | **Learning Environment** |
| **Technology Level** | Synchronous (real time) | Asynchronous (not real time) |
| Low | * Participation in conference or other individual phone calls
 | * Text (including group text)
* Email with question or other student-initiated contact
* Packet pick ups
* Submission of an assignment or exam
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| Medium | * Participation in video conferencing with staff or live virtual classroom
* Participation in interactive tutorial
* Participation in an online study group
 | * Posting in a discussion forum or online academic discussion with timestamp
* Completion of online webforms or surveys
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| High | * Total student time in virtual classrooms (tracked by platform analytics)
* Completion and submission of collaborative assignments during virtual class setting
 | * Total student time active on a student portal (tracked by online learning platform or analytics)
* Instructional materials opened or watched (tracked by online learning platform or analytics)
* Completion of secure online quizzes or exams
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